



Jain Concepts of Anekāntavāda

Who Governs the Events of the Universe

Karma - External Circumstances - Freewill - Predestination

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Who Governs the Events of the Universe

- **Who Governs the Events of the Universe?**
 - **Karma (Internal Nimitta)**
 - **External Circumstances (External Nimitta)**
 - **Freewill or Determination (Purushārtha)**
 - **Is it Predestined (Niyati)?**



Jain Terminology to Understand

Jiivava, Soul, And Karma

Utpad, Vyaya, Dhruvya, And Sat

Dravya, Guna, And Paryay

Praman And Naya

Nishchaya And Vyavahar

Upadan And Nimitta

Dravya Karma And Bhav Karma

Dravya Mind And Bhav Mind

Karya_karan Relationship

Nimitta_naimitik Relationship

Vastu Vyavastha And Dravya Swatantrata

Krama Baddha Paryay



Jain Beliefs

▪ **Fundamental Beliefs of Jainism**

- **Soul and Karma exist from Eternity**
- **The Soul is in Mithyätva (ignorant and wrong belief) from Eternity**
- **Karma is attached to the Soul from Eternity**
- **The Principles governing the successions of life cycles (Birth, Life, and Death) is Karma.**
- **Our Ignorance (Mithyätva), Vices (Kashäya) and Intention behind our actions of body, mind, and speech continues to bind us with new Karma.**
- **Ignorance (Mithyätva) is the root cause of all Sufferings**
- **Ultimate goal of life is Liberation. Removal of Mithyätva and Kashaya in turn helps to removes all Karma.**



Karma

Karma is a matter (pudgal) and hence it possesses all characteristics of matter

No Consciousness / Knowledge

Possesses Body

Occupies Space

Very Fine Particles (Smallest Particle In The Universe)

Can Not Be Seen/Feel/Verified

Entire Universe Is Filled With Karma Particles



Karma..

- **Free karma particles**
 - **The karma particles not bounded to a soul is known as free karma particles**
- **Karma or Bonded Karma Particles**
 - **When the free Karma particles bind to a Soul is known as bonded Karma or Karma**
- **Effects of Karma**
 - **Karma continuously produces its effect on to the Soul**
 - **It obscures the Soul's natural quality of Infinite Vision, Knowledge, Power, Conduct. Hence Soul possesses limited Vision, Knowledge, Power, and Faith and Conduct (Ghāti Karma)**
 - **Soul with Karma also possesses Body, Life span, Social standing, Pleasure and Pain due to surroundings (Aghāti Karma)**
- **The intensity of the effect of Karma depends on the illusion and ignorance of the Soul**
- **One person's Karma does not affect the other living being (no connection)**



Dravya and Paryäya

- **Dravya (Substance)**
 - Every substance in the universe continuously changes its form. During the modification process, its certain qualities or properties remains unchanged. Collectively the unchanged qualities are called as **Dravya**.
- **Paryäya (Modification or Form)**
 - Each substance in the universe continuously modifies its form. This form is called **Paryäya** of that substance at that time.
- **Dravya and Paryäya are inseparable.**
 - e.g. **Bengal is a Paryäya, Gold is a Dravya**



Upadan and Nimitta

- **Upädän (Real cause of the change or result)**
 - **Upädän is a real cause of a result**
 - **It is One and Only One in any given process, result, or activity**
- **Nimitta (Apparent cause of the change or result)**
 - **Nimitta is an apparent cause of a result or a catalytic agent (helper) of a process, result, or activity**
 - **There can be one or more Nimitta in any given event**



Examples

- A potmaker makes a pot using following items

- Clay, Fire, Water, Machine

f Determine Upadan and Nimitta cause

- Fire U/N

- Water U/N

- Potmaker U/N

- Clay U/N

- Machine U/N

- Person X says bad word to person Y and Person Y gets Angry

- Person X U/N

- Person Y U/N

- Bad word U/N

- Karma of Y U/N

f Determine External and Internal Nimitta



Process of Separation and Bondage

- **Case I**

- f* **Person X says bad word to person Y**

- f* **Person Y gets Angry**

- **Case II**

- f* **Person X says bad word to person Y in the morning**

- f* **Person Y does not get Angry**

- f* **Person X says bad word to person Y in the evening**

- f* **Person Y gets Angry**

- **Case III**

- f* **Person X says bad word to person Y alone**

- f* **Person Y does not get Angry**

- f* **Person X says bad word to person Y in presence of Z**

- f* **Person Y gets Angry**

- **Case IV**

- f* **Person X says bad word to person Y**

- f* **Person Y does not get Angry**

- f* **Person Z says same bad word to person Y**

- f* **Person Y gets Angry**



Process of Separation and Bondage..

- **Simple Example (case I)**

- f* **Person X says bad word to person Y**

- f* **Person Y gets Angry**

- **Process**

- f* **When Y's past karma (e.g. anger) matures, it is ready to produce the result.**

- f* **At that time**

- Y finds X saying bad word**

- Old Karma separates from Y's soul**

- Y gets angry (Soul becomes angry)**

- New karma bind to Y(Soul).**



Process of Separation and Bondage..

▪ **Analysis**

- f* **When past karma of Y matures, it helps to produce the proper environment according to its nature (Prakrati), duration (Sthiti), and intensity at the time of maturity**
 - Y finds X saying bad word to him**
- f* **At that time Karma separates from Y (Soul)**
- f* **Y due its ignorance gets trapped into the environment and becomes angry**
- f* **New karma binds to soul Y because of Y's anger (vibratory action of soul)**



Nimitta and Upadan Causal Analysis

f **Y's Anger**

–External Nimitta

?

–Internal Nimitta

?

–Upadan

?

f **Bondage of new karma to Y (Soul)**

–Nimitta

?

–Upadan

?

f **Separation of old karma from Y (Soul)**

–Nimitta

?

–Upadan

?



Nimitta and Upadan Causal Analysis

f **Y's Anger**

–External Nimitta

-Bad word of X

–Internal Nimitta

-Maturity of old karma of Y

–Upadan

-Person Y (Soul)

f **Bondage of new karma to Y's soul**

–Nimitta

- Person Y's anger

–Upadan

- Free karma particles

f **Separation of old karma from Y's Soul**

–Nimitta

- Time (Maturity of Karma)

–Upadan

- Y's old Karma



Summary

- **Y's anger binds him with new karma.**
- **Y's quietness results no bondage of karma.**
- **Y's proper understanding of reality (proper knowledge) can keep him remain quiet (proper conduct).**



Soul and Karma Relationship

- Soul gets angry on its own, karma does not make soul to get angry but it creates the environment for the soul to become angry.
- Free particle converts into karma on its own, angry soul does not force free particle to convert into karma but creates the proper environment for the conversion
- In other Words:
 - f* Karma is nimitta for soul to get angry and
 - f* Angry soul is nimitta to convert particle into karma
- This relationship is Nimitta_Naimittik relationship



Anekāntavāda (*Doctrine of Pluralism or Non-absolutism*)

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

a lesson on Anekāntvād



Certainty based on limited
perspective makes one blind



Anekāntavāda ***(Doctrine of Pluralism or Non-absolutism)***

Realization of Truth or Existent is Absolute

Expression of Truth or Existent is Relative or Non-absolute

Realizing or Viewing the object from all aspect is called Pramāna

Expressing the object from any one point of view is called Naya

Truth or Existence or Reality (substance) has many facets. It has many qualities and properties.

One can not make definite statement about Truth or Existent.

Each statement is true in its own limited sense (Naya).

To understand the nature of Existent, one requires the vision of seeing an Entity from all direction (Pramana).

This is known as Anekant, Pluralistic, or Multifacetedness viewpoints.



Existent, Sat, or Truth

▪ **Existent**

- **The Jain term for 'Existent' is 'Sat' or Truth.**
- **It designates an entity comprised of**
 - **Dravya (Substance)**
 - **Guna (Qualities or Attributes)**
 - **Paryäya (Mode or Form)**
- **Guna or the attributes are inseparable from the Substance and are permanent**
- **Paryäya (Mode) is transient and changes continuously**
- **Dravya and Paryäya are inseparable.**



Pramana

Pramāna (Knowledge in its entirety)

- **Total knowledge of an Entity, Substance, or Existent**
- **Views an object from all aspects (both general and particular) in its entirety**
- **Pramāna accepts positive aspects of reality and rejects negative statements**

Hence Pramāna is a complete and proper knowledge of self and non-self.



Naya – A Point of View

Naya (Particular Point of View of Knowledge)

- **Relative knowledge of an Entity, Substance or Existent**
- **Considers an object in its particular aspect and part**
 - **Knowledge of a substance in its relation**
- **It is true in relation to one point of view and false from all other point of view.**
- **The statement expressed from any one point of view (Naya) can never be absolute and hence can not be totally True**
- **Hence each statement or affirmation should be preceded by the phrase "may be", "perhaps" or "some how"**



Syadvada

- **Syādvāda is a method or a language of expressing the multi-facetedness of objects by using the qualifier 'syad'.**

It is an expression of:

Conditional predication, Relativity of propositions or judgments



Example

Persons X and Y are involved in a car accident

Person X was at fault

Person Y got hurt

Person Z witnessed the accident

What are the possible reflections of persons X, Y, and Z.



Possible Reflections

Reflection of person X

- 1. It was Y's bad karma that he got hurt. I was just the Nimitta**
- 2. It was predestined for Y to get hurt**
- 3. I was not driving carefully. Due to my negligence Y got hurt**

Reflection of person Y

- 1. It was my bad karma that I got hurt. Person X was just Nimitta**
- 2. It was predestined for me to get hurt**
- 3. It was X's fault. If he would have been careful I would not get hurt**

Reflection of person Z

- 1. Y got hurt because of his bad karma. Let him complete the suffering so that his karma get exhausted**
- 2. It was predestined for Y to get hurt**
- 3. Y got hurt and I should try my best to help him immediately**



Ignorant Person's Reflection

▪ **Reflects only One Cause which benefits him**

-X

-It was Y's bad Karma or his Predestination (Niyati) that he got hurt

-Y

-It was X's Negligence (Freewill) that I got hurt

-Z

-It was Y's bad Karma or his Predestination that he got hurt. Let him complete his suffering so he does not have to suffer in future



Spiritual Person's Reflection

- **Reflects on one cause which enhances his spirituality or reduces his kashays such as anger, greed, ego, lust etc.**

–X

–It was my negligence

–Y

–It was my bad Karma or my Predestination

–Z

–My intrinsic nature is Compassion. I need to help Y immediately



Fully Realized (Kevali) Person's Reflection

**Fully Realized (Kevali) person reflects
that this is way the incident occurred**



Jain Understanding of Karma or External Circumstances, Predestination, and Freewill

Jain Reality (Logic) explains that

Five Causes of equal magnitude (Samavayi) are always present when an event happens in the Universe or in our Life

- **Time (Kal)**
- **Intrinsic nature (Swabhav)**
- **Predestination (Niyati, Bhavitavyata, or Honahar)**
- **Instrumental cause (Nimitta)**
 - **External Beings, Objects (External Cause)**
 - **Karma (Internal Cause)**
- **Determination, Self-effort, or Freewill (Purushārtha)**



Example

- **Leaves fall off at beginning of fall season, Winter is cold (Time)**
- **Apple seeds grow apples not oranges, Female gets pregnant not male (Intrinsic Nature)**
- **A barren woman never gets pregnant (Predestination)**
- **Person X wins a lottery (Instrumental cause, karma)**
- **Gandhiji got the Independence of India (Free Will / Determination)**



Analysis

- **Jain reality explains that 5 causes exist equally for any event that occurs in the Universe**
- **However**
 - **3 of 5 causes are beyond our control**
 - **Time, Intrinsic nature, Predestination**
 - **Instrumental Cause (Nimitta)**
 - **To certain extent External circumstances are in our control**
 - **Karma which have not produced the result (which are in Sattā) continuously changes with our reflection**
 - **Freewill or Determination is in our control**



Attributes of Ignorant, Spiritual, and Fully Realized Person

- **Even though Reality explains that five causes are present at all times during any action, activity, or incidences that happens in our life**
 - f* **Ignorant person reflects on only ONE cause which benefits him or supports his ego**
 - f* **Spiritual person understands the presence of all five causes but reflects on ONE cause which**
 - Reduces Vices (kashays) such as anger, greed, ego, lust etc. or**
 - Enhances Spirituality within**
 - f* **Realized (Kevali) person reflects on ALL five causes equally**



Summary

Jain reality indicates that Five Causes are always present for any event that happens in the Universe.

To form an opinion on any one of the five causes indicates our ignorance about Jain reality.

However during our spiritual growth period, we should reflect on one cause that will reduce or minimize our vices such as Anger, Ego, Deceit, and Greed (Kashäya) and enhance our spirituality.

Kevali visualizes the presence of all five causes at all the time



Summary..

During the action or activity period one should reflect on:

One's own effort for the success (Determination, Free will, Self-effort)

At the conclusion of an activity or action one should reflect on:

If the result is positive

The success was due to the help from others (external Nimitta or circumstances)

If the result is negative

The failure was due to

Past Karma

Was Predestined

My effort was not adequate



Spiritual Understanding of Predestination

Person needs Freewill, Determination, Effort or Ego to progress from Illusionary/Ignorant state (1st Gunasthänak) to Monkshood state (6th Gunasthänak)

Person can not spiritually progress further without dissolving his/her ego.

To the egoless person, all events that occur in the universe seems predestined

- **This does not mean that events are predestined in reality (all five causes are equally present)**
- **Also we continuously change two of the five causes:**
 - **Freewill and Nimitta (Karma and External situation)**
- **Hence the probability of all events are predetermined is very low**

Only single concept of Predestination violates Jain theory of Five Samaväya Causes (Theory of Karma and Freewill)



Keval Jnän

The popular definition:

- Kevali is capable of visualizing All Past, Present, and Future Events together of the universe (Paryaya of every substances) at the same time

Analysis

- From reflection (Upayoga) point of view, Kevali's reflection remains within his/her soul all the time. Hence Kevali never visualizes external objects
- The definition only explains the power that Kevali possesses
- The definition is useful to get rid of ego (Kartäbhäv) to further progress spiritually from 6th Gunasthänak



Karma and Compassion

Our ignorance or intention behind our actions of body, mind, and speech bind us with Karma.

During an ignorance state a person is controlled by surroundings (Nimitta).

- **Hence on the path of spiritual progress the person should be surrounded by proper environment**
 - Religious study
 - Charity and Social work
 - Temple and Pāthashälä going, Tirtha Yātrā
 - Good friends
 - Protection of Environment



Karma and Compassion.....

As spiritual progress occurs, the effect of Nimitta reduces, and the power of Free-will (Upadan increases

For a totally realized person (Kevali) surroundings (Nimitta) has no effect

**Karma philosophy applies to ourselves,
Compassion applies to all**