# Indian Philosophy I

## SEMESTER II

## (AS PER CBCS AND NEP 2020)

# PHILOSOPHY


**SURYA KUMAR BHUYAN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY**

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## COURSE INTRODUCTION

The Second course of Second Semester of M A in Philosophy of KKHSOU is "Indian Philosophy I. This course introduces us to the about some of the basic as well as important schools of Indian Philosophy. Indian philosophy shows us different paths to realize the highest truth in life under different schools. Therefore, Indian philosophy is essentially spiritual. It is divided into two schools, namely, orthodox (astika) and heterdox (natika). In this course some major theories of some of these schools will be discussed. along with it some of the basic concepts of Indian Philosophy like some of the basic concept of Vedanta and some of the issues of Gita will also be discussed. .

The first unit starts with "The Nature and Scope of Indian Philosophy". After going through this unit, you will be able to know nature and scope of Indian Philosophy.

The second unit is 'The Basic Philosophical Ideas in The Vedas'. The concepts included in this unit are rta, Theism and its various types, Polytheism, Henotheism, Monotheism, Deism, and Monism.

The third unit is 'Gita's Idea of Karmayoga'. It deals with the issues. They are: the concept of Gita, Gita's view on Karmayoga, Interpretation of the concept of Niskrma Karma, Niskāma karma : Metaphysical and Epistemological concept, Pravṛtti and Nivṛtti, Svadharma, Mokṣa : The Supreme Goal of Human Life, and Gita's karmayoga and Kant's Deontological Ethics

The fourth unit, "Āstika and Nāstika Division of Schools of Indian Philosophy" basically discusses the Astika and Nāstika schools of Indian Philosophy.

The fifth unit, "Cārvāka Epistemology" discusses the concepts like accidentalism, naturalism, the denial of inference, and the denial of the validity of the Vedas.

The Sixth unit 'Cā-rvā-ka Metaphysics' gives us the knowledge of Cā-rvā-ka metaphysics, Cā-rvā-ka concept of soul and consciousness, Cā-rvā-ka arguments in favour of Dehā-tmā-avā-da, Cā-rvā-ka denial of God's existence, Cā-rvā-ka svabha-bavada, Cā-rvā-ka denial of law of Karma, the theory of rebirth, and reaction of Cā-rvā-ka against liberation.

The seventh unit, 'The four noble truths of Buddhism' deals with the issues such as A Brief Sketch of Buddhism, Concept of Four Noble Truths, There is Suffering, There is a Cause of Suffering, Dependent Origination, The Cessation of Suffering, Concept of Nirvāna. and the Path of Cessation of Suffering

The unit eight is ‘Buddhism: Theory of Momentariness’. The concepts discussed in this unit are: General idea about Buddhism and the Concept of Dependent Origination or Pratityasamutpada.

The ninth unit is ‘Buddhism: The Concept of Nirvâna’. This unit deals with the issues like Brief Outlook on Buddhism, Concept of Four Noble Truths (First Noble Truth, Second Noble Truth, Third Noble Truth, Fourth Noble Truth), and Concept of Nirvâna.

The tenth unit, ‘Realistic Schools of Buddhism: Vaibhasika and Sautrantika’ discusses the points, they are such as Sarvastivada or Vaibhasika, The Dharma Theory, The Doctrine that ‘All Exist’, No-soul Theory: Sautrantika, Theory of Momentariness, Skandhamatratas, and Nirvana

The eleventh unit is ‘Idealistic Schools of Buddhism: Madhyamika and Yogacara.’ It discusses the concepts, they are madhyamaka: Nagarjuna, Unreality of the External World, The Highest Reality, Yogacara, Existence of Mere Ideas (vijnaptimatrata), The Store Consciousness (alayavijnana), and The Three Kinds of ‘Own Being’ (svabhava)

The twelve unit is ‘Jainism: Syādvāda’. The concepts included in this unit are: Jaina Epistemology, Jaina Metaphysics, Syādvāda or the Sapta-bhangi-naya, and Criticism of Syādvāda

The thirteenth unit is ‘Jainism: Anekāntavāda’. After going through this unit, you will be able to know Literal Meaning of Anekāntavāda. Besides, you will be able to explain the concept of change in the context of Anekāntavāda, analyse positive and negative characters of an object, understand Anekāntavāda with a concrete example, and to explain ekāntavāda

The fourteenth unit is ‘. Jaina Metaphysics’. The concepts discussed in this unit are: What is Jaina Metaphysics? Two Important Concepts In Jainism, Dravya: Elaborated, Soul or Jiva, and

Ajivas – The Inanimate Substance

The name of the fifteenth unit is ‘Nyāya: Concept of Pramā’. This unit basically deals with the concepts like definition of pramā and the sources of knowledge.

While going through this course you will come across some boxes which are put on the left side or right side of the text. These boxes will give us the meanings of some words and concepts within the text. Apart from this, there will be some broad and short questions included under Activity and Check Your Progress in every unit. Activities will increase our thinking capacity because questions put in Activity are not directly derived from the text. But answers to the short questions are put in the section Answers to Check Your Progress. Besides, there are some text-related questions which are put in Model Questions. These questions will help you in selecting and mastering probable topics for the examination so that you can prepare for the examination with confidence.

**Q.6:** What is saddarshana?

**Q.7:** Name the system of Indian philosophy which deals with Karma Kanda.

**Q.8:** Name the system of Indian philosophy which deals with Jñāna Kānda.

**B) Short Questions** (Answer in about 100-150 words)

**Q.1:** Is Indian philosophy pessimistic? Briefly explain.

**Q.2:** Briefly explain the nature of Indian philosophy.

**Q.3:** Write a brief note on the scope of Indian philosophy.

**C) Long Questions** (Answer in about 300-500 words)

**Q.1:** Explain the nature of Indian philosophy.

**Q.2:** Discuss the scope of Indian philosophy.

*** ***** ***

that is inseparable from Indian philosophy is its stress on self-culture, that an individual has to improve in a manner that will give them ultimate peace.

- Major philosophical treatises like Upanishads and Gita give an orientation to it that is developed by other philosophical schools, irrespective of their Vedic affiliation. That is even the so-called heterodox schools, Buddhism and Jainism, seriously believe in the law of karma/action. As you sow, so you reap. Four aims worthy of emulation have been put before the individual. These are dharma (religion/morality), artha (material possessions), kama (pleasure) and moksha (liberation). And all these are to be cultivated at the appropriate stage of an individual's life. Therefore, this world is not ignored at all. Again, the charge of pessimism is because its reference to misery. But this reference, more pointedly in Buddhism and Samkhya, is only as a point of departure.
- The word *'veda'* means wisdom. Therefore, what we know as the Vedas are the collection of experiences. wisdom and aspirations of the very early Indian thinkers. They are called *rshis*, wise persons.
- Indian materialism (Charvaka/Lokayata) is a staunch critic of the Vedic way of thinking. It is against the Vedas. It is therefore called nastika or heterodox school of philosophy. In this context, orthodoxy or heterodoxy (astika-nastika) does not mean belief in God or otherwise; it only means following the Vedas or not.
- If at all, the basic distinguishing mark of Indian philosophy is its practical aspect. It is a guide to meaningful living. It refuses to be purely theoretical. It is not entirely speculative. It has a robust pragmatism attached to it.



## 1.6 FURTHER READING

1. Chatterjee, S. C. & Dutta, D. M. (1968). *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. University of Calcutta.

Spiritualism is a human phenomenon and is available elsewhere in abundance. Therefore there is no point in making reference to spiritualism as either weakness or strength of any philosophy. Also, contrary to popular perception, Indian philosophy is a living entity. Philosophers like Radhakrishnan, K.C.Bhattacharyya, Aurobindo, Vivekānanda, Rabindranath, B.N.Seal, J.N. Mohanty, have interpreted and enriched the basic findings of Indian philosophy and raised its standard to an appreciable height. Indian philosophy is in the process of continuous self-discovery and innovation.

There is a specific point for the serious students. That is the expression "Indian Philosophy" itself. When Indians doing/reading philosophy made in India, designate it as 'Indian', they alienate themselves from the process of philosophy so designated. It should have been thought of as 'Philosophy' and not 'Indian Philosophy'. For this leaves scope for imagining that what they are doing is 'Indian' while philosophy is something else, that is philosophy made elsewhere (= west). While there are specific occasions for referring to philosophy as Indian philosophy, most of the time the expression is superfluous and detrimental to the creativeness of philosophy in India. We can go and do philosophy and call it philosophy. We can name it realism, idealism, monism, pluralism, hedonism, humanism, as the context demands. But there is no philosophical expediency to call it 'Indian' except under certain circumstances.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 3:** Write the meaning of 'Vedānta'

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**Q 4:** Mention the names of three Upanishads.

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**Q 5:** Write the meaning of the term 'philosophy'.

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pessimism, if at all, is only initial and a passing phase. Indian philosophy is optimistic in outlook.

There is a tradition of classifying Indian philosophy into Orthodox and Heterodox schools. This is determined by the allegiance or otherwise of the schools concerned to the Vedas. The word 'veda' means wisdom. Therefore, what we know as the Vedas are the collection of experiences. wisdom and aspirations of the very early Indian thinkers. They are called rshis, wise persons. Technically the Vedas have no authors. Truth is purportedly revealed to certain seers and they have received the wisdom and passed that on for the posterity. Upanishads are only the final portions of the Vedas. Well, these Vedas form a huge reference point for deciding if a particular school is following the mainstream trend in philosophy or otherwise. For instance, Indian materialism (Cārvāka/Lokayata) is a staunch critic of the Vedic way of thinking. It is against the Vedas. It is therefore called nastika or heterodox school of philosophy. In this context, orthodoxy or heterodoxy (astika-nastika) does not mean belief in God or otherwise; it only means following the Vedas or not. For instance, Mahayana Buddhism believes in God - and yet it is a heterodox school for its antivedic stand.

Of these heterodox schools there are three in all. They are: Cārvāka (also called Lokāyata, Materialism), Bauddha (Buddhism) and Jaina (Jainism). Cārvāka is the Indian version of materialism, hedonism and common sense realism. It traces its philosophy to the teaching of a saint called Brihaspati. Buddhism is based on the teaching of Gautama the Buddha and Jainism on the teaching of Mahāvira. While these three schools are heterodox, there are six major schools that are orthodox. These, again, are astika/orthodox not because of the question of belief in God, but because of their ultimate allegiance to the Vedas. While Samkhya does not believe in God, the Mimāmsā concept of God is obscure. But both these schools are astika/orthodox. These six systems are together called saddarshan, six philosophies. These are - Nyāya (of Gotama), Vaiseśhika (of Kanāda), Samkhya (of Kapila), Yoga (of Patanjali), Mimāmsā (of Jaimini) and Vedānta (of Badarayana). These six systems also come in the group of two because of their basic teaching. Hence, Nyaya-Vaiseshika, Samkhya-Yoga and

there is enormous scope for debate in it. It is neither dormant nor dead. It is alive, dynamic and growing.

It has all the elements of a mature philosophy - no matter where it was born or brought up.

The term for philosophy in India is 'darshan'. It means seeing or vision. It is equivalent to understanding, realization or wisdom. Sometimes darshan is emphasized with an extra word 'samyak'. When added to darshan, jt makes 'samyagdarshan', or to be grammatically correct, samyagdarshanam. It will translate as - comprehensive or total understanding, total vision, and complete realization. It is not a partial or relative understanding. It is the final realization that does not have a beyond. It is absolute intuition or insight. Also, philosophy is accepted in India as the special knowledge that saves. (mokshe dhih jnanam). It is that knowledge that gives liberation. In contrast, science or vijnan is that gives us material prosperity.

While dealing with the nature of Indian philosophy one is automatically drawn to the view that it is basically spiritualistic. Excepting for an odd but powerful outlook called Lokayata or Charvaka (to which we come later), all the systems of Indian philosophy believe in certain things that are corollaries of spiritualism; for instance - law of karma and continuity of life. Ethics of altruism and pragmatism too are linked to spiritualism. Another important point to note is that Indian philosophy is a life-centred philosophy. Mere theoretical wrangling is not encouraged in it. Even Cārvāka means business. It has its elaborate hedonistic teaching. Pursuit of pleasure is prescribed here.

**Darshan that is Indian philosophy is rigorously practical. It is life-centric. In a way it is existential without resorting to absurdity. A feature that is inseparable from Indian philosophy is its stress on self-culture, that an individual has to improve in a manner that will give them ultimate peace.**

When we say like this, we do not want to claim superiority for Indian philosophy in comparison with philosophies elsewhere. It is describing a fact. It is only telling what is the case - it is not to claim that it is good or bad,

## 1.3 NATURE OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

In fact 'philosophy' is a general name given to a wide range of intellectual activities marked off by a hidden unity of pattern and structure. This structure gives them the brand name. Poetry and novel are different in name and content but are united by the essential concern in them - artistic creativity. They conform to the idea of literature. Similarly epistemology, metaphysics or ethics are different in name and content, but they are united by their essential concern for explaining some experiences. They are philosophies. This leads us also to have a rough idea of philosophy as 'an interpretation of experiences'. There can be a dispute over it, but for the time being we can accept it and go ahead. In fact all intellectual activities are interpretation of experience. In science we explain some experiences like those of atoms, molecules, cells, stones, trees etc. In commerce we explain production, distribution, profit and loss etc. In philosophy we explain experiences and concepts like knowledge, truth, goodness, beauty, holiness, happiness, self, person etc.

Philosophy is part of the culture of a nation. What people of a particular culture have deeply thought about certain basic experiences of humanity constitutes their philosophy. What we call Indian Philosophy is the philosophy generated in India. We have similarly Greek Philosophy, German Philosophy, British Philosophy, etc.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** What are the varieties in philosophy?

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**Q 2:** Mention three philosophies of other countries.

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## 1.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A) Very Short Questions**

**Q.1:** How many Vedas are there?

**Q.2:** What does Ṛta literally means?

**Q.3:** What do you mean by theism?

**B) Short Questions** (Answer in about 100-150 words)

**Q.1:** What are the different parts of the Vedas?

**Q.2:** What is agnosticism?

**Q.3:** What is autotheism?

**Q.4:** Which are the monotheistic religions?

**C) Write distinction between** (Answer in about 100-150 words)

**Q.1:** Monotheism and monism

**Q.2:** Pantheism and panentheism

**D) Long Questions** (Answer in about 300-500 words)

**Q.1:** Explain the concept of Ṛta.

**Q.2:** What are the different stages of theism?

**Q.3:** Briefly explain the concept of deism.

**Q.4:** Discuss the concept of polytheism.

- Henotheism involves believing that multiple Gods exist and focuses on worship of just one of those Gods. Henotheism is a step from polytheism to monotheism.
- Monotheism is the belief in the existence of a single God. Monotheism evolved from polytheism.
- Pantheism is the belief that the physical universe is equivalent to God, and that there is no division between a Creator and the substance of its creation.
- Atheism refers to belief that there is no divinity.



## 2.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q. No. 1:** The orthodox schools of Indian Philosophy are the Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika, the Sāṁkhya, the Yoga, the Mimāmsā and the Vedānta.

**Ans to Q. No. 2:** The heterodox schools of Indian Philosophy are the Cārvāka, the Buddhists and the Jaina.

**Ans to Q. No. 3:** The three divisions of the Vedas are the Samhitas, the Brahmanas, and the Aranyakas.

**Ans to Q. No. 4:** Ṛta literally means "the course of things". Ṛta is the physical order. It governs the uniformities of nature. It is the natural order. It is the law of truth, right and justice. It is the moral law. Varuṇa is the custodian of the moral law or Ṛta. Ṛta originally meant the "established route of the world, of the sun, moon and stars, morning and evening, day and night." Ṛta is called the father of all. The world of experience is a shadow or reflection of the Ṛta, the permanent reality which remains unchanged in all the welter of mutation.

**Ans to Q. No. 5:** (a) True (b) False (c)True

**Ans to Q. No. 6:** (a) Varuṇa (b) Aranyakas (c) Ṛta

**Ans to Q. No. 7:** Henotheism involves believing that multiple Gods exist and focuses on worship of just one of those Gods. However, henotheism allows that more than one God may be worthy of worship. It is the belief in 'one' God as distinguished from monotheism or belief

## 2.12 AUTOTHEISM

Autotheism is the viewpoint that, whether divinity is also external or not, it is inherently within 'oneself' and that one has the ability to achieve godhood. This can be in a selfless way, a way following the implications of statements attributed to ethical, philosophical, and religious leaders. Autotheism can also refer to the belief that one's self is a deity, within the context of subjectivism. This is a fairly extreme version of subjectivism, however.

The concept of theism is also involved in a number of terms which refer to disbelief or doubt in the existence of God. They are-

Nontheism: The absence of clearly identified belief in any deity. Nontheistic religions include Taoism and Zen Buddhism.

Antitheism: A direct opposition to theism, or else the view that theism is destructive.

Atheism: Atheism refers to belief that there is no divinity. This includes both strong atheism, the belief that no deity exists, and weak atheism, an absence of belief in the existence of deities.

Agnosticism: The belief that the existence of God or gods is unknown and/or inherently unknowable. This includes strong agnosticism, the view that the question of the existence of deities is inherently unknowable or meaningless, and weak agnosticism, which states that the question of the existence of deities is currently unknown, but not inherently unknowable.

It should be noted that these labels for types of theistic belief systems are often not as rigid as this classification scheme may suggest.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

Q 7: What is henotheism?

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Q 8: What is deism?

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Pantheism is the belief that the physical universe is equivalent to God, and that there is no division between a Creator and the substance of its creation. The term pantheism is built upon the Greek roots pan, which means all, and theos, which means God; thus, pantheism is either the belief that the universe is God and worthy of worship, or that God is the sum total of all there is and that the combined substances, forces, and natural laws which we see around us are but manifestations of God. The central point of the pantheistic doctrine is to deny the difference between God and nature which as we have shown is the necessary implication of monotheism. God is conceived here not as transcending nature but as immanent in it. The world does not proceed from God, but is itself God. Although the object of this view is to postulate unity, it retains, somewhat inconsistently as it seems, both the notions of God and nature and so far fails to satisfy the mind in its search after true unity.

## 2.11 PANENTHEISM

Panentheism is described as monotheistic tendency in the Ṛg Veda.The term panentheism is Greek for "all-in-God," pan-en-theos. Panentheism like Pantheism is the belief that the physical universe is joined to a God or Gods. However, it also believes that a God or Gods are greater than the material universe. Examples include most forms of Vaishnavism. A panentheistic belief system is one which posits a God that interpenetrates every part of nature, but is nevertheless fully distinct from nature. So this God is part of nature, but still retains an independent identity.

The term panentheism appears to have been originally used by Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781-1832), although aspects of it can be traced all of the way back to Plato. There is an understandable tendency to confuse panentheism with pantheism or even to consider panentheism to be a type of pantheism. What is the difference between standard pantheism and panentheism?

It is true that both panentheists and pantheists share the view that the universe and every natural thing in it is pervaded by divinity. However, since panentheism postulates that the universe is contained within God

knowledge about God can be discerned through God's creation - thus, study of nature, the world, the universe, and humanity is akin to a study of God as well.

Deists were and are opposed to religious orthodoxy, dogma, and doctrine, all of which they have argued lead inevitably to corruption and intolerance. Deism acknowledges that most, if not all, religions contain within them a basic core of rational truth and understanding of God; nevertheless, all have also fallen away due to the corrupting influence of supernatural religious beliefs and superstitions. Insofar as a religious doctrine or practice does not harm anyone, however, deists argue that they should be tolerated as cultural practices and not treated as something blasphemous or heretical. However, deists also rejected the very pious and overly emotional forms of worship. In deism, religion is a matter of reason and rationality rather than highly emotional religious faith.

One very different form of deism has been labeled "Deistic Supernaturalism" and has been supported by philosophers like Soren Kierkegaard. According to this system, God is not only transcendent and external to nature (as with deism), but is also the "superhuman and supernatural revealer of values." Denying that God's nature can be found via human experience, Deistic Supernaturalists argue that God can be understood via direct revelations from God. Communion with God can thus be established via activities like prayer or meditation.

Although deism at one point came to be a dominant position among the intelligentsia of England, France, Germany, and even America, today it is not nearly as fashionable as it once was. For one thing, people who are inclined to reject belief in traditional Gods can become atheists and reject belief in Gods altogether - atheism does not suffer the same amount of social stigma which it once did. For another thing, when deism was popular, people regarded the universe as a finely tuned machine, like a watch. Today, however, that picture of the universe is not so common; instead, the universe is seen as more dynamic, chaotic, and more in continual development, a conception which does not lend itself to the development of deism.

Atman (the human soul), hence the usual theist dualism of human and God is precluded. Henotheism is a step from polytheism to monotheism.

## 2.7 POLYTHEISM

The concept of Ṛta harmonizes the Gods with one another, and paves the way for monotheism. The term monotheism comes from the Greek monos, which means one, and theos, which means God. Thus, monotheism is the belief in the existence of a single God. Because monotheism is founded upon the idea that there is only one God, it is common for believers to also think that this God created all of reality and is totally self-sufficient, without any dependency upon any other being. The largest monotheistic religion systems are Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. Monotheism is typically contrasted with polytheism, which is a belief in many Gods, and atheism, which is an absence of belief in any Gods.

Two types of monotheism can be further elucidated: 1) Inclusive monotheism, the belief that there is only one deity, and that all other claimed deities are just different names, merely being aspects or incarnations of their one, supreme God, and 2) Exclusive monotheism, which refers to the belief that there is only one deity, and that all other claimed deities are false and distinct from it, either the product of invention, evil, or human error; they deny the existence of the Gods of any other religious faiths. The Hindu denomination of Smartism serves as an example of inclusive monotheism. Most Abrahamic Religions serve as examples of exclusive monotheism.

Most monotheistic systems tend to be exclusive in nature. As a consequence of this exclusivity, monotheistic religions have historically displayed less religious tolerance than polytheistic religions. The form of monotheism which is traditionally most common in the West (and which is too often confused with theism in general) is the belief in a personal God which emphasizes that this God is a conscious mind that is immanent in nature, humanity, and the values which it has created.

Islam and Christianity are the two extremes of monotheism. On the one extreme we have the uncompromising monotheism of Islam where

Other structural considerations of a pantheon include the separation of authority. In some polytheistic systems one God is dominant in power and authority over the other Gods, but not supreme in a way that warrants special worship from humans. In some polytheistic systems the Gods themselves may be subordinate to other forces of nature or fate - just because they are Gods doesn't mean that they are supernatural or transcendent. Thus, polytheism commonly posits a division of labor and responsibility within the divine realm similar to that which we find in the human world.

Although polytheistic systems postulate a coherent group, this does not mean that they do not acknowledge the existence of Gods outside the religion's pantheon. When faced with Gods from other cultures and religions, there are usually three different responses. First is to claim that some or all of the outside Gods are really the same as the Gods currently worshipped, just with different names. Any new aspects or powers are simply incorporated into the older Gods. Second response is taking some of the new Gods and adopts them as new members of the pantheon. In this manner the pantheon can gradually grow. A final response is to accept that the other Gods exist, but not worship them in any active manner. Because polytheistic systems are accepting the existence of Gods from other religions and cultures, polytheism has tended to offer more religious freedom than monotheism has.

There are two types of polytheism hard and soft. Hard polytheism views the Gods as being distinct and separate beings. An example of this would be certain schools of Hinduism as well as Hellenisms. Soft polytheism views the Gods as being subsumed into a greater whole. Some other forms of Hinduism such as Smartism/Advaita Vedanta serve as examples of soft polytheism.

Nevertheless, a modern scientific perspective will tend to reject polytheism because of its incompatibility with our understanding of nature.

If there really were different, independent Gods in charge of all the different aspects of reality, then we shouldn't necessarily have a set of natural laws which are common to all parts of reality. The laws of physics



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** What are the orthodox schools of Indian Philosophy?

.....

.....

**Q 2:** What are the heterodox schools of Indian Philosophy?

.....

.....

**Q 3:** What are the three divisions of the Vedas?

.....

.....

**Q 4:** What is Ṛitam?

.....

.....

**Q 5: Write true or false.**

a) Ṛta paves the way for monotheism.

b) The Atharva Veda contains the hymns of the Ṛg Veda, which are to be chanted in sacrifice.

c) Theism is the belief in the existence of deities.

**Q 6: Fill in the blanks.**

a) a) _____is the custodian of the moral law or Ṛta.

b) The Upanisads are mostly part of_____.

c) _____is the physical order and the moral order.

## 2.4 THEISM AND ITS VARIOUS TYPES

Theism is the belief in the existence of deities. To put it simply, theism is a belief in the existence of at least one god of some sort. The term theism

the Jaina reject their authority. The Upanisads contain the germ of the orthodox schools of Indian Philosophy. They are parts of the Vedas. There are four Vedas, Ṛg Veda, Sāma Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. The first three constitute the triad, which are the original Vedas, and which enjoy higher authority. The Atharva Veda is a later addition. Each Veda has three divisions, viz, the Samhitas, the Brahmanas, and the Aranyakas. The Samhita are mostly verses. The Brahmanas are commentary in prose. The Aranyakas are forest treatises. The Upanisads are mostly part of Aranyakas. The Samaveda contains the hymns of the Ṛg Veda, which are to be chanted in sacrifice. The Yajur Veda contains large portions of Ṛg Veda. The Atharva Veda contains many mantras of the Ṛg Veda, which is the earliest. The Vedas represent different phases of religious thought. There are manifest signs of polytheism, henotheism, monotheism and monism.

## 2.3 ṚTA

The law of which Varuṇa is the custodian is called the Ṛta. Ṛta literally means "the course of things". Ṛta is the physical order. It stands for law in general and the immanence of justice. This conception must have been originally suggested by the regularity of the movements of sun, moon and stars, the alternations of day and of night, and of the seasons. Ṛta denotes the order of the world. Everything that is ordered in the universe has Ṛta for its principle. It corresponds to the universals of Plato. The world of experience is a shadow or reflection of the Ṛta, the permanent reality which remains unchanged in all the welter of mutation. The universal is prior to the particular, and so the Vedic seer thinks that Ṛta exists before the manifestation of all phenomena. The shifting series of the world are the varying expressions of the constant Ṛta. So Ṛta is called the father of all. The Maruts come from afar from the seat of the Ṛta. Viṣṇu is the embryo of the Ṛta. Heaven and earth are what they are by reason of the Ṛta. The tendency towards the mystic conception of an unchanging reality shows its first signs here. The real is the unchanging law. The real is one without

# UNIT 3: GĪTĀ'S VIEW OF KARMAYOGA

## UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives
3.2 Introduction
3.3 What is Gītā
3.4 Gita's view of Karmayoga
3.4.1 Interpretation of the concept of Niskāma Karma
3.4.2 Niskāma karma: Metaphysical and Epistemological concept
3.4.3 Pravṛtti and Nivṛtti
3.4.4 Svadharma
3.4.5 Mokṣa: The Supreme Goal of Human Life
3.5 Gīta's karmayoga and Kant's Deontological Ethics
3.6 Let us sum up
3.7 Further Readings
3.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
3.9 Model Questions

## 3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this chapter you will be able to

- explain the meaning of karma in the Gītā,
- explain the meaning and significance of niskāma karma,
- discuss the metaphysical ideas behind the activity of Prakṛti.
- distinguish between Gîtâ's karmayoga and Kant's deontological ethics
- explain the relevance of svadharma in the present context

## 3.2 INTRODUCTION

The concept of karmayoga represents the ethics of the Gītā. The concept of karmayoga is made up of two concepts viz., karma and yoga. The Sanskrit word 'yoga' is derived from the verb root 'yuj' which means

'union' or 'identity' or 'to connect'. When we talk about connection, there arises a question- 'what is to be connected with what?' In the Gītā, These entities are the individual consciousness and the Universal Supreme Consciousness. The Gītā brings about a synthesis of Knowledge (Jñāna), Action (Karma) and Devotion (Bhakti). This synthesis is called yoga, which means the union of the individual self (Ātman) with the Absolute Self (Brahman). This identity is spiritual not physical. The concept of karma is an ambiguous concept. In accordance with its own philosophy, every school of thought derives different meaning of the concept of karma. In the Vedas, karma means yajña karma; in Upaniṣads, it means search of truth; in theistic philosophy, it means worship of the Lord. But in the Gītā, Karma is used in the sense of action. Karma, according to the Gītā, is a mārga or a path to mokṣa or liberation or union with the Supreme Consciousness i.e., the Lord. But any and every kind of karma or action cannot guarantee us liberation. It is the niskāma karma which can link one with the Supreme or the Absolute.

## 3.3 WHAT IS GĪTĀ:

The Gītā is basically a Hindu religious scripture. With its 18 chapters and 700 verses Gītā occupies the Bhīṣmaparvan of the Mahabharata. The Bhagavad Gītā literally means song of the Absolute. It is a conversation between Arjuna and Lord Kṛṣna, which took place in the battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Kurukṣetra is also called Dharmakṣetra in which the two forces of 'dharma' and 'adharma' were fighting against each other. In the Gītā, Kṛṣna represents the Supreme Being and Arjuna represents an ordinary human being like us. At the very beginning we find that Arjuna had been worried at the thought that he had to fight against his own friends and relatives.

## 3.4 GITA'S VIEW OF KARMAYOGA:

The concept of karma, in the Gītā, is used in a wide meaning. It means both, Divine service and Svadharma. According to the Gītā, so long we lead embodied lives, we cannot escape from action. Without work life

cannot be sustained (III. 5). The karma yoga of Gītā is based upon the doctrine of karmavāda of Sāṁkhya system. The Sankhya states that Prakṛti is the fundamental stuff out of which the world evolves. Prakṛti is the unity of the three guṇas of sattva, rajas and tamas, held in equilibrium. As Prakṛti and its guṇas are present in human beings, we cannot live a single moment without action. Prakṛti is ever active. So, we are bound to be active.

The Gītā recognizes that it is through action, we are brought into relation with the rest of the world. There is a well-known view that karma binds human beings and they are saved by knowledge. Every action produces its natural effect (either good or bad). It involves embodiment in the world which is regarded as an obstacle in the path of liberation. Every action confines the sense of egoism and separateness of the doer and sets a new series of effects. Therefore it is argued that one must renounce all actions and become a sanyāsin. But Gītā does not accept this ascetic tradition and states that through karma or action, we can attain liberation. Gītā also declares that karma is a mārga or way to liberation. Then there arises a question- 'by what type of action, we can attain liberation?' The answer is Niskāma Karma. Niskāma karma is the basic ideal of Gītā's ethical teaching. Doing work in the spirit of detachment, without fear of consequence is the best form of action because it has more sattva guṇa in it. The karma which is dominated by sattva guṇa or inspired by sattva guṇa is the best karma. Karma is an alternative method of approaching the goal of life, according to the Gītā.

### 3.4.1 INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF NISKĀMA KARMA:

Gītā's concept of niskāma karma is not a simple concept. It is a compound concept which is made up of two different concepts. They are- niskāma and karma. The word niskāma is made up of two words viz., 'nih' and 'kāma'. Kāma means sensual desires. The prefix nih is used in the sense of negation. Therefore niskāma karma means desireless action or more precisely an action done by an agent in a desireless manner. Niskāma karma is opposed to sakāma karma or desireful action. Niskāma karma does not mean renunciation of action; rather it means renunciation in action.

It is the renunciation of the fruits of action.

### 3.4.2 NISKĀMA KARMA: METAPHYSICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONCEPT

Some metaphysical and epistemological concepts are pre-requisite for the concept of niskama karma of the Gita. The metaphysical notion is based on the Karmavada of Sankhya Philosophy. Sankhya makes an ontological dualism between Purusa (self) and Prakrti (matter). But the Gita makes them (Purusa and Prakrti) subordinate to God. The epistemological notion is the possibilities of viveka jyana which can make an individual realize the distinction between Prakrti and Puru?a.

### 3.4.3 PRAVṚTTI AND NIVṚTTI:

Pravrtti is the ideal which recommends living in the midst of the world carrying out all the obligations thereby; it includes the elements of selfish interest. It is motivated by desire. On the other hand, nivṛtti advocates the giving up of all karma and withdrawing from the world completely. Pravrtti is suggestive of involvement in the external world and nivṛtti means withdrawal from it or renunciation. But the Gita brings about a synthesis of these two ideals by combining action with renunciation of its fruits. The Gitā discovers the golden mean between these two ideals of pravṛtti and nivṛtti. The karmayoga of the Gitā is such a mean. It is impossible for any individual to abstain from action altogether. But he who gives up all the fruits of action, he is said to be a relinquisher (XVIII.11). Thus Gitā does not discard any of the ideal; but by combining them, refines them.

### 3.4.4 SVADHARMA

Gitā holds that men are the products of Prakṛti. The three gunas of Prakṛti are present in men. According to the presence of the three gunas (sattva, rajas and tamas), human race is divided into four varnas or classes viz., Brahman, Ksatriya,Vaisya and Sudra. A Brahman is one who is predominated by sattva guna and his duty is spiritual investigation. A Kṣatriya is one who is predominated by rajas guna and his duty is to defend the kingdom from enemies and engage himself in martial activities. A Vaisya is

predominated by rajas mixed tamas guna and his duties are agriculture, trade and commerce. Lastly, a Sudra is one who is predominated by tamas guna and his duty is to serve the above mentioned three upper classes. 'Brahman, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudras are distinguished, in accordance with the qualities born of their own nature' (XVIII. 41). This division is not hereditary. It is determined by guna and karma. According to the Gitā, karma or action means acting according to one's own varna. Every individual has his inborn nature or svabhaba and to make it effective in his life is his svadharma. People are classified into these four varnas to perform different functions in society. By svadharma Gitā means this varna-dharma. In the Gitā, the word dharma is used in the sense of duty. The Gitā maintains that it is better to do one's own duty even without excellence than to do anther's duty well, svadharme nidhana sreya paradharmo bhayavaha (III.35). It is to be mentioned here that in the Gita, it is stated that the varna system has been established by God Himself.

When Krishna advices Arjuna to fight, it does not mean that He is supporting the validity of warfare. Arjuna does not raise the question of right or wrong of war. His reluctance to fight is not the outcome of spiritual development. He is not dominated by sattva guna but a product of ignorance. We know that one's inaction can also be rooted in desire. Krishna advises Arjuna to fight without desire for kingdom, even without anger or attachment. We should do action devotedly and whole-heartedly without attachment. Krishna tells Arjuna that one can attain perfection in this world even while doing his own duty as an act of niskama karma. Our action must be the result of our own nature. The varva dharma of a ksatriya is to fight against injustice and to establish justice in society. Lord Krisna reminds Arjuna his duty as a ksatriya. After listening to the teachings of Lord Krisna, Arjuna finally decides to fight the war as he has come to know about his own duty. Gita advices us to work in this world and while working we should try to work for the best. It improves our own world. While doing our work, it should be the call of our inner self. This is the highest kind of action stated in the Gita. All works have to be done without any selfish motive.

### 3.4.5 MOKṢA: THE SUPREME GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE:

According to the Gitā, Moksa is the ultimate goal of human life. Gitā states that with a spirit of detachment to the fruits of action or the niskāma karma, one can overcome joys and sorrows of personal life and reach the highest goal of life i.e. mukti, moksa, liberation or the unity with the Supreme. A karmayogi is one who renounces his fruits of actions and performs his duties in a disinterested way. The yogi is a sthitaprajna (stable in intelligence) who puts away all the desires of his mind and brings all the senses under his control. He attains the highest goal of human life, moksa i.e, a complete union with the Divine. It is to be noted here that the Gita asks individuals to continue to work even after attaining moksa. After attaining spiritual freedom, he works for the welfare and solidarity of humanity or lokasaṁgraha. The Gitā lays stress on human brotherhood. The Gitā also says that duties ought to be performed for the good of all creatures i.e., of man as well as of other beings (XII. 4). Lokasasgraha stands for the unity of the world (III.20). The Gitā prescribes the concept of niskāma karma as a means not only to attain perfect Bliss but also to maintain social goodness which consists in doing the duty in a detached manner. The Gitā tries to synthesize Jyana, Karma and Bhakti; the karma which is based on jyana and supported by bhakti can lead an individual to moksa. According to the Gitā, karma is an alternative method to approach to moksa which culminates in wisdom. But it is to be noted here that moksa or spiritual freedom is not inconsistent with activity.

## 3.5 GITĀ'S KARMAYOGA AND KANT'S DEONTOLOGICAL ETHICS

The Gita's karmayoga emphasizes the performance of duties related to one's own varna without any desire for fruits in a detached manner. The main principle of Kant's ethics is 'duty for duty's sake'. According to Kant, one ought to do his duty for the sake of duty irrespective of consequences. Therefore the karmayoga of Gita resembles Kant's deontological ethics. But there are some major differences between them. The Gita regards moksa or liberation or union with the Supreme Consciousness i.e., the Lord is the Highest Ideal. But Kant does not speak about the realization of

God. Secondly, The Gita asks us to perform our duties for the good of all creatures. But according to Kant, the Highest Good is virtue or good will. It is the good of the individual. Hence, Kant's ethics is individualistic while Gita's karmayoga is universalistic as it lays stress on solidarity of humanity. Moreover, for Kant, the moral law which is imposed by conscience upon itself is a categorical imperative or an unconditional command. Therefore, Kant's ethics is legal. But the karmayoga of the Gitā is not legal. In Kant's ethics, the rightness or wrongness of an action is not determined by its consequences or results. The doer should be guided by reason, not by emotion. Rational will is completely free. Kant's ethics is deontological as he prescribes duty for the sake of duty only, not for the sake of anything else. But Gitā's karmayoga is teleological as the Gita prescribes actions as a means for the attainment of some ends i.e., moksa and lokasamgraha.

In the Gitā, it is stated that God Himself has established the varna-dharma. But it is quite irrational. Division of labour is a necessary requirement for the smooth functioning of a human society. Different classes of people perform different duties in society on the basis of their ability and interest. The varna system is actually a social requirement which is good for a well-balanced society. But the Gitā has unnecessarily given divine sanction to the scientific principle of division of labour in society.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** From which verb root the word yoga has been derived?

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.....

**Q 2:** How many chapters are there in the Gita?

.....

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**Q 3:** How many verses are there in Gitā?

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.....

**Q 4:** What are the guGas of Prakṛti?

.....

.....

**Q 5:** What is nivṛtti?

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.....

**Q 6:** What are the four varnas?

.....

.....

**Q 7:** What is the varGa dharma of a Brâhman?

.....

.....

**Q 8:** Is Kant's ethics is legal?

.....

.....

**Q 9:** Is mokṣa inconsistent with activity?

.....

.....



## 3.6 LET US SUM UP

- The Bhagavad Gîtâ literally means song of the Absolute. It is a conversation between Arjuna and Lord Krishna.
- The Gîtâ brings about a synthesis of Knowledge (Jòâna), Action (Karma) and Devotion (Bhakti).

- According to the Gîtâ, we cannot live a single moment without action. Without work, life cannot be sustained. As the gunas of ever active Prak[ti is present in human beings, therefore human beings are bound to be active.
- Prakrti is the unity of the three gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas.
- In the Gîtâ, the concept karma is used in the sense of action. Karma, according to Gîtâ, is a way to moksa or liberation or union with the Absolute i.e., the Lord.
- Niskâma karma means desireless action or an action which is done by an agent or a doer in a desireless manner. Actions without attachment to the fruits do not bind. One has to free his mind of egoistic passions.
- The word niskâma is made up of two words- 'nih' and 'kâma'. Kâma means sensual desires. The prefix nih is used in the sense of negation or denial.
- The Gîtâ discovers the golden mean between two ideals of pravrtti and nivrtti. The Gîtâ brings about a synthesis of these two ideals by combining action with renunciation of its fruits.
- According to the presence of the three gunas (sattva, rajas and tamas), human race is divided into four varnas or classes viz., Brâhman, Kṣatriya,Vaiṣya and Sudra.
- Gîtâ says that the varna system has been established by God Himself.
- According to the Gîtâ, mokṣa is the ultimate goal of human life. Gîtâ states that with a spirit of detachment to the fruits of action or the niskâma karma, one can overcome joys and sorrows of personal life and reach the highest goal of life i.e. mokca or the unity with the Supreme.
- After attaining spiritual freedom (mokṣa), the individual works for the welfare of all creatures which is termed as lokasaṃgraha in the Gîtâ.



## 3.7 FURTHER READING


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## 3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q. No. 1:** Yuj

**Ans to Q. No. 2:** Eighteen (18) chapters.

**Ans to Q. No. 3:** 700 verses.

**Ans to Q. No. 4:** Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

**Ans to Q. No. 5:** Giving up all karma and withdrawing from the world entirely.

**Ans to Q. No. 6:** Brâhman, Ksatriya,Vaisya and Sudra.

**Ans to Q. No. 7:** Spiritual investigation.

**Ans to Q. No. 8:** Yes

**Ans to Q. No. 9:** No



## 3.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A) Very Short Questions**

**Q.1:** What does yoga mean?

**Q.2:** How many verses are there in the Gîtâ?

**Q.3:** What does niskâma karma mean?

**Q.4:** What is pravṛtti?

**Q.5:** Who has established the varna system, according to the Gîtâ?

**Q.6:** What is lokasaṃgraha?

**B) Short Questions** (Answer in about 100-150 words)

**Q.1:** Write short not on Varna dharma

**Q.2:** What is Svabhâba

**Q.3:** Make a distinction between pravṛtti and nivṛtti

**Q.4:** Write briefly on the concept Mokṣa

**C) Long Questions** (Answer in about 300-500 words)

**Q.1:** Discuss the concept of niskâma karma in the Gîtā.

**Q.2:** Discuss the concept of svadharma in the Gîtā and show its relevance in the present context.

**Q.3:** Compare and contrast Gîtā's concept of niskâma karma and Kant's deontological ethics.

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# UNIT 4: ĀSTIKA AND NASTIKA DIVISION OF SCHOOLS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

## UNIT STRUCTURE


4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 The Āstika Schools

4.4 The Nāstika Schools

4.5 Let us sum up

4.6 Further Readings

4.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.8 Model Questions


## 4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the divisions of Indian Philosophy
- explain the meaning of the words āstika and nāstika in Indian Philosophy
- explain the distinction between âstika and nâstika schools of Indian Philosophy
- explain the philosophical ideas of different schools of Indian Philosophy

## 4.2 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is called Darsana in India. The term 'darsana' has been derived from the Sanskrit root 'dṛs', which means 'to see'. Philosophy is the vision of the Reality as a whole. It is an insight into the nature of the whole Reality. Indian philosophy has diversity of views, sources, methods and approaches. Its diverse schools or systems can be grouped together on the ground of common features they share. All of them have some practical concerns: 'How can we live a meaningful life?' 'What are life's goals we have to strive for?' Apart from the practical concerns they have

common method of philosophizing by considering other's view. But diversity in the systems comes from their stands and attitudes about the Vedas. It is a common feature of Indian systems to take a stand on the authenticity of the Vedas as a source of knowledge. None of the systems can ignore this issue. Some of the systems accept the Vedas as the valid source of knowledge and while others do not.

In Indian Philosophy, the Vedas occupy a very important place. The Vedas are believed to be the earliest literary record available to mankind. The origin of Indian Philosophy can be easily traced in the Vedas. There are four Vedas, viz., rik, Yajur, Sama and Atharva. Each Veda comprises of four parts- Mantra, Brahmana, aranyaka and Upanisad. Philosophical thought is enshrined in the Upanisads (aranyakas represent a transition from the ritualistic to the philosophical thought). Indian Philosophy is greatly influenced by the Vedas, either positively or negatively. There are three distinct positions regarding the Vedas that any of the schools may take. They are-

1. Vedas are valid sources of knowledge and philosophical principles are to be derived from the Vedas.

2. Vedas are valid sources of knowledge but philosophical principles can be derived from other sources.

3. Vedas are not valid sources of knowledge and philosophical knowledge can never be derived from them.

Those who take the first two positions are grouped together with the label 'āstika' while those taking the third stand are called 'nāstika'. The Sanskrit word 'āstika' being derived from the verb 'asti' (from the root meaning 'there is' or 'exists') means those who admit that something (validity of Vedas) exists. Nāstika (na+ astika or notastika) is the negative of astika. In other contexts, the term 'āstika' means a theist or one who believes in God and nāstika means an atheist or one who does not believe in God. But in Indian Philosophy, the two words astika and nastika are used in a technical sense. In Indian Philosophy, astika means a system or a school which believes in the authority of the Vedas and nāstika means a system or a school which does not believe in the authority of the Vedas. āstika and nastika schools are also called the Vedic and non-vedic schools respectively.

Sankhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mimamsa and Vedānta are the astika schools and Carvaka, Jaina and Bauddha are the nastika schools. These are called 'schools' or 'systems' because the thoughts in each are well coordinated and constitute a logical whole.

## 4.3 THE ĀSTIKA SCHOOLS

The astika schools are those schools of Indian Philosophy which believe in the authority of the Vedas. The āstika school includes six systems of Indian Philosophy viz., Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaiśeṣika, Mimāmsā and Vedanta. These six schools or systems are collectively known as Sad Darsana.

Again, in the astika school itself, there is two types of philosophical systems, such as-

(i) Those which are directly based upon the Vedas. These include Mimāmsā and Vedānta. Of these two systems, the first emphasizes the ritualistic aspect of the Vedas and the second emphasizes the knowledge aspect.

(ii) Those which are not directly based on the Vedas. They have an independent basis. These include Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika.

Among the six astika or orthodox or Vedic systems, the Sankhya and the Mimāmsā are atheists whereas the Nyāya, the Vaisesika, the Yoga and the Vedānta are theists. The Sāṁkhya advocates the dualism of Purusa and Prakṛti. The Mimāmsā recognizes the reality of individual souls and the self existent material world. As the Sāṁkhya and the Mimāmsā are the atheists, therefore they reject the conception of God as the creator of the world. Let us discuss briefly the philosophical ideas of different āstika schools.

**SANKHYA SYSTEM:**

The Sāṁkhya system is one of the oldest systems of Indian Philosophy. Kapila is the founder of this system. The Sāṁkhya Pravasana Sutra written by sage Kapila is the main text of this system. But this text was lost and

afterwards Isvarakrishna composed another text known as Sāṁkhya Karika which was recognized as the authentic text of this system. The Sāṁkhya system advocates the ontological dualism of two ultimate realities, Prakṛti, the matter and Puruṣa, the self. In respect of their existence, these two ultimate realities are independent of each other. The word Sāṁkhya is derived from Sāṁkhya which means number. It is the philosophy of number as it deals with twenty-five categories. But the Bhagavad Gitā uses this word in the sense of right knowledge. Sāṁkhya is also the philosophy of right knowledge. Here, right knowledge means the knowledge of the separation of the Purusa from the Prakṛti. The Sāṁkhya system is theoretical. Sāṁkhya and Yoga are allied systems. Yoga system tells us about the practice of Sāṁkhya theoretical-metaphysical teachings. Sāṁkhya Philosophy Prakṛti is the ultimate material cause of the world. It is the uncaused root cause. It is unmanifested (Avyakta), unintelligent and unconscious (Jada), ever-active unlimited power (sakti). It evolves out of itself and re-absorbs at the time of destruction of the universe. Prakṛti is the unity of three gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) held in equilibrium. The gunas of Prakṛti are not qualities but substances.

Puruṣa or the self is the subject and the knower. It is neither the body nor the soul, neither ego nor intellect. Like Prakṛti, Purusa is also eternal. It is pure (suddha), liberated (mukta), pure consciousness (caitanya swarupa) and all pervading. Purusa is inactive and silent witness (saksi). It is the ultimate knower and the foundation of all knowledge. It is the pure subject and can never become an object. But due to ignorance, Purusa confuses itself with the not-self and wrongly thinks itself to be the enjoyer (bhokta). Sankhya accepts the plurality of selves. This view is called Bahupurusavāda.

Sankhya is an atheistic philosophy. It does not believe in the existence of God as a creator of the universe. According to Sāṁkhya Philosophy, the universe (Prakrti) just evolves. The evolution takes place when Prakṛti comes into contact with Purusa. This evolution is teleological.

Sāṁkhya advocates Satkāryavāda as a theory of causation. According to satkāryavāda, the effect pre-exists in its material cause. Sāṁkhya believes that Prakrti is the material cause of the universe and all material effects are

the modification (parinama) of Pṛakrti. Therefore the satkāryavāda theory of Sāṁkhya is also known as Prakṛti- Parināmavāda..

Sāṁkhya accepts three sources of valid knowledge (pramanas). They are- perception, inference and testimony.

Like other systems of Indian Philosophy, the Sāṁkhya system also aims at the attainment of liberation, the highest end of human life. According to Sāṁkhya, the world is full of three kinds of suffering viz., Ādhyatmika (suffering due to psycho-physical causes), Ādhibhoutika (suffering due to natural causes such as human beings, animals, birds, insects etc.) and Adhidaivika (suffering due to supernatural agencies like ghosts, demons, witches etc.). Ignorance or non-discrimination between Puruṣa and Prakṛti is the cause of bondage and suffering. Liberation means complete cessation of all these sufferings and it can be attained by knowledge of the discrimination between Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the self and the not-self.

**YOGA SYSTEM:**

Sage Patanjali is the traditional founder of Yoga system. The word yoga literally means 'union', i.e., union of the individual soul with the Universal Soul. The Yoga is closely allied to the Sāṁkhya system. Yoga is the practical path for the realization of the theoretical ideals of Sāṁkhya philosophy. Yoga accepts the epistemology and metaphysics of Sāṁkhya. Yoga admits three sources of valid knowledge accepted by Sāṁkhya system viz., perception, inference and testimony and twenty five metaphysical principles.

Traditional Sāṁkhya is atheistic. But Yoga believes in God as the highest Self distinct from other selves. Therefore, it is called Sesvara Sāṁkhya while the Sāṁkhya is called Nirisvara Sāṁkhya.

Yoga is defined as the cessation of the modification of citta. Citta means the three internal organs of Sāṁkhya- intellect (buddhi), ego (ahankara) and mind (manas). Citta is the first evolute of Prakṛti in which there is the predominance of sattva over rajas and tamas. It is material by nature but due to closest contact with Puruṣa, it has the power to reflect Puruṣa and therefore it appears as if it is conscious. It assumes the form of anything in whose contact it comes. This 'form' is called vrtti or modification. Puruṣa is

pure consciousness and is free from the limitations of Prakṛti. But it wrongly identifies itself with the reflection in the citta and appears to be undergoing modification. Therefore, citta is the physical medium for the manifestation of the soul.

The modification of citta is of five kinds, according to Yoga Philosophy. These are- right cognition (pramana), wrong cognition (viparyaya), verbal cognition or imagination (vikalpa), absence of cognition or sleep (nidra) and memory (smati). Yoga means the cessation of the modification of citta (citta-vrtti-nirodha).

The bondage of the self is due to its wrong identification with the modifications of citta and therefore liberation means the end of this wrong identification through the knowledge of the discrimination between Purusa and Pṛakrti and it can be attained by complete cessation of the modification of citta. This is the aim of yoga.

There are five kinds of sufferings (klesas), viz., ignorance (avidya), egoism (asmiti), attachment (raga), aversion (dvesa) and clinging to life and fear of death (abhinivesa). To get rid of the kesas, the citta must be controlled. Yoga prescribes eight-fold path of discipline (Astanga Yoga or Yogānga). These are: Yama (control of the mind, body and speech), Niyama (external and internal purification), āsana (steady and comfortable posture), Pranayama (control of breath), Pratyāhāra (withdrawal of the senses), Dharana (attention), Dhyāna (meditation) and Samādhi (concentration). In the stage of Samādhi, the self remains in its real nature. These yogangas are the means to complete cessation of the modification of the citta which is the aim of Yoga.

**NYAYA SYSTEM:**

The Nyāya system was founded by Sage Gautama who is also known as Aksapāda. It is a realistic philosophy based on logical grounds. Nyāya Satra is the basic text of this system of Indian philosophy. It is allied to the Vaiśeṣika system which is called Samanatantra or similar philosophy. Nyāya develops logic and epistemology while Vaiśeṣika develops metaphysics and ontology.

Epistemology: Knowledge (jyana) is defined as apprehension or consciousness. According to Nyāya, knowledge reveals both the subject and object which are quite distinct from itself. Therefore Nyāya is called a realistic system. Valid knowledge is called prama and it is defined as the right apprehension of an object (yatharthanubhavah). It advocates the correspondence theory (paratah pramanya). As valid knowledge is called pramā, therefore the sources of valid knowledge are called pramānas. According to this system, there are four sources of valid knowledge (pramana), viz. perception (pratyaksa), inference (anumāna), comparison (upamana) and testimony (sabda).

Perception is the direct knowledge of objects produced by the contact between the sense- organs and the object. According to Gautama, there are two stages in perception, viz., indeterminate (nirvikalpa) and determinate (savikalpa). Perception is of two types- ordinary (laukika) and extra-ordinary (alaukika). When the sense-organs come into contact with external objects in a usual way, we have ordinary perception and when the sense-organs come into contact with external objects in an unusual way, then we have extra-ordinary perception. Ordinary perception is again, of two types- internal (manas) and external (bahya). Extra-ordinary perception is of three kinds, viz. samanyalaksana, Jyanalaksana and yogaja.

Inference is defined as the knowledge which presupposes some other knowledge. In every anumana there are three terms - Sādhya, Paksa and Hetu. These three terms correspond to the major, minor and middle terms respectively of syllogism. The basis of anumāna is the invariable relation between the middle term (hetu) and the major term (sādhya). This invariable relation is called vyāpti. The Naiyayikas give three different classifications of anumana. According to the purpose, anumāna is of two kinds, viz.,

a) Svārthanumāna or inference of oneself

b) Parārthanumāna or inference for others

According to causal relation, anumāna is of three kinds, viz,

a) Pūrvavat anumāna

b) Śesavat anumāna

c) Sāmanyatodṛṣta anumāna

Again, according to the application of method, anumāna is of three kinds, viz,

a) Kevalānvayi anumāna

b) Kevalā-vyatireki anumāna

c) Anvayi-vyatireki anumāna

**VAIŚEṢIKA SYSTEM:**

The great sage Kanāda or Uluka, the author of Vaiśeṣika Sutra, is the founder of the Vaisesika system. It is allied to the Nyāya system. Prasasthapada's Padarthadharmasangraha is a commentary on the Vaisesika Satra. The word Vaisesika is derived from the root 'visesa' which means particularity or distinction. The Vaiśeṣika emphasizes the plurality and distinctness of physical things and individual souls. Therefore, Vaisesika Philosophy advocates pluralistic realism.

The Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika are two allied systems. But unlike Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika system accepts only two pramanas, viz., perception and inference and reduces testimony and comparison to perception and inference.

The main business of Vaiśeṣika system is to deal with the categories. A category is called padartha, which means the objects of knowledge or reals. Originally the Vaiśeṣika believed in six padarthas and the seventh padartha i.e., abhāva was added later on. The seven padarthas are- substance (dravya), quality (guna), action (karma), generality (samanya), particularity (visesa), inherence (samavaya) and non-being (abhava). The whole Vaiśeṣika system centres round the detailed discussion of these padarthas.

Like Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika system also advocates Asatkāryavāda, which means that the effect does not pre-exist in its cause. The effect is a new beginning.

According to the Vaiśeṣika system, all composite objects of the universe are composed of atoms of earth, water, fire and air. Hence the Vaiśeṣika view concerning creation is called atomism or paramānuvāda.

**MIMĀMSĀ SYSTEM:**

Jāimini, is the founder of the Mimāmsā system of Indian Philosophy and his Mimāmsā Sūtra is the main text of this system. The literal meaning of the word Mimāmsā is 'revered thought'. Mimāmsā and Vedānta are the allied systems. Both these systems are based on the Veda. The Mimāmsā deals with the earlier portion of the Vedas, i.e., the Mantra and Brahmana, which is called Karmakānda. Hence, Mimāmsā system is also known as Purva Mimāmsā and Karma Mimāmsā. On the other hand, Vedānta deals with the later portion of the Vedas i.e., the Upanisads which is called Jyanakanda and therefore Vedānta is called Uttara Mimāmsā. Mimāmsā deals with Dharma and Vedānta deals with Brahma and therefore Mimāmsā is also called Dharma- Mimāmsā and Vedanta is also called Brahma-Mimāmsā. The Mimāmsā deals mainly with the Vedic injunctions about rituals the rules of interpretation of the vedic texts.

There are two main schools of Mimāmsā system founded by Prabhākara and Kumārila Bhatta. They are the two main commentators of Jaimini's Mimāmsā Sūtra.

Epistemological view : According to Prabhākara, valid knowledge is apprehension (anubhuti). Kumārila Bhatta defines valid knowledge as apprehension of an object which is produced by causes free from defects and which is not contradicted by other knowledge. The Mimāmsā advocates the theory of Svatahprāmānyavāda (self-evidence theory) which means all knowledge is valid by itself. It is not validated by any other knowledge. Therefore it is opposed to the theory of Parātahprāmanyavāda advocated by the Nyāya system. For both Prabhākara and Kumarila, knowledge itself is pramana or means of knowledge. For Jaimini, there are three pramanas-perception, inference and testimony. But Prabhākara admits five pramānas, viz., perception, inference, testimony, comparison and implication. Kumārila adds one more and it is non-perception.

Metaphysical view : Mimāmsā Philosophy is pluralistic realism. It believes in the reality of the external world, plurality of individual souls and innumerable atoms (but Kumarila says that all Mimāmsākas do not believe in atoms). Mimāmsā Philosophy believes in the Law of karma and in the

heaven and hell. It believes in many deities, who are worshipped through sacrifices. But it rejects the notion of one God as the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world. The world has always been as it is. The world was neither created nor shall it be destroyed. The law of karma is an autonomous natural law that rules the world. Thus, Mimāmsā advocates atheism. For the Mimāmsākas, the Vedas are eternal and also infallible. But God is not the author of the Vedas. The Vedas are self-existing.

**VEDANTA SYSTEM:**

The Brahmasutra of Badarayana is the main text of the Vedānta system which systematizes the upanisadic teachings. The word 'Vedanta' means the end of the Vedas. The Upanisads are the end of the Vedas. Therefore, Vedānta system arises out of the Upanisads. As Vedanta deals with the later portion of the Vedas i.e., Jyanakānda, it is also called Uttara Mimamsa or Jyana Mimāmsā. The Upanisads are the concluding portion as well as the cream of the Vedas. The Upanisads, the Brahmasutra and the Gitā are called Prasthanatraya and these are the three basic works of Vedānta.

Though Badarayana's Brahma Sūtra is the basic text of the Vedānta system, yet subsequently many writers wrote commentaries on the Sūtras. Among those commentators, Samkara and Ramānuja are of great importance.

Samkara's Vedānta is called Advaita Vedānta. According to him, Brahman is the only reality, one without a second who is indeterminate, inactive, changeless and attributeless. Brahman is also devoid of homogeneous, heterogeneous and internal differences. Brahman is the nature of Sat (Existence), Cit (Consciousness) and ānanda (Bliss). The world is unreal. It is merely an appearance and this appearance is the creation of Māya. The individual self and the Brahman are identical. But due to ignorance, the individual selves imagine themselves as different from Brahman and mistake Brahman as the world. When right knowledge regarding the essential unity of the individual self and the Brahman arises, avidyā vanishes and that is liberation.

Rāmānuja's Vedānta is known as Visistadvaita Vedānta. According to

Rāmānuja also, Brahman is the only reality, one without a second and devoid of homogeneous and heterogeneous differences but it has internal difference. Brahman has two internal parts- Cit (self) and Acit (matter). The individual selves evolve out of cit and the world evolves out of acit. Rāmānuja recognizes three things which are ultimate and real (Tattva-traya). These are-God, soul and matter. Though all are equally real, yet the last two are dependent on God. For Rāmānuja, the Brahman is an organic unity, an identity which is qualified by diversity. Therefore, his view is called Visistadvaitavāda or qualified monism. According to him, God is not attributeless, matter and soul are His attributes. God is both material and instrumental cause of the world. He is having all the good qualities, such as- Existence, Knowledge and Bliss; Truth, Goodness and Beauty; Love and Power. The bondage of the individual selves is due to avidya and karma. To attain liberation, the individual selves have to remove their karmic obstacles. Liberation is to be attained through work, knowledge and devotion.

## 4.4 THE NASTIKA SCHOOLS

The philosophical schools which do not believe in the authority of the Vedas are known as the nastika schools. Cārvāka, Jaina and Bauddha are the three nastika schools of Indian Philosophy. Let us discuss the philosophical ideas of these schools in brief.

### CĀRVĀKA SYSTEM :

The Cārvāka system is one of the nāstika or heterodox or non-vedic systems of Indian Philosophy. Regarding the founder of this system, there are different opinions. Some say that there was a sage named 'Cārvāka' who founded this system and the followers of that system are called the Cārvākas. According to some other, Bṛhaspati, the teacher of the gods, propounded this system. Cārvāka system is also called Lokāyata which means the view of common people, because it is popular among the common people (Loka- Ayat).

Epistemological view : According to the Cārvākas, perception (pratyaksha) is the only source of valid knowledge. Perceptual knowledge

is the knowledge obtained through sense-organs. The perceptible world is the only reality. The things which are perceived by sense-organs are the only reality. The things which are not perceived by sense-organs are not real. The Cārvākas reject the validity of inference and testimony because inference and testimony cannot give us certain knowledge.

Metaphysical view : According to the Cārvāka system, matter is the only reality and mind and consciousness are also the products of matter. Matter is of four kinds, viz. earth, water, fire and air. The Cārvākas reject ether because the existence of ether is not perceived. Whatever is not perceived is not real. Therefore, for the Cārvākas, there is no God, no soul, no after-life and no before-life. This is the only life. Heaven and hell are not real because they are not perceived. Therefore Cārvāka system is also known as Indian materialism.

Ethical view : Cārvākas are hedonists (hedone means pleasure) because according to them, pleasure is the ultimate goal of human life. For the Cārvākas, attainment of maximum pleasure and avoidance of pain as much as possible should be the aim of human life. The ethical ideal of the Cārvākas is eat, drink and be merry.

**JAINA SYSTEM :**

The word Jaina is derived from 'jina' which means 'conqueror'- one who has conquered all kinds of passions and desires and obtained emancipation. The Jainas believe in 24 Tirthankaras or 'founders of the faith'. Mabhadeva was the first and Mahāvira was the last tirthankara.

The Jainas do not believe in God but adore the liberated souls or the tirthankaras, who attained liberation through their own efforts by conquering all passions and desires.

Epistemological view : The Jainas classify knowledge into immediate (aparoksa) and mediate (paroksa). Immediate knowledge is again divided into three kinds- Avadhi, Manahparyaya and Kevala. Mediate knowledge is divided into two- Mati and sruta. Knowledge again may be divided into two kinds, viz., Pramāna or the knowledge of a thing as it is and Naya or the knowledge of a thing in its relation. The Jainas admit three pramānas, viz.,

perception, inference and testimony. According to Jaina Philosophy, every object possesses innumerable qualities and we, the ordinary people can know only some of those qualities. Only the omniscient being can have an immediate knowledge of an object with all its qualities through Kevala Jyāna. Human knowledge is relative and limited and hence all our judgments are also relative and limited and therefore all our judgments should be qualified by 'syad' or 'may be'. This epistemological and logical view of the Jainas is called Syādvāda. The metaphysical notion that reality has innumerable characters is called Anekāntavāda. Anekāntavāda and Syādvāda are the two sides of the same reality- realistic and relativistic pluralism.

Metaphysical view : The Jainas believe in the reality of the world and hold that the world consists of two kinds of realities, viz., Jiva and Ajiva. Jiva has life and consciousness while Ajiva is devoid of life and consciousness. There are many Jivas and are classified into mukta (liberated) and baddha (in bondage). Ajiva, on the other hand, is divided into five kinds, viz., matter (pudgala), time (kala), space (akasa), motion (dharma) and rest (adharma).

Like other schools of Indian Philosophy (except Cārvāka), Jainism also believes in liberation as the highest ideal of life. According to the Jainas, the bondage of the soul is due to its association with the body or matter. Due to ignorance, the souls come to be associated with matter and thus suffers. This ignorance can be removed by right knowledge. So, right knowledge is the cause of liberation. This right knowledge is produced by the faith in the teachings of the tirthankaras. It is the right conduct which perfects right knowledge. Hence, right knowledge, right faith and right conduct together constitute the path of liberation. These are the three jewels (triratna) of Jainism.

**BAUDDHA SYSTEM:**

Bauddha system is one of the nāstika systems of Indian Philosophy. Gautam Buddha is the founder of this system. Buddha was primarily an ethical teacher and a reformer. Gautam or Siddhārtha was devastated with grief at the sight of disease, old age and death. He renounced the world to find out the remedy for suffering. He discovered its cause and also the way

to stop it and he became enlightened or Buddha. Buddha's teachings are pragmatic. He was not interested in discussing metaphysical concepts which have no practical utility. Instead of this, Buddha tried to enlighten people on the important questions of sorrow, its cause, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation. The answers to these questions given by Buddha have come to be known as the Four Noble Truths (Arya Satya). These four noble truths are:

(i) There is suffering

(ii) There is a cause of suffering

(iii) There is a cessation of suffering

(iv) There is a way to the cessation of suffering

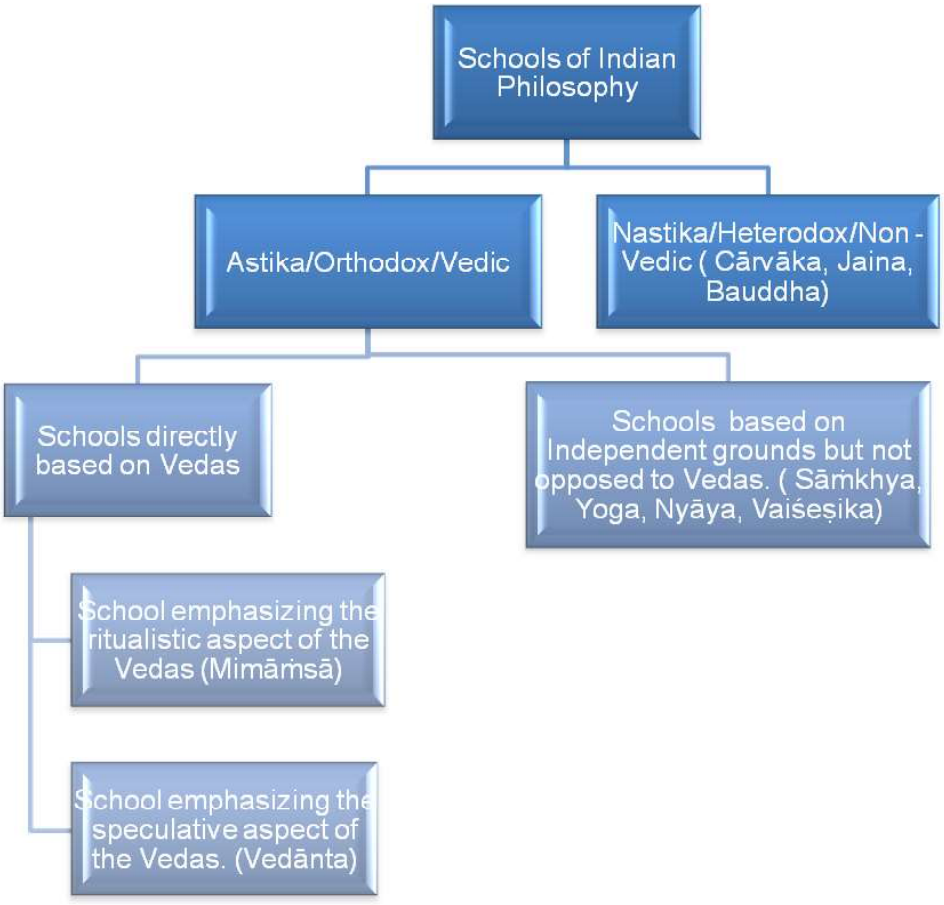
The first noble truth is 'life is full of pain and suffering'. Birth is painful, disease is painful, old age is painful, death is painful, union with the unpleasant is painful, separation from the pleasant is painful, any craving that is unsatisfied is also painful. Nobody can be escaped from suffering.

The second noble truth relates to the cause of suffering. Every event has a cause. Everything in this world is conditional, relative and limited. Being a fact of our experience, suffering also has a cause. The origin of life's suffering is explained by Buddha in the light of his theory of 'Dependent Origination' or 'Pratityasamutpāda'. This theory means that nothing is unconditional. According to Buddha, suffering has a causal chain which has twelve links. These are- (i)Jaramarana (old age and death), (ii) Jati (birth), (iii) Bhava (will to be born), (iv) Upadana (mental clinging to the objects), (v) Tṛsna (desire for objects), (vi) Vedanā (sense-experience), (vii) Sparsa (sense-object contact), (viii) Ṣaḍāyatana (the six sense-organs), (ix) Nāma-rupa (mind-body complex or organism), (x) Vijnana (consciousness), (xi) Samskara (impressions of past experience) and (xii) Avidyā (ignorance). Therefore, according to Buddha, ignorance of the truth is the root cause of suffering.

The third noble truth is extinction of suffering. If ignorance is removed, suffering will also cease to exist. So, there is a cessation of suffering. Cessation of suffering leads to salvation which is called Nirvāna (Nibbana in Pali) in Buddhism.

According to Buddha, the fourth noble truth is the ethical and spiritual path by following which suffering can be removed and as a result nirvāna is attained. This path is eight-fold. These are- Right vision ( samyak dṛṣṭi), Right resolve (samyak sankalpa), Right speech (samyak vak), Right conduct (samyak karmānta), Right livelihood (samyak ājīva), Right effort (samyak vyāyama), Right mindfulness (samyak smṛti) and Right concentration (samyak samādhi). By following these paths, one can attain nirvāna which is the highest goal of human life.

But later on, the followers of Buddha developed the philosophical theories and as a result there are four schools of Buddhism viz., Mādhyamika or vanyavada, Yogācāra or Vijnānavāda, Sautrāntika and Vaibhasika.



The division of āstika and nāstika schools has given significance to Indian philosophy. Both these two schools (āstika and nāstika) have their own views and notions. They criticize and influence each other. These schools have acted and reacted upon each other. Their mutual influence acts as a means of broadening the basis of thought. Different systems of Indian philosophy developed within their respective circles by influencing one another. In fact, it is by constant mutual criticism that different philosophical thought came into existence.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** From which Sanskrit root the term Darsana has been derived?

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**Q 2:** What are the āstika schools of Indian Philosophy?

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**Q 3:** Name the nāstika schools of Indian Philosophy.

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**Q 4:** What are the two ultimate realities, according to Sāṁkhya Philosophy?

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**Q 5:** Which system of Indian philosophy is called Seœvara Sāṁkhya?

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**Q 6:** How many pramânas are accepted by Prabhākara?

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**Q 7:** According to which Indian philosophical system, perception is the only source of valid knowledge?

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**Q 8:** What are the philosophical schools of Buddhism?

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## 4.5 LET US SUM UP

- Indian philosophy has been divided into two broad divisions- āstika and nāstika.
- The Sanskrit word 'āstika' is derived from the verb 'asti' (root "as), meaning 'there is' or 'exists' which means that which exists. Nāstika (na+āstika or not āstika) is the negative of āstika.
- In Indian philosophy, āstika is that system or school which believes in the authority of the Vedas and nāstika is that system or school which does not believe in the authority of the Vedas.
- There are six āstika schools viz, Sāmkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiseśika, Mimāmsā and Vedānta; and three nāstika schools viz, Cārvāka, Jaina and Bauddha.
- Sāmkhya believes in the ontological dualism of Purusa and Prakṛti. According to Sāmkhya Philosophy, the universe (Prakṛti) evolves. The evolution takes place when Prakṛti comes into contact with Purusa. This evolution is teleological.
- Yoga is the practical path for the realization of the theoretical ideals of Sāṁkhya philosophy. The aim of Yoga is Citta Vṛtti Nirodha or the cessation of the modification of Citta.
- The Nyāya is allied to the Vaiśeṣika system which is called Samānatantra or similar philosophy. Nyāya develops logic and epistemology while Vaiśeṣika develops metaphysics and ontology.

- Vaiśeṣika believes in seven categories or padārthas. These are- substance (dravya), quality (guna), action (karma), generality (sâmânya), particularity (vaiśeṣi), inherence (samavāya) and non-being (abhāva). The whole Vaiśeṣika system centres on the detailed discussion of these padārthas.
- The Mīmāmsā deals mainly with the Vedic injunctions about rituals the rules of interpretation of the texts. There are two main schools of Mīmāmsā system founded by Kumārila Bhatta and Prabhākara. They are the two main commentators of Jaimini's Mīmāmsā Sûtra.
- Though Badarāyana's Brahma Sûtra is the basic text of the Vedānta system which systematizes the Upanicadic teachings, subsequently many writers wrote commentaries on the Sûtras. Among those commentators, Samkara and Rāmānuja are of great importance.
- Cārvāka is also known as Indian Materialism because according to the Cārvāka system, matter is the only reality and mind and consciousness are also the products of matter. Matter is of four kinds, viz. earth, water, fire and air.
- The Jainas believe in 24 Tirthankaras. Zcabhadeva was the first and Mahāvira was the last tirthankara. For the Jainas the three jewels or triratnas (right knowledge, right faith and right conduct). constitute the path of liberartion.
- Buddha tried to enlighten people on the important questions of sorrow, its cause, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation. The answers to these questions given by Buddha have come to be known as the Four Noble Truths (Arya Satya).



## 4.6 FURTHER READING

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## 4.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q. No. 1:** The term Darsana has been derived from the Sanskrit root D[s.

**Ans to Q. No. 2:** Sāmkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaisesika, Mimāmsā and Vedānta.

**Ans to Q. No. 3:** Cārvāka, Jaina and Bauddha.

**Ans to Q. No. 4:** Puruca and Prakrti.

**Ans to Q. No. 5:** Yoga system.

**Ans to Q. No. 6:** Five pramānas.

**Ans to Q. No. 7:** The Cārvāka system.

**Ans to Q. No. 8:** Mādhyamika or Sûnyavāda, Yogacāra or Vijnānavāda, Sautrāntika and Vaibhāsika.



## 4.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A) Very Short Questions**

**Q.1:** What does Darsana mean?

**Q.2:** How many āstika systems are there in Indian philosophy?

**Q.3:** How many nāstika systems are there in Indian philosophy?

**Q.4:** What is the ultimate material cause of the world, according to the Sāmkhya system of Indian philosophy?

**Q.5:** How many yogāngas are there in Yoga philosophy?

**Q.6:** What are the two stages of perception, according to sage Gautama?

**Q.7:** Who is the founder of Vaiśeṣika system of Indian philosophy?

**Q.8:** Name any two commentators of Jaimini's Mimāmsā Sutra.

**Q.9:** What is Prasthānatraya?

**Q.10:** Which system of Indian philosophy is also known as Lokāyata?

**Q.11:** What are the two kinds of mediate knowledge, according to the Jainas?

**Q.12:** What is the root cause of suffering, according to Bauddha philosophy?

**B) Short Questions** (Answer in about 100-150 words)

**Q.1:** Write short not on :

a. Nyāya conception of perception

b. Cārvāka Epistemology

**Q.4:** Write briefly on the concept Moksa

**C) Long Questions** (Answer in about 300-500 words)

**Q.1:** Distinguish between āstika and nāstika school of Indian philosophy?

**Q.2:** Explain the four noble truths of Buddhism.

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# UNIT 5 : CĀRVĀKA EPISTEMOLOGY

## UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives
5.2 Introduction
5.3 Accidentalism and naturalism
5.4 The denial of inference
5.5 The denial of the validity of the Vedas
5.6 Let us sum up
5.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
5.8 Model Questions

## 5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the means of valid knowledge accepted by Cārvāka philosophy
- discuss the sources of valid knowledge accepted by Cārvāka philosophy
- describe the concept of naturalism
- analyse the issue of the denial of the validity of the Vedas.

## 5.2 INTRODUCTION

Cārvāka also known as Lokayata is the ancient school of Indian materialism. Cārvāka is categorized as a heterodox school of Indian Philosophy. It is considered an example of atheistic schools in the Hindu tradition. Bṛhaspati is usually referred to as the founder of Cārvāka or Lokayata philosophy. Cārvāka, after whose name this school is so called, is said to be the chief disciple of Bṛhaspati. According to another view, Cārvāka is the name of the founder of this school. The word Cārvāka comes from the Sanskrit word caru "agreeable" and vak "speech". The etymology of Cārvāka is to mean "agreeable speech" or pejoratively, "sweet-tongued" for which this doctrine is superficially attractive. According to another view,

the word Cārvāka derives from the root 'charv' meaning 'to eat' possibly alluding to the philosophy's hedonistic precepts of "eat, drink, and be merry", or it signifies a person who eats up his own words, all who eats up all moral and ethical considerations.

This philosophy is also called Lokayata because it was prevalent (ayatah) among the people (lokesu), and meant the world-outlook of the people. Lokāyata means a commoner and therefore, by implication, a man of low and unrefined taste. The dictionary meaning of Lokāyata signifies "directed towards, aiming at the world, worldly", it holds that only this world or loka is. Lokayata is stated to be the Hindu school where there is "no God, no samsara (rebirth), no karma, no duty, no fruits of merit, no sin."

Cārvāka holds direct perception and experience, as proper sources of knowledge. It embraces philosophical skepticism and rejects Vedas, Vedic ritualism and supernaturalism. According to it all the ceremonies are a means of livelihood for Brahmans. The three authors of the Vedas were buffoons, knaves and demons. It also rejects inference as a means to establish valid, universal knowledge, and metaphysical truths. In other words, according to Cārvāka perception is the only authority; earth, water, fire and air are the only elements; enjoyment is the only end of human existence; mind is only a product of matter. There is no other world: death means liberation. There is no heaven, no final liberation, nor any soul in another world; nor do the actions of the four castes, orders etc. produce any real effect. The Cārvāka view is that; while life remains let a man lives happily, let him feed on ghee even though he runs in debt; when once the body becomes ashes, it can never return again.

## 5.3 ACCIDENTALISM AND NATURALISM

The Cārvākas are accidentalists and naturalists. Accidentalism is also called the doctrine of sudden emergence (akasmikatvavada). This doctrine states that effects are produced at any time without depending on definite causes. An effect does not depend on any cause, but suddenly comes into being. Accidentalism believes in spontaneous generation of an

event. It had antecedent non-existence and has subsequent existence at any time. A thing by its nature comes into existence at a particular time without any cause. Its appearance is uncaused. Gotama explains accidentalism as the doctrine that an effect is produced without any cause like sharpness of thorns and the like.

Accidentalism is criticized on the ground that if effects did not depend upon definite causes, they would either always exist, or they would always not exist. But if they depend upon other causes, then only they can appear at a particular time. So they are produced by particular causes. Time (kala), nature (svabhava), destiny (niyati), and fate (bhavitavyata) are the causes of all things.

Naturalism means the natural power inherent in different things. Fire has a natural power of burning. Water has a natural power of flowing downward. Naturalism states that all effects are produced by their very nature, and that they cannot be produced voluntarily. Sharpness of thorns and various colours of beasts and birds are due to their very nature. They are not produced by anybody. Fire is hot, water is cool and air has refreshing touch. Their differences are due to their inherent natures. Some entities are eternal beings, others are eternal non-beings. Different things have different characteristics. Their peculiarities are due to their different natures inherent in them.

Naturalism is criticized on the following ground. Svabhāva is one's own nature or peculiar character. It is either the peculiar nature of the cause or the peculiar nature of the effect. If it is the peculiar nature of the effect, it does not exist before the effect, and so cannot determine its production at a particular time. The nature of an effect cannot exist before its production. If svabhāva is the nature of the cause, then the effect has a cause. If the cause does not exist, it cannot have a nature (svabhava). If it exists and has a nature from which the effect springs, then it has a cause. Thus naturalism is undermined.

The Cārvāka do not believe in causality and its universality. Causality is an imaginary relation between antecedents and consequents, which are

perceived together on many occasions. Only antecedence of one event and consequence of another event are perceived. Invariable antecedence of one event and invariable consequence of another event are never perceived. Perception is confined to particular instances. It can never apprehend all instances in the present, past and future. The sequence of two events perceived in the past on numerous occasions may fail in future under unforeseen circumstances. No necessary connection can be known to exist between an antecedent and a consequent. Repeated observation of one event being followed by another produces an expectation in the mind that the antecedent will be followed by the consequent in future on all occasions. Conjunction of two events on numerous occasions produces an expectation that they will always be conjoined. The Carvakas do not believe in the production of an effect by a definite cause and a necessary and invariable connection between them.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** What is the etymological meaning of the word Cārvāka?

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**Q 2:** What are the four elements accepted by Cārvāka philosophy?

.....

.....

**Q 3:** What is accidentalism?

.....

.....

**Q 4:** What is naturalism?

.....

.....

**Q 5: Fill up the blanks.**

(a) The only source of knowledge according to Cārvāka is_____.

(b) The other name of Cārvāka philosophy is_____.

(c) Cāru means_____.

**Q 6: Write true or false.**

(a) Cārvāka is categorized as orthodox school of Indian Philosophy.

(b) "Eat, drink, and be merry" is the ethics Cārvāka philosophy.

(c) Cārvāka believes in rebirth.

## 5.4 THE DENIAL OF INFERENCE

The epistemological doctrine of the Cārvāka school is that perception (pratyaksha) is the only means of valid knowledge. Cārvāka epistemology consists of a series of negations. They reject inference and testimony as means of valid knowledge. Perception is either external or internal. External perception is due to interaction of five senses and worldly objects. Internal perception depends upon external perception. Manas, the internal organ, can work upon the material supplied by external perception. It is not independent of the external sense-organs. The perceptible world is the only reality. The things perceived by the sense-organs only are real. The other things beyond the reach of perception are not real. Heaven and hell are not real, because they are not perceived. The tactual organ perceived softness, hardness, heat, cold, roughness, smoothness and the like. The gustatory organ perceived sweet, sour, pungent, astringent and other tastes. The olfactory organ perceives agreeable and disagreeable odours. The visual organ perceives walls, jars, posts, man, beast, earth, mountain and the like. The auditory organ perceives various kinds of sounds. The perceptible world is real. It is an aggregate of perceptible things and qualities. The Cārvākas advocate naive realism and empiricism. They regard perception

as the only means of valid knowledge.

The Cārvāka reject inference as a means of valid knowledge. Inference is said to be a mere leap in the dark. We proceed here from the known to the unknown and there is no certainty in this, though some inferences may turn out to be accidentally true. A general proposition may be true in perceived cases, but there is no guarantee that it will hold true even in unperceived cases. Deductive inference is vitiated by the fallacy of petitio principii. It is merely an argument in a circle since the conclusion is already contained in the major premise the validity of which is not proved. Inductive inference undertakes to prove the validity of the major premise of deductive inference. But induction too is uncertain because it proceeds unwarrantedly from the known to the unknown. In order to distinguish true induction from simple enumeration, it is pointed out that the former, unlike the latter, is based on a causal relationship which means invariable association or vyapti. Vyapti therefore is the nerve of all inference. But the Cārvāka challenges this universal and invariable relationship of concomitance and regards it a mere guess-work. The Nyāya believes in a five-membered inference (pararthanumana) for demonstration to others as shown below:

1. The hill is fiery;
2. Because it is smoky;
3. Whatever is smoky is fiery; like a kitchen;
4. The hill is smoky;
5. .: The hill is fiery.

The first three or the last three members of the inference are enough for inference for oneself. Inference depends upon the universal concomitance (vyapti) between the middle term and the major term. The middle term (e.g., smoke) is the sign (linga), which indicates the existence of the major term (e.g., fire). It must be found to exist in the minor term (pakṣa) or the subject of inference (e.g.,the hill). The middle term must be invariably accompanied by the major term. The invariable concomitance of the middle term or probans (sadhana) with the major term or probandum (sādhya) is called vyāpti. It is the ground of inference. This universal relation must be unconditional. It must not be vitiated by any conditions (upādhi). The vyāpti

does not cause inference by virtue of its existence, but by virtue of its being known. Vyāpti cannot be known by perception, external or internal. External perception arises from the intercourse of the sense-organs with their proper objects. There can be no intercourse of the sense organs with all individuals, past, remote and future. Vyāpti is the invariable concomitance of all cases of the middle term with all cases of the major term. But all instances of the middle term and the major term cannot be perceived with the external sense-organs. Nor can vyāpti be known by internal perception. Manas is not independent of the sense-organs in apprehending external objects. It can elaborate the material supplied by external perception. Knowledge of vyāpti is not the knowledge of invariable concomitance between the genus of the probans (e.g., the genus of smoke) and the genus of the probandum (e.g., the genus of fire) because class-characters are not known by perception. Even if they are known by it, the invariable concomitance between their class-characters does not establish the invariable concomitance between the particular instance of the probans and the particular instance of the probandum. Nor can vyāpti be known by inference, since it would lead to infinite regress. One vyāpti is known by inference, which is based on another vyāpti. This vyapti is known by another inference and so on to infinity. Nor can vyāpti be known by testimony, because it is included in inference. If testimony is not included in inference, it depends upon the words of a reliable person. The words are the signs of their meanings. They denote definite objects. Comprehension of the meanings of words depends upon the knowledge of universal concomitance of words with their meanings. So vyāpti cannot be known by testimony, which also depends on the knowledge of another universal concomitance. It involves argument in a circle. We cannot believe in another person's statement that there is invariable concomitance between the probans (e.g., smoke) and the probandum (e.g., fire) any more than we can believe in a dogmatic assertion of Manu. If vyāpti is known by testimony only, there can be no inference for oneself, in which the vyāpti is not pointed out by any other person. Nor can vyapti be known by comparison (upamana), because it depends upon the universal relation between words and objects signified by them. Comparison is the knowledge

of an object (e.g., a wild cow) indicated by the statement of a forester that 'a wild cow is like a cow'. So it depends upon invariable concomitance between words and their meanings. Hence vyāpti cannot be known by comparison. It is not known by perception, inference, testimony and comparison. Inference is not possible, since vyāpti, which is its ground, cannot be known.

Vyāpti is the invariable concomitance between the probans and the probandum free from all conditions (upādhi). A condition is that which does not invariably accompany the probans, but which invariably accompanies the probandum. The absence of all conditions, which vitiate the inference, can never be known. All conditions can never be perceived. The absence of all conditions can never be known by non-perception. If they are known by inference, testimony or comparison, the same difficulty will arise. Further, the knowledge of a condition must precede the knowledge of its absence. The knowledge of invariable concomitance between the middle term and the major term depends upon the knowledge of the absence of the conditions. Thus there is reasoning in a circle. Vyāpti, the ground of inference, can never be known. Therefore inference is not possible.

Vyāpti is said to depend on uniform and uncontradicted perception. It is an enumerative induction based on simple enumeration. It is based on observation of concomitance of the probans (e.g., smoke) with the probandum (e.g., fire) on numerous occasions. But even if they have accompanied each other on numerous occasions in the past, they may not accompany each other in future. The invariable concomitance between them observed so far may have exceptions in future. No necessary connection has been established between them. The invariable concomitance between smoke and fire in all times, in all places, and under all circumstances, can never be known. If all instances of smoke and fire in all times and in all places in the whole world be not perceived, the doubt will persist that smoke may exist without being accompanied by fire. Even if their agreement in presence be known by observation of numerous instances of their co-presence, their agreement in absence can never be known by observation of numerous instances. It is impossible to observe that all cases

of the absence of fire are the cases of the absence of smoke. Non-fiery things are all things in the world other than fire. The non-existence of smoke in all non-fiery things can never be perceived. Thus the universal concomitance of the middle term with the major term can never be known, since their agreement in presence and agreement in absence in the whole world in the past, the present and the future can never be observed. Their invariable concomitance cannot be known through their class-characters because there are no class-characters or universals. So vyāpti, the ground of inference, can never be known. It cannot exist between all particular instances of the probans and the probandum with their infinite peculiarities due to different times, places and circumstances. Vyāpti can neither exist nor be known. So inference is not possible. It can never be valid.

The Cārvākas do not believe in causation and its universality. There is no necessary connection between cause and effect. There is only accidental conjunction of an antecedent and a consequent. The two events are found together on numerous occasions, and therefore produce an expectation in the mind that they will always go together. But there is no certainty about their co-presence. This accidental conjunction of an antecedent and a consequent cannot ensure vyāpti, which is the ground of inference.

Perception is the only means of valid knowledge. The objects, which are perceived, exist. Imperceptible entities do not exist. If imperceptible objects were supposed to exist, then even imaginary things would exist, and the poor would remove their poverty with imaginary wealth, the servants would become masters by imagining themselves to be rich, and all would fulfill their desires with imaginary objects. The distinction between perceptible things and imaginary things would be abolished. There would, therefore, be total collapse, of practical life, which depends upon the distinction between perceptible and imaginary things. Therefore, imperceptible things do not exist. The perceptible world as an aggregate of perceptible things and qualities exists.

But the critics argue that to accept the validity of perception and, at the same time and from the same standpoint, to reject the validity of inference is a thoughtless self-contradiction. The crude Cārvāka position has been

vehemently criticized by all systems of Indian Philosophy all of which have maintained the validity of at least perception and inference. To refuse the validity of inference from the empirical standpoint is to refuse to think and discuss. All thoughts, all discussions, all doctrines, all affirmations and denials, all proofs and disproof are made possible by inference. The Cārvāka view that perception is valid and inference is invalid is itself a result of inference. The Cārvāka can understand others only through inference and make others understand him only through inference. Thoughts and ideas, not being material objects, cannot be perceived; they can only be inferred. Hence the self-refuted Cārvāka position is called sheer nonsense and no system of philosophy. Perception itself which is regarded as valid by the Cārvāka is often found untrue. We perceive the earth as flat but it is almost round. We perceive the earth as static but it is moving round the sun. We perceive the disc of the sun as of small size, but it is much bigger than the size of the earth. Such perceptual knowledge is contradicted by inference. Moreover, pure perception in the sense of mere sensation cannot be regarded as a means of knowledge unless conception or thought has arranged into order and has given meaning and significance to the loose threads of sense-data. The Cārvāka cannot support his views without giving reasons which presuppose the validity of inference.

## 5.5 THE DENIAL OF THE VALIDITY OF THE VEDAS

The Cārvākas reject the validity of the Vedas, because they are vitiated by falsehood, contradiction and tautology. They are incapable of being the means of valid knowledge. They are false because they make statements which are false. They are contradictory because they make statements, which are incompatible with one another. They are tautologous because they repeat the same statement several times. A Vedic text declares 'one who desires a son should perform Putre??i sacrifice. Yet we find that a son is not born after the sacrifice has been performed. The text is false. So the Vedas have no validity as a source of knowledge. The three Vedas are inventions of cheats, knaves and demons. Their injunctions are

meaningless jargon. The rites and ceremonies enjoined by the Vedas are the inventions of the Brahmanas, who cheat the other castes to earn their livelihood. They are devoid of intelligence and manliness, and cannot earn their living by honest means. The Vedas are mere incoherent ramblings of knaves. The religious rites enjoined by them are intended to be the means of their subsistence. Religion is priestcraft. If a beast killed in a sacrifice goes to heaven, why does not the person sacrifice his own father? If the food offered at the Sraddha ceremony appeases the hunger of the departed souls, what is the need of supplying travelers with food for the journey? Their hunger may as well be appeased by the offering of food at home. If the soul, issuing out of its body, goes to the next world, why does it not return to this world out of affection for the dear ones? When the body is burnt to ashes, how can it come back again? The soul is identical with the body. The rites are the inventions of impostors of their livelihood.

Cārvāka repudiation of the authority of the Vedas is criticized on the following grounds. The Vedas are authoritative, because they are accepted as valid by the great saints, who practiced the Vedic sacrifices with earnestness, untainted by such vicious causes as intention to deceive, association with heretics, eagerness for false disputation due to habit, desire for livelihood and reckless desire for delicious food and drink, whether they are permitted or forbidden by the scriptures. The Vedas are not inventions of crafty priests for their livelihood. The Brahmanas who were averse to all enjoyments, and imposed upon themselves severe penances, and possessed supreme wisdom, could not compose the Vedas in order to deceive the people. The Vedas must be regarded as valid, since they are accepted as valid by great saints. The Cārvāka philosophy is severely criticized not only by the orthodox systems but also by Buddhists and Jainas



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 7:** How many kinds of perception are there?

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**Q 8:** What is vyāpti?

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**Q 9:** Why Cārvāka does not believe in causation?

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**Q 10:** What is Cārvāka epistemology?

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.....

**Q 11: Fill up the blanks.**

(a) Inference is said to be a mere leap in the_____.

(b) Deductive inference is vitiated by the fallacy of_____.

(c) Vyāpti is the relation between middle term and_____.

**Q 12: Write true or false.**

(a) Cārvāka believes in the authority of the Vedas.

(b) Inference is based on vyâpti.

(c) Vyāpti cannot be known by perception according to carvaka.



## 5.6 LET US SUM UP

- Cārvāka epistemology is the doctrine according to which perception (pratyaksha) is the only means of valid knowledge. They reject inference and testimony as means of valid knowledge.

- Earth, water, fire and air are the four elements accepted by Cārvāka philosophy. Cārvāka philosophy rejects ether as an element.
- Cārvāka philosophy is also known as Lokāyata.
- Vyāpti is the invariable concomitance of the middle term or probans (sādhana) with the major term or probandum (sādhya). It is the ground of inference
- The Cārvākas do not believe in causation and its universality. There is no necessary connection between cause and effect.
- Cārvāka do not believe in the authority of the Vedas.
- Cārvāka is categorized as a heterodox school of Indian Philosophy. It is considered an example of atheistic schools in the Hindu tradition.
- According to Cārvāka there is no God, no samsāra (rebirth), no karma, no duty, no fruits of merit, no sin."
- "Eat, drink and be merry" is the ethics of Cārvāka philosophy.
- Cārvāka believes in accidentalism and naturalism.

## 5.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q. No. 1:** The etymological meaning of the word Cārvāka is "agreeable speech" or pejoratively, "sweet-tongued".

**Ans to Q. No. 2:** Earth, water, fire and air are the four elements accepted by Cārvāka philosophy.

**Ans to Q. No. 3:** Accidentalism is also called the doctrine of sudden emergence (ākasmikatvavāda). This doctrine states that effects are produced at any time without depending on definite causes. An effect does not depend on any cause, but suddenly comes into being. Accidentalism believes in spontaneous generation of an event. It had antecedent non-existence and has subsequent existence at any time.

**Ans to Q. No. 4:** Naturalism means the natural power inherent in different things. Fire has a natural power of burning. Water has a natural power of flowing downward. Naturalism states that all effects are produced by their very nature, and that they cannot be produced voluntarily.

Sharpness of thorns and various colours of beasts and birds are due to their very nature.

**Ans to Q. No. 5:** (a) Perception (b) Lokāyata (c) Agreeable

**Ans to Q. No. 6:** (a) False (b) True (c) False

**Ans to Q. No. 7:** There are two kinds of perception external and internal.

**Ans to Q. No. 8:** Vyāpti is the invariable concomitance of the middle term or probans (sādhana) with the major term or probandum (sādhya). It is the ground of inference.

**Ans to Q. No. 9:** The Cārvākas do not believe in causation and its universality. There is no necessary connection between cause and effect. There is only accidental conjunction of an antecedent and a consequent. The two events are found together on numerous occasions, and therefore produce an expectation in the mind that they will always go together. But there is no certainty about their co-presence.

**Ans to Q. No. 10:** Cārvāka epistemology is the doctrine according to which perception (pratyaksha) is the only means of valid knowledge. Cārvāka epistemology consists of a series of negations. They reject inference and testimony as means of valid knowledge.

**Ans to Q. No. 11:** (a) Dark (b) petitio principii (c) Major term

**Ans to Q. No. 12:** (a) False (b) True (c) True



## 5.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

**A) Very Short Questions**

**Q.1:** What is the other name of Cārvāka philosophy?

**Q.2:** "Eat, drink and be merry" is the ethics of which theory?

**Q.3:** Does Cārvāka believes in the authority of the Vedas?

**B) Short Questions** (Answer in about 100-150 words)

**Q.1:** What is testimony?

**Q.2:** What is parārthanumāna?

**Q.3:** What is vyāpti?

**C) Long Questions** (Answer in about 300-500 words)

**Q.1:** Why Cārvāka does not believe in the authority of the Vedas? Give reasons.

**Q.2:** Why Cārvāka rejects inference as a source of valid knowledge?

**Q.3:** Discuss the views of Cārvākas regarding causation.

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# UNIT 6 : CĀRVĀKA : METAPHYSICS

## UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives
6.2 Introduction
6.3 Cārvāka: Metaphysics
6.4 Cārvāka: Concept of Soul and Consciousness
6.5 Cārvāka: Arguments in Favour of Dehātmāvāda
6.6 Criticism against Cārvāka Dehātmāvāda
6.7 Cārvāka: Denial of God's existence
6.8 Cārvāka: Svabhābavāda
6.9 Cārvāka: Denial of Law of Karma and Theory of Rebirth
6.10 Cārvāka: Reaction against Liberation
6.11 Let Us Sum Up
6.12 Further Readings
6.13 Answers to Check Your Progress
6.14 Model Questions

## 6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- write a short essay on Cārvāka Philosophy
- discuss what is Metaphysics and its scope
- explain Cārvāka Metaphysical Concepts
- discuss the Concept of Liberation in Cārvāka Philosophy
- describe Cārvāka View of Dehātmāvāda, Law of Causation, Cārvāka refutation of God's existence, Cārvāka view of karmāvada and Theory of Rebirth.

## 6.2 INTRODUCTION

Indian philosophy is generally spiritualistic. It believes in soul, God, law of Karma, Liberation etc. Indian philosophy consists of nine systems. These are– (i) Nyāya, (ii) Vaiśeṣika, (iii) Saṅkhya, (iv) Yoga, (v) Mīmāṁsā

(vi) Vedānta, (vii) Cārvāka (viii) Buddha (ix) Jaina. These are divided into two groups– (i) Āstika or Vedic (ii) Nāstika or Non-Vedic.

Āstika or Vedic systems of Indian philosophy are those which believe in the authority of the Vedas.

Again the Nāstika or Non-Vedic systems donot believe in the testimony of the Vedas. However, the word 'Āstika' literally means a believer in god and the word 'Nāstika' means the disbeliever in god. In brief, an Āstika is a theist, while a Nāstika is an atheist. But in Indian philosophy Āstikas are the Vedic schools, while Nāstikas are the non-Vedic schools. The Cārvāka philosophy is one of the Nāstika schools of Indian philosophy. It occupies a very important place in the history of Indian philosophy. The sage-Bṛhaspati is considered to be the founder of Cārvāka philosophy. The ancient Sūtras of Cārvāka philosophy are known as Bṛhaspati Sūtra. As a gross approach to the philosophy of life, the view of Cārvāka seems to be the earliest in the evolution of knowledge.

The word 'Cārvāka', is derived from the root 'Carva' which means 'to chew' or 'to eat'. This philosophy gives special emphasis on eating and drinking. Cārvāka schools is also named as 'Lokāyat school'; because it is widely popular among the common people. (Lokayat). Cārvāka system is more a philosophy of life than a theory of Ultimate Reality. This philosophy is concerned with man's eternal urge for pleasure. It has its novelty in challenging all the traditional values of Indian people. Cārvāka philosophical concept may be divided into three headings– epistemology, metaphysics and ethics. In metaphysics, ethics and epistemology, the Cārvāka philosophy stands in marked contrast to all other Indian philosophical system.

Being one of the Nāstika schools, Cārvākas donot believe in the testimony of the Vedas. As a matter of fact, all the Nāstika systems of Indian philosophy owe their origin to the reaction against Vedic traditions. It should be noted that the Buddha and Jaina schools donot criticize Vedic thought though they are Nāstika systems. But Cārvāka philosophers have openly abused the Vedas. They say that the Vedas are full of lies and repetitions; they are created by cunning priests who wanted to gain their means by misguiding the ignorant people.

Cārvāka philosophy is entirely materialistic. The school of materialism in India seems to be very old. References of it are found in the Epics and in the early Buddhistic literature. According to Materialism, matter is the ultimate element of the Universe. Cārvāka philosophy also upholds such a view. This philosophy maintains that everything which exists in the world is material. Anything which is not material cannot exist.

## 6.3 CĀRVĀKA : METAPHYSICS

Generally every school or system of philosophy is based on its epistemological foundation. Cārvāka Metaphysical doctrines are also based on its epistemology. The Cārvāka epistemological view is that Perception or Pratyakṣa is the only means of valid knowledge. It rejects all other sources of valid knowledge such as inference (Anumāna), comparison (Upamāna), Authority (Sabda) etc.

The Cārvākas donot believe in God, soul, the life after death, heaven, law of Karma etc. Because these cannot be perceived. Usually in Indian philosophy five physical elements are recognized as the original elements of the things & beings of the Universe, they are– earth, water, fire, air, and ether. But Cārvākas accept the existence of the first four elements. It rejects the fifth element, i.e. ether, because it is not perceived but inferred. According to the Cārvāka philosophy, everything which exists, including the mind, is due to a particular combination of these four elements. Cārvāka maintains that though these elements are eternal, their combinations undergo production and destruction.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q.1.** Indian Philosophy consists of nine systems. What are these systems?

(Answer in about 10 words)

.....

.....

**Q.2.** Write the Cārvāka view of Epistemology in one sentence. (Answer in about 15 words)

.....

.....

**Q.3.** Fill in the blanks :

a) The word ..... means a believer in God.

b) Cārvāka is one of the ..... schools of Indian Philosophy.

c) Cārvākas donot believe in the ..... of the Vedas.

d) The word 'Metaphysics' comes from the Greek word .....

e) It was ..... who for the first time developed Metaphysics to be studied after physics.



**ACTIVITY : 2.1**

a) Is Cārvāka materialist? Discuss.

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b) Does Cārvāka go beyond experience? Discuss.

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## 6.4 CĀRVĀKA : CONCEPT OF SOUL AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Being materialistic, the Cārvākas donot believe in the existence of an invisible, unchangeable and immortal soul. According to them soul is a product of matter. It is the quality of the body and does not exist separately outside the body. The soul is simply the conscious living body. We donot perceive any soul; we perceive only the body in a conscious state. A particular combination of the elements produces consciousness, though

these elements donot separately possess it. The actions attributed to the soul are really the actions of the body. Consciousness is the result of an emergent and dialectical evolution. It is an epiphenomenon, a by product of matter. Here naturally a question may be raised, how can a soul or a conscious being originate from inanimate objects? Cārvāka replies that just as combination of betel leaf nut, lime and catechu produces red colour, in the same way the fusion of these elements speaks of consciousness. According to Cārvāka, body with consciousness is the soul. Behind and beyond the material body there is no eternal soul.

There are two types of Cārvākas– the Dhurta or cunning Cārvākas and the Susikshit or educated Cārvākas. The former considers the conscious body to be the soul. With that body the soul exists and with it the soul perishes. Consciousness can be experienced only in the body. So, consciousness has no separate existence of it own its outside the body.

On the other-hand, the educated Cārvākas maintain that the soul has eternal knowledge and perishes with the body. The soul does not migrate from one body to another. Thus, some of the Cārvākas are Dehātmāvādin, i.e. those who identify body and soul. Others are Indriyatmāvādin; they consider the senses to be the soul. There are some others known as Pranavadin, they regard the soul as nothing but the vital principle (Prana). Again, some other are Ātmāmanovādin, for whom there is no difference between mind and soul. On the whole according to Cārvāka philosophy, when the body is destroyed nothing is left. Therefore, there is no eternal, immortal soul beyond the body. The Cārvāka view of soul is known as 'Dehātmāvāda' or Bhūtachaitanyavāda.

## 6.5 CĀRVĀKA : ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF DEHATMAVADA

The Cārvāka philosophers forward some arguments in favour of Dehātmāvāda or Bhutachaitanyavāda. These are as follows–

1. When the body is nourished by foods, then the consciousness or intelligence is also nourished. The nutritious food and drinks make

our bodies healthy; as a result, consciousness or soul is also nourished. Hence, consciousness is also a bodily thing.

2. Human mental development and capabilities have grown according to bodily nervous system. To establish this fact the Cārvākas cite the example of sheep. Human celebral nervous system is more developed and complicated than that of the sheep. Accordingly, human intelligence is more developed than that of the sheep. From this example it is proved that intelligence is a product of bodily mechanism.
3. When our body turns to be disordered or unwell, then our mental power or consciousness decreases. This proves that consciousness is caused by body.
4. When man grows old, his body turns to be thin or light. Accordingly the intellectual capacity turns to be weak. Therefore, the body is the store of consciousness.
5. Our day-to-day activities, conducts also prove that consciousness is nothing but the body. When we utter 'I', actually this 'I' indicates the body and also the soul. Hence, the body is the soul or consciousness.

## 6.6 CRITICISM AGAINST CĀRVĀKA DEHATMAVADA

Though Cārvāka philosophy severely criticized the existence of the soul besides the body, the Cārvāka theory of soul or Dehātmāvāda is also criticized by many philosophers of different schools of Indian philosophy. Some of these critical points are mentioned as follows–

1. If consciousness is the specific quality of the body, it should exist even in deep sleep, swoon, and the like.
2. If consciousness is the quality of the body, why is it not perceived by other people? Other qualities are perceptible to others. Why is there an exception in the case of consciousness?
3. Recollection, etc., cannot be the function of the changeable body. Only an eternal and unchangeable soul can account for such actions.

4. Consciousness or soul cannot be the quality of the body, because when a person dreams, consciousness remains active, although the body becomes inactive.
5. Subject cannot be identified with object. The body is the subject and the soul is the object. So the soul has an existence separate from the body. Consciousness is the quality of the soul. In fact, it is identical with the soul.
6. The fact that consciousness resides in the body does not necessarily make the former an attribute of the latter. The qualities of the body are either perceptible by the external sense organs or imperceptible. But consciousness is neither perceived by the sense organs nor is imperceptible. So it is not a quality of the body.

The above mentioned critical points are supported by many Indian philosophers like, Vātsyāyana, Udayana, Jayanta Vijñāna Bhikashu, Shaṅkara and Vāchaspati Misra.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q.4.** What are the two types of Cārvākas?

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**Q.5.** What do you mean by the educated Cārvākas?(Answer in about 40 words)

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**Q.6.** What is Dehatmāvāda or Bhutachaitanyāvāda? (Answer in about 40 words)

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## 6.7 CĀRVĀKA : DENIAL OF GOD'S EXISTENCE

Cārvāka Metaphysics does not believe in the existence of God. It does not accept god as the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world.

Because Cārvākas donot accept the existence of anything which cannot be perceived. As God cannot be perceived, therefore, there can be no God. God as an omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent being is only an imagination. It is not necessary to believe in God as the creator of the world. The whole universe, animate as well as inanimate, is composed, according to Cārvāka Metaphysics, of the four basic elements-earth, water, fire and air. Living beings are born of them and they merge into them after death. The world is not moving towards any definite goal created by God.

The Cārvākas say that introducing the name of God, some hypocrates and cunning priests had exploited the ignorant and simple minded common people. To satisfy God, the common people performe worships, yajna, etc. They offer various valuable things in the name of God by the direction of the priests. Worships etc. are only for the selfish fulfillment of the wicked, priests according to Cārvākas. Therefore, it is completely meaningless to worship God, because He is non-existent and non-perceptible.

Moreover, the Cārvākas regard the king of a country to be the God. Because the qualities attributed to God are almost present in the king, who is also the all in all of the kingdom. The king is the judge, well wisher of the subjects. Common people try to make the king satisfied by all means. Only the fools try in vain to please God by uttering prayers etc. But the intelligent people earn wealth pleasing the king. 'Lokosiddho bhabet raja', the king is real, he is perceived. Hence, the king is the God.

## 6.8 CĀRVĀKA : SVABHĀBAVĀDA

The Cārvāka philosophy does not believe in the law of causation and its universality. Law of causation maintains that every effect must have a cause and the cause and the effects are necessarily related. This relation is invariable and it depends upon concomitance. Everything in the world is due to some cause. The things of the world are causally related to one other. But the Metaphysics of Cārvāka philosophy does not accept such a view. According to it, the causal relation is not necessary and invariable. The law of causation does not explain the diversity of the world. The relation

of cause and effect is not unconditional. The Cārvākas hold that every effect may not have a cause. The inherent nature of things is the cause of the diversity of the world. There is no cause of the inherent energy or nature of things. They maintain that it is not true that a definite effect always arises from a definite cause. Because we cannot perceive the incidents of future. So from a definite cause many effects may arise.

According to Cārvāka Metaphysics, the inherent nature or power of things is the ultimate cause of the universe. As we have already said, the things of the universe originate from the inherent power of the four basic elements. Therefore, the Cārvākas call them 'Bhūtachatuṣtaya', they are the Earth (Khiti), Water (Apa), Fire (Teja), and Air (Marut).

Therefore, the Cārvākas accept Naturalism instead of casuality to explain the diversity of the world. They use the word 'Svabhāva' or 'nature' (Ydriccha) to indicate the inherent energy of things. From this nature the diversity of the world originates, sustains and destroys. Again, they said that behind the causal relation there is no inherent necessity. According to nature of the things, all events occur on their own. Behind the hotness of fire, coolness of water, sharpness of thorns, there is no agent or cause. These happen according to their nature. Nature has no cause; it is the cause of itself.

## 6.9 CĀRVĀKA : DENIAL OF LAW OF KARMA AND THEORY OF REBIRTH

All schools of Indian philosophy accept the law of Karma and Rebirth except the Cārvāka philosophy. The Law of causation applied in the moral world is called the law of Karma. According to the law of Karma, pleasure, pain, sorrow, happiness, unhappiness of human life are related to their action. Good action results in good fruits. Every person has to undergo the fruits of his actions. If a person performs good action then he gets good fruits and, on the other-hand, bad action results in bad fruits; he cannot avoid the sufferings of his bad actions. Therefore, according to law of Karma one cannot escape from the fruits of his action. Everyone faces the

fruits or results of his own action either in this very life, or in the life after death. People take birth again and again because of the law of Karma.

The Law of Karma involves the concept of Rebirth also. But, in Cārvāka Metaphysics as well as philosophy, there is no place for the doctrine of the law of Karma and Rebirth. As Cārvāka philosophy does not accept the law of causation, so it rejects the doctrine of the law of Karma. According to the Cārvākas, there is no necessary relation between the action and its fruit. Therefore, for them there is no truth in the doctrine of Karma. There can be no fruit according to its action. It is just an imagination. Happiness, sorrow, pleasure, pain, reward, punishment etc. are not the results or fruits of one's action. These are not dependent on the actions performed by the people. On the othehand, they depend upon the environment and different conditions, surroundings under which the actions are done. Everything in this world is accidental. From the same action one may get sorrow, unhappiness; but from the same action another person may get happiness or pleasure. As Cārvāka philosophy rejects the law of Karma, so it naturally does not accept the doctrine of rebirth. It holds that man cannot take birth again after his death. There is no soul behind the material body. After death or the destruction of the body nothing is left. So, there can be no question of taking a new birth again. The life after death or rebirth, immortality of soul etc. all are some false ideas or imagination. Thus Cārvāka philosophy rejects both the doctrine of Karma and theory of rebirth.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q.7.** How many physical elements are accepted by Cārvākas Philosophy?

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.....

**Q.8.** Which elements is not accepted by the Cārvākas?

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**Q.9.** What is Soul, according to Cārvāka philosophy? (Answer in about 15 words)

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**Q.10.** Does Cārvāka Philosophy believe in an eternal soul? (Answer in about 15 words)

.....

**Q.11.** Many Indian Philosophers criticize Cārvāka view of Soul. Give their names.

.....

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**Q.12.** Cārvāka school is also known as Lokāyata School. Why is it so-called? (Answer in about 15 words)

.....

.....

**Q.13.** Metaphysics is divided into five branches. What are these branches?

.....

.....

**Q.14.** Cārvāka an Āstika school? If not why? (Answer in about 15 words)

.....

.....

**Q.15.** State whether the following statements are true or false :

a) Cārvāka is an Āstika school. (True/False)

b) According to Cārvāka, 'Perception or Pratyaksa is the only reliable source of valid knowledge'. (True/False)

c) Consciousness is an epiphenomenon, according to Cārvāka. (True/False)

d) 'The soul can be perceived' according to Cārvākas. (True/False)

e) Cārvāka accepts ether as a physical element. Is it true? (True/False)

## 6.10 CĀRVĀKA : REACTION AGAINST LIBERATION

The concept of liberation is one of the most important issues in Indian philosophy. Except Cārvāka, all other schools of Indian philosophy believe that liberation or Mokṣa is the ultimate destiny of human life. They maintain different ways and views regarding the attainment of liberation or Mukti. They hold contrary view regarding liberation as the state of ultimate peace, the state of ultimate detachment, happiness etc.

There are two states of liberation (i) jivanmukti and (ii) Videhamukti. In the jivanmukti state the liberated soul or human being feels the ultimate peace, detachment to everything in this very life. Such a person lives only for others, having no selfish interest. Again, Videhamukti is the state of a liberated soul after the death of the person. In such a state, the soul becomes completely free from the worldly desires, attachment and bondage of life.

But Cārvāka philosophy says that liberation is not the detachment of the soul from the body. Being pure materialist it holds that there is no soul apart from the body. In such a situation, it does not believe in the state of liberation of the soul. After the destruction of the material body, everything is destroyed. The material world is the only world which can be perceived. Human life is full of pleasure, pain, sorrow, happiness etc. So there is no state called liberation which is the state of ultimate peace, happiness etc, where there is no pain, sorrow, grief. Thus, according to the Cārvākas if there is life, then there must be body; where there is body, there must be both pleasure and pain. Human life is a combination of pleasure and pain. Liberation is unreal, because it cannot be perceived.



## 6.11 LET US SUM UP

- The word ‘Cārvāka’, is derived from the root ‘Carva’ which means ‘to chew’ or ‘to eat’. This philosophy gives special emphasis on eating and drinking.
- Cārvāka school is also named as ‘Lokāyat school’; because it is widely popular among the common people. (Lokāyat).

- It explains all doctrines materialistically.
- Matter occupies the central place in epistemology, metaphysics and ethical view of Cārvāka philosophy. It is not interested in any spiritualistic interpretation.
- Cārvāka metaphysics is the inevitable consequence of its epistemological discussion.
- Cārvāka metaphysics is the inevitable consequence of its epistemological discussion.
- Cārvāka philosophy refutes spiritualism and establishes its materialism to give its metaphysical theories.
- Cārvāka rejects the existence of God, eternal soul, the possibility of future life, past life etc.
- The main reason of the denial of this metaphysical issue is that 'Perception is the only source of valid knowledge, according to Cārvāka'.
- We know four things only by five sense organs. These are Earth, Water, Fire and Air. These four physical elements are eternal and imperishable. These may be transformed but not destroyed.
- The Cārvākas believe in the four basic elements– The Earth (Khiti), Water (Apa), Fire (Teja), and Air (Marut). The Cārvākas cal them– 'Bhūtachatuṣtaya'.
- According to Cārvāka, the positive metaphysical doctrine is that 'There are four physical elements and these are eternal and imperishable'.
- The negative conclusion is that: There is no God, no immaterial soul, no heaven, no hell, no future life, no after life.



## 6.12 FURTHER READINGS

1) Chatterjee, S. C. & Dutta, D. M. (1968). *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. University of Calcutta.
2) Hiriyanna, M. (1993). *Outlines of Indian philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

# UNIT 7 : THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS OF BUDDHISM

## UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives
7.2 Introduction
7.3 A Brief Sketch of Buddhism
7.4 Concept of Four Noble Truths
7.5 There is Suffering
7.6 There is a Cause of Suffering
7.6.1 Dependent Origination
7.7 The Cessation of Suffering
7.7.1 Concept of Nirvāṇa
7.8 The Path of Cessation of Suffering
7.9 Let Us Sum Up
7.10 Further Readings
7.11 Answers to Check Your Progress
7.12 Model Questions

## 7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain Buddhism
- elaborate the four-noble truths of Buddhism
- describe the concept of Nirvāṇa
- discuss the eight-fold paths of Nirvāṇa.

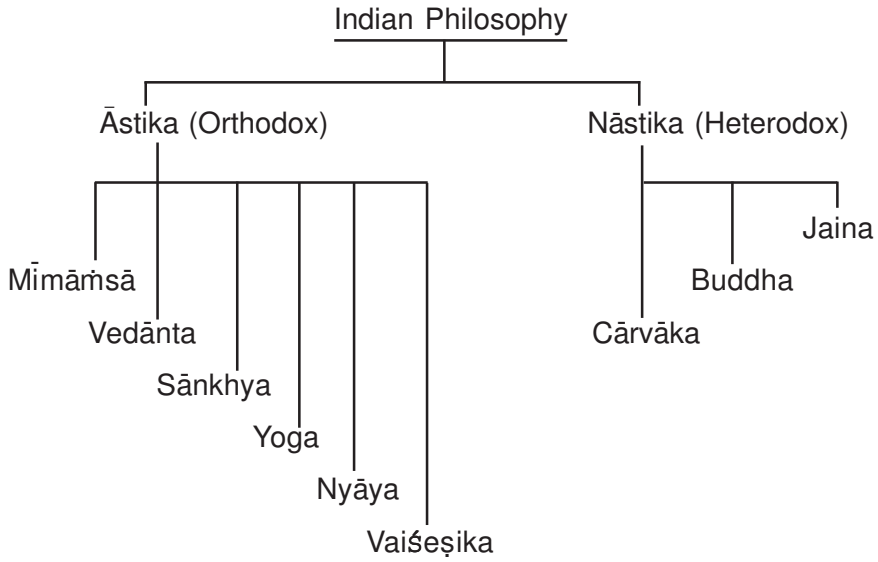
## 7.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces you to the four noble truths of Buddhism. In this unit the main teachings of Buddha are to be discussed. His teachings are contained in the four noble truths. These are– i) the truth that there is misery, ii) there is a cause of misery, iii) there is a cessation of misery and iv) there is a path leading to the cessation of misery. The main aim of

Buddha's teachings is the total extinction of suffering. According to him, nirvāṇa is attained here on the Earth. Nirvāṇa is the cooling of passion. It is the site of perfect peace and perfect enlightenment. The way to nirvāṇa is the eightfold path of right conduct, concentration and insight. They remove ignorance and desire, enlighten the mind and bring about perfect equanimity and tranquility.

## 7.3 A BRIEF SKETCH OF BUDDHISM

Indian philosophy is divided into two broad classes. They are– orthodox or āstika and hetrerodox or nāstika system. The orthodox system is also classified into another six systems. They are– Mīmāṁsā , Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. Similarly, heterodox system has also another three kinds. They are– Cārvāka, Buddha and Jaina. This classification can be presented in the following way–




Thus, we find that Buddhism belongs to nāstika system. The founder of Buddhism is Gautama Buddha. From his early age, Gautam felt very sad about seeing the human miseries, like– disease, old age, death etc. Therefore, he went to search for the cause of sufferings and also the means of removing it. At last he got the result of his journey. This form is known as the ''Four Noble Truths of Buddhism''. Generally, Buddha's teachings are found in the Pitakas. There are three Pitakas in Buddhism. They are– Sutta

Pitaka, Vinayapitaka and Abhidharma Pitaka. They are together known as the Tripitakas or the three baskets of teachings. Pitakas are written in Pali language.

In course of time his followers increased in number. So, they are divided into different schools. Buddhism is mainly divided into two schools.

1. Hinayāna
2. Māhāyana

This division is based on the question– "What is the object of Nirvāṇa?" Hinayāna prescribes nirvāṇa only for oneself. On the other hand, Mahāyāna believed that nirvāṇa is not for one's own sake but to obtain perfect wisdom of all beings in misery. Thus, we can say that the concept of Nirvāṇa is the central teaching of Buddhism.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q.1.** State whether the following statements are true or false :

a) Buddhism belongs to āstika systems. (True / False)

b) There are 3 Pitakas in Buddhism. (True / False)

c) Pitaks are written in Pali language. (True / False)

d) The founder of Buddhism is Mahāvira. (True / False)

**Q.2.** What is the meaning of Tripitaka?

.....

**Q.3.** What are the main schools of Buddhism?

.....



## ACTIVITY 7.1

a) Can nirvāṇa lead to ultimate happiness? Discuss.

.....

.....

.....

## 7.4 CONCEPT OF FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

Primarily Gautama Buddha is a social reformer and an ethical teacher. Being an ethical teacher his teachings are followed by human beings at large. These teachings lead us to a path or 'marga' to overcome sufferings. After a deep meditation Buddha got four prime truths. They are called "CATVARI ARYASATYANI" or the "FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS" of Buddhism. They are as follows–

i) Life in the world is full of suffering (Duḥkha).

ii) There is a cause of this suffering (duḥkha-samudaya).

iii) There is a cessation of suffering (duḥkha-nirodha).

iv) There is a path to the cessation of suffering (duḥkha-nirodha marga).

Now, we are going to discuss about these four-noble-truths in detail.

## 7.5 THERE IS SUFFERING (DUḤKHA)

The first noble truth of Buddhism is concerned with the nature of human sufferings. The causes of sufferings are birth, different diseases, old age and death. Therefore, there is suffering everywhere and at all stages of life. There is pain with birth. Similarly, disease is painful; death is painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful just as separation from pleasant is painful. Thus, Buddha is on the conclusion that "Life is all pain''. In our life, we the human beings get pleasure about certain things. But Buddha said that they are only the sensual pleasure and sensual pleasure is not permanent. According to him, sensual pleasure is transitory and followed by pain.

## 7.6 THERE IS A CAUSE OF SUFFERING

This Second noble truth is concerned with the origin of suffering. In his opinion, there is a cause of suffering also. Because every event must have a cause and without cause nothing can happen. Will-to-live or desire is the motivating power which creates the cycle of birth and death. And it is the cause of suffering. This desire is of three kinds. They are :

a) Will-to-live for sex or sensual pleasures.

b) Will-to-live for enjoyment of life, and

c) Desire for wealth and power.

Thus, will-to-live is the cause of suffering. Buddha describes these causes according to his theory of causation. It is known as ‘‘Pratitya-Samutpādavāda or Dependent Origination’’.

Let us discuss Dependent Origination in some detail.

### 7.6.1 Dependent Origination

Dependent origination or pratitya-samutpāda is the foundation of all the teachings of Buddha. The literal meaning of pratitya Samutpāda is arising (Samutpāda) after getting (Partitya). It means the production of an effect out of a complement of cause and conditions. When the cause and conditions disappear, the effect disappears. The causal formula is– ‘‘This being, that arises’’. It means Depending on the cause, the effect arises.

Buddha’s belief in the theory of dependent origination relates to a twelve-linked chain. It makes him able to trace back the origin of suffering. Here every consequent is dependent on the antecedent for its origin. Buddha explains the twelve-links in the following way–

Jarāmarana is the first link of the chain. It means suffering is due to the nature of old age, death etc. Jāti is the cause of this Jarāmarana. If anyone does not take birth then the question of suffering does not arise. So, birth is the cause of suffering. The cause of Jāti is Bhāva, means the will to be born. The cause of Bhāva is Upādāna. It means one’s clinging is due to Tṛṣṇa or the thirst for such enjoyment. This thirst is due to Vedanā. It is actual sense-enjoyment. The cause of this sense-enjoyment is Sparsha, i.e. sense object contact. Ṣaḍāyatana that is six sense organs including mind is due to nāma-rūpa. It means the psycho-physical organism. This organism is due to Vijñāna, the initial consciousness of the embryo. Samskāra means the forces generated by the past karmas, which

are finally the cause of Ignorance. Therefore, ignorance is the root cause of all human sufferings.

Thus, we get the twelve-links of Dependent Origination. They are:

1. Ignorance (avidyā) — Past life
2. Impressions of Karmic forces (samskāra) — Past life
3. Initial consciousness of the embryo (vijñāna)
4. Psycho-physical organism (nāma-rūpa)
5. Six sense-organs including mind (Ṣaḍāyatana) — Present life
6. Sense object-contact (Sparsha)
7. Sense-experience (Vedanā)
8. Thirst for sense-enjoyment (tṛiṣṇa)
9. Clinging to this enjoyment (Upadana)
10. Will to be born (bhāva)
11. Rebirth (Jāti) — Future life
12. Old age and death (jarā-maraṇa) — Future life

These twelve-links are called the Bhāva-chakra, Samsāra-chakra, Janma-marana-chakra, Dharma-chakra, Pratitya samutpāda chakra etc. Among these twelve-links, the first two (Avidyā & Samskāra) are related to the past life. The last two (Jāti & Jara-maraṇa) are with the future life and the others are related with the present life.

The doctrine of Karma is based on this theory. Our present life is due to the impressions of the past Karmas and it will shape our future life. Again, the theory of Kṣaṇa-bhaṅga-vāda or Momentariness is also based on it. According to it, all things are relative, dependent, conditional and finite. So, they must be momentary.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q.4.** State whether the following statements are True or False :

a) Buddhist theory of causation is called Four Noble Truths. (True / False)

b) There are twelve links in dependent origination. (True / False)

c) The doctrine of Karma is associated with the Pratitya-samutpada. (True / False)

**Q.5.** What is dependent origination? (Answer in about 50 words)

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.....

**Q.6.** Among the twelve links which one is related to the present life?

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**ACTIVITY 7.2**

a) Does effect exist without a cause? Discuss.

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## 7.7 THE CESSATION OF SUFFERING

The third noble-truth is the extinction of suffering. Since everything arises from some cause and conditions, so, when the conditions are removed then sufferings also will be removed. The total elimination of suffering is known as NIRVĀṆA. Nirvāna means being free-from bondage and re-birth. It is the perfect calm and tranquility undisturbed by desires and passions.

### 7.7.1 Concept of Nirvāṇa

'Duḥkha nirodha' or the cessation of suffering is called Nirvāṇa. Buddha says that when a person controls his desires and passions he can get perfect knowledge. It is possible when he realizes the

four-noble truths. Then the person becomes to an Arhat. 'Arhat' means a worthy person. According to Buddha, this stage is popularly known as Nirvāṇa. It is the state of bliss and happiness. There is no place for misery or pain in it.

The literal meaning of nirvāna is "blown out" or "cool down". On the basis of the literal meaning, some Buddhists and non-Buddhists have explained a negative aspect of Nirvāṇa. According to them, Nirvāṇa means the complete elimination of all physical and mental states. But in the words of Rhys Davids, Buddha did not say that Nirvāṇa is the destruction of all existence. According to Buddha, nirvāna is the cessation of sufferings and it eliminates the conditions of rebirth.

In the Pali texts, Nirvāṇa is explained as a state of peace. Here, nirvāṇa is described as eternal health, the ultimate end and the place of no fear. Nirvāṇa is neither eternalism nor nihilism. Buddha says that Nirvāṇa is unknown, unique and uncreated. It is a matter of realisation. Just as the wind cannot be seen but its existence cannot be denied. So, it is a matter of realisation. Besides these, Nirvāṇa can also be described as permanent, stable, ageless, immovable, deathless, unborn and unbecome that it is the state of bliss and happiness. King Milinda (one of the disciples of Buddha) describes the nature of Nirvāṇa by saying that that "Nirvāṇa is profound like an ocean, lofty like a mountain peak, sweet like honey etc."

In the Pali texts, it is stated that there are two types of Nirvāṇa. One is called 'Upādhisesa Nirvāṇa' and the other is called "Niropādhisesa Nirvāṇa". First one is also known as Nirvāṇa and the later one is called Parinirvāṇa. In the state of Nirvāṇa, there is no attachment or desire, there is only the existence of pure consciousness. But in the state of Parinirvāṇa all these are eliminated.

According to Buddha, Nirvāṇa can be attained within the life. And Buddha himself is the greatest example of it. Nirvāṇa is an ineffable state of perfect wisdom, perfect peace and perfect self-command.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q.7.** State whether the following statements are True or False :

a) The literal meaning of Nirvāṇa is 'blown out' (True/false)

b) Nirvāna belongs to 3rd noble truths. (True/false)

c) Arhat means pain. (True/false)

d) According to Buddha, Nirvāna can be attained within the life. (True/false)

**Q.8.** What are the two types of Nirvāṇa?

.....

## 7.8 THE PATH OF CESSATION OF SUFFERING

The fourth noble truth is that there is a way of cessation of suffering. Buddha said that one can attain Nirvāṇa within his life-time. But there is a question– how can it be possible to obtain liberation or Nirvāṇa? According to Buddha, there are eight paths for the attainment of Nirvāṇa. They are called the eight-fold path or the astāngika-mārga of Buddhism. These paths is open to all monks as well as laymen. They are–

1. Right views (Samyag dṛṣṭi)
2. Right resolve (Samyag saṅkalpa)
3. Right speech (Samyag vāk)
4. Right conduct (Samyag karmānata)
5. Right livelihood (Samyag ājiva)
6. Right effort (Samyag vyāyama)
7. Right mindfulness (Samyag smṛiti)
8. Right concentration (Samyag samādhi)

**Right views :** Ignorance or avidyā is the root cause of all sufferings of human beings. Because of this ignorance man cannot acquire right knowledge about the relation between the self and the world. So, right knowledge is defined as the correct knowledge about the four noble truths.

When we acquire the right knowledge, it leads us to the supreme goal– that is Nirvāṇa.

**Right resolve:** Every man must resolves to reform his life in the light of the right knowledge. So, the act of resolution to lead an honest life in the path of right knowledge is right resolve. So, Buddha describes three contents of right determination.

They are–

a) to renounce all attachment to the world.
b) to give up ill-feeling towards others.
c) to stop from doing any harm to them.

**Right speech :** Right speech consists in abstention from lying, slander, abuse, harsh words etc. One should speak right, not the unrighteous. He should speak the truth not the false. We should speak well. And he must speak that which does not pain oneself nor hurts others.

**Right conduct :** It consists in abstention from the destruction of life, from stealing, from lying etc. Liberality, courtesy, kindness and unselfishness should be cultivated by all.

**Right livelihood :** Right livelihood means one has to maintain his life of honest means. By renouncing bad speech and bad actions, one should earn their honest means.

**Right effort :** Right effort consists in suppressing the evil states and cultivating the good states. A Restless mind is not conducive to good thoughts, good emotions and good conduct.

**Right mindfulness :** It is the recollection of the impurity of the body, the nature of feeling, pleasure and pain. It frees the mind from Raga and Dvesha and prepare the mind for higher concentration. Thus, right mindfulness is an indispensable prerequisite of right concentration.

**Right concentration :** Right concentration is the last path to the attainment of Nirvāna. It consists of four meditations.

a) In the first state, sensuality is eliminated.
b) The second state is concerned with the deep tranquility.
c) The third state is a mental consciousness in which all passions are eliminated.

d) The last one is a state of complete tranquility and self-passions. Thus, it is the state of perfect wisdom.



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q.9.** State whether the following statements are true or false :

a) The way of cessation of suffering is called Nirvāṇa. (True / false)

b) Right determination consists of four meditations. (True / false)

c) Buddha upholds the eight-fold path for the attainment of Nirvāṇa. (True or false)

**Q.10.** What are the eight folds paths of Buddhism?

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**Q.11.** What is right livelihood, according to Buddha? (Answer in about 30 words)

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## 7.9 LET US SUM UP

- The four fold of paths of Buddhism are called "Four Noble Truths"
- The second noble truth of Buddhism holds that every event must have a cause. and nothing can happen without a cause.
- The second noble truth of Buddhism is associated with the theory of causation. It is known as Pratityasamut pāda or dependent origination.
- According to Buddha, Ignorance is the root cause of all human sufferings.

- The twelve links of dependent origination are called the Bhāva-chakra, Dharma-chakra, Pratitya Samutpāda Chakra etc.
- Buddha holds that there are eight paths for the attainment of Nirvāna. These eight fold paths are called the astāngika-mārga of Buddhism.
- Nirvāna means the cessation of suffering.



## 7.10 FURTHER READINGS


1) Chatterjee, S. C. & Dutta, D. M. (1968). *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. University of Calcutta.
2) Hiriyanna, M. (1993). *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass publishers pvt Ltd.
3) Radhakrishnan, S. (1923). *Indian Philosophy* (2 volumes). Oxford: University Press.
4) Sharma, C. D. (1973). *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass.
5) Sinha, J. N. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*. Calcutta: New Central Book Agency Pvt. Ltd.




## 7.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans. to Q. No. 1 :** a) False b) True c) True d) False

**Ans. to Q. No. 2 :** Three baskets of teachings.

**Ans. to Q. No. 3 :** Hināyana and Mahāyāna.

**Ans. to Q. No. 4 :** a) False b)True c)True

**Ans. to Q. No. 5 :** It holds that every event must have a cause. And without a cause nothing can happen. That is why Buddha holds that the will to live or desire is the cause of suffering. When the cause disappears the effect also disappears. It indicates that depending on the cause the effect arises.

**Ans. to Q. No. 6 :** Nāma-rūpa

**Ans. to Q. No. 7 :** a) True b) False c) True d) True

# UNIT 8: BUDDHISM: THEORY OF MOMENTARINESS (KSANIKAVĀDA)

## UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives
8.2 Introduction
8.3 General idea about Buddhism
8.4 Concept of Dependent Origination or Pratityasamutpada
8.5 Concept of Momentariness or Ksanikavāda
8.6 Criticism of Momentariness
8.7 Brief account of No-soul theory
8.8 Let us sum up
8.9 Further Reading
8.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
8.11 Model Questions

## 8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe Dependent origination
- analyse the theory of Momentariness
- explain the concept of No-soul theory

## 8.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces you to the concept of momentariness. But before we discuss about the theory of Momentariness, we should discuss the concept of Dependent Origination or Pratityasamutpada. The doctrine of Dependent origination is considered as the foundation of all the teachings of Buddha. It is contained in Buddha's Second Noble Truth which says that there is a cause of suffering and in the Third Noble Truth which says that there is cessation of suffering. For Buddha, suffering means sam?sa?ra and cessation of suffering means Nirvana. After observing the impact of disease old age and death on human beings Buddha left his home to find

the solution of the misery of the earthly life. As a solution of this problem he found Pratityasamutpada. It is the central teaching of Buddha and his other teachings can be easily deduced from it.

## 8.3 GENERAL IDEA ABOUT BUDDHISM

Traditionally, Indian philosophy is classified into two broad classes: Astika(orthodox) and Nastika (heterodox). In case of Indian philosophy, by Astika or Vedic we mean those philosophical schools which believe in the authority of the Vedas. Again, by Nastika we mean those philosophical schools that do not believe in the authority of the Vedas. Among the nine philosophical schools Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Mimamsa and Vedānta are know as Astika and Carvaka, Jainism and Buddhism are known as Nastika philosophies as they refuse to accept the authority of Vedas as infallible.

Thus, Buddhism does not accept the authority of the Vedas and is non-vedic in nature. Buddhism is the elaboration of the teachings of Buddha. In reality, Buddha was an ethical teacher who preached orally. His teachings may be found through 'Tipitaka'or 'Three Baskets of the Law'. These three pitakas are: (i) Vinaya Pitaka, (ii) Sutta Pitaka and (iii) Abhidhamma Pitaka. Vinaya Pitaka deals with the discipline of the order. Sutta Pitaka is considered as the compilation of the utterences of Buddha. Again, Abhidhamma Pitaka deals with philosophical discussions.

Generally, according to the Upanisads the eternal Atman or Brahman alone is real. It is the transcendental reality, consciousness and bliss. On the other hand Buddha taught that everything is impermanent; there is no permanent soul or self. The soul is an impermanent mind-body-complex. There are no permanent substances except impermanent qualities. Our life is full of suffering, even the whole world is full of suffering. Suffering is because of our will to live. Again, will to live is due to ignorance. Ignorance is the false knowledge of impermanent as permanent. It is the root cause of all suffering. The aim of Buddha's teaching is to remove ignorance and attain nirvana on this earth.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** State whether the following statements are true or false:

a. Buddhism accepts the authority of the Vedas.(True/False)

b. Buddhism is the elaboration of the teachings of Buddha.(True/False)

c. Buddha, the ethical teacher preached orally.(True/False)

d. Buddhism accepts the existence of soul.(True/False)

e. The aim of Buddha's teaching is to attain NirvâGa.(True/False)

**Q 2:** What is the root cause of suffering according to Buddha?

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**Q 3:** What did Buddha teach?

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## 8.4 DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

Dependent origination or Pratityasamutpada is that doctrine which asserts that whatever exists arises from causes and conditions. Because, everything is conditional and dependent on a cause. Nothing happens by chance. Pratityasamutpada means arising (Samutpada) after getting (pratitya). It means production of an effect is possible under a complement of cause and conditions. If the cause and conditions disappear, then only the effect appears. From the destruction of the cause and condition the effect emerges. Every object of thought is necessarily relative. The twelve links of the Causal Wheel of Dependent Origination may be mentioned as follows:

1. Ignorance (Avidy?)

2. Impressions of karmic forces (samaskara)
3. Initial consciousness of the embryo (vijñana)
4. Psycho-physical organism (nama-rupa)
5. Six sense organs including mind (Sadayatana)
6. Sense-object contact (sparsha)
7. Sense-experience (vedana)
8. Thirst for sense enjoyment (trsna)
9. Craving to the enjoyment (upadana)
10. Will to born (bhava)
11. Birth or rebirth (jāti)
12. Old age and death (jarā-marana).

Among these twelve links the first two are related to our past life, the last two to future life and the rest to present life. Hence, it is considered as the cycle of birth and death. It is the vicious circle of causation. This circle never ends with death. Death is regarded as the beginning of a new life. It is called Bhava-chakra. The twelve links of dependent origination can be destroyed only when its root cause ignorance is destroyed.

The doctrine of Pratityasamutpada opposes to Accidentalism, Naturalism, Fatalism and Supernaturalism. Because, according to Accidentalism, an event is an accidental happening and it denies the law of causality. Again, Naturalism holds that an effect is produced due to its own inherent nature. Fatalism also states that all things good and bad are predetermined by Fate. Further, Supernaturalism holds the view that an event is generated by the supernatural intervention of God. Hence, Buddhism accepts that all existences physical and psychical are subject to the law of universal causation. Nothing is uncaused and eternal.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 4:** What does Pratityasamutpâda mean?

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**Q 5:** Why does Pratityasamutpâda oppose Accidentalism?

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**Q 6:** Why did Buddha mention 'nothing is uncaused and eternal'?

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## 8.5 THEORY OF MOMENTARINESS OR KSANIKAVADA

The doctrine of 'Pratityasamutpada' focuses the Buddhist theory of the transitory nature of things. All things according to Buddha are subject to change and decay. As everything originates from some condition, it disappears when the condition ceases to be. Many poets and philosophers have stated about the transitoriness of life and worldly things. This view got the status of the theory of Impermanence in Buddha's teaching. His followers developed it as the theory of momentariness. 'Momentariness' means everything has conditional as well as non-permanent existence and things last not even for short period of time, but exist for one partless moment only.

According to Buddha there is nothing permanent in this universe. For him the body, sensation and consciousness are impermanent and sorrowful. None of them is substantial. They are appearances empty of substance or reality. Impressed by the transitoriness of objects, the ceaseless mutation and transformation of things Buddha formulated a philosophy of change. He established that life is nothing but a series of manifestations of becomings and extinctions. All things change. There is nothing human or divine which is permanent. For example, the flame maintains itself unchanged in appearance, every moment it is another and not the same flame. The stream is sustained in its flow by ever new waters. The becoming of all is the central fact of Buddhism. Absolute reality is not the property of anything on earth.

Identity of objects is only another name for continuity of becoming. A child - a boy - a youth - a man - an old man are one. The seed and the tree are one. The banyan tree a thousand years old is one and the same plant with the seed out of which it has grown. It is the succession that gives the appearance of an unbroken identity. The seeming identity from moment to moment consists in a continuity of moments which we may call the continuity of an ever changing identity. To account for the continuity of the world in the absence of permanent substratum, Buddha announced the law of causation and made it the basis of continuity. The law of universal causation with its corollary of the eternal continuity of becoming is the chief contribution of Buddhism to Indian thought. In Buddha's view existence is transformation. It is a series of successive states. All things undergo changes indicated in utpada (origination), sthiti (staying), Jara (growth) and nirodha (destruction).

The theory of impermanence held by early Buddhism is developed by Buddha's followers into the view of Momentariness. But it may be stated here that the concept of impermanence is different from the concept of momentariness. Because, when we say 'things are anitya or impermanent', it is different from saying that things are momentary or Ksanika. Buddha clearly distinguished the momentary character of mental processes from the impermanent nature of non-mental reality. When the momentary character is extended to all existence we get the ksanikavada. The followers of Buddha believed that all existence is momentary. Permanent existence for them is a contradiction. It may be mentioned that the theory of momentariness is the most important theory of Hinayana school of Buddhism. According to it everything is subject to birth and death, to production and destruction, to creation and decay.

For Buddha, existence is impermanent. All things mental and physical are transitory. There is neither being nor non-being but becoming. Everything is becoming, changing, flux. The world of becoming is governed by the law of Causality (Pratityasamutpada). All individuals are series of momentary states of consciousness. The theory of momentariness is corollary of Dependent Origination. Things depend

on their causes and conditions. As things are relative, dependent, conditional and finite, so they must be momentary. If we say that a thing arises depending on its cause is to admit that it is momentary, for when the cause is removed the thing will cease to be. That which arises, that which is born, that which is produced must necessarily be subject to death and destruction. Again, which is subject to death and destruction is not permanent. Besides, which is not permanent is momentary. The No-soul theory is based on it. When everything is momentary, the soul is also momentary and therefore relative and false. There is no permanent soul but only succession of momentary mental processes. Thus, everything lasts only for a moment.

## 8.6 CRITICISM OF MOMENTARINESS

The theory of momentariness is criticized by many thinkers. Because, if we accept the view of momentariness, then we have to admit causation and continuity with their correlates of permanence and identity or resolve the world into a devil's dance of wild forces and give up all attempts at comprehending it. Sankara pointed out the inconsistency between causation with its implication of permanence and the theory of momentariness.



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 7:** Mention whether the following statements are true or false:

a. Theory of momentariness is based on Pratityasamutpâda. (True/False)

b. According to Buddha everything is permanent and eternal. (True/False)

c. Buddhism holds that the idea of permanent existence is a contradiction. (True/False)

d. For Buddha, everything lasts for a moment only. (True/False)

e. Buddha denied the substantiality of the objects. (True/False)

**Q 8:** What is the theory of Momentariness?

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## 8.7 CONCEPT OF NO-SOUL THEORY

One of the most valuable theories of Buddhism is the No-soul theory. Generally, there is a common belief that in human being there is an abiding permanent substance called soul (atman). It persists through all the changes that overcome body and exists before birth and after death. Again, the soul is believed to migrate from one body to another. But with the theories of conditioned existence and universal change Buddha denied the existence of soul. According to Buddha, man is only a conventional name for a collection of different constituents, the material body (Kaya), the immaterial mind (manas), and the formless consciousness (vijñjna). Just as a chariot is a collection of wheels, axles, shafts etc., the existence of man is dependent upon this collection and it ceases to exist when the collection breaks up. The soul or the ego denotes nothing more than this collection.

The theory of 'No-soul' may have two types of meaning: (i) The self is an aggregate of impermanent mental and bodily processes; (ii) The world is unsubstantial and void. The soul is impermanent. It is series of successive mental and bodily processes which are impermanent. It is a stream of cognitions. There is a continuity of constantly changing mental processes in it. The self is an aggregate of body and four kinds of mental processes, feeling, perception, disposition and self-consciousness.

Hence, the meaning of Buddha's No-soul theory is that the world is unsubstantial and soulless. All eternal things are aggregate of changing qualities. All forms of existence, material and psychical are impermanent and soulless. The concept of soul is replaced by that of an unbroken stream of consciousness. As the present state of consciousness inherits its characters from previous ones, the past continues in the present through its effect. Thus memory becomes explicable even without a soul. This theory of the non-existence of soul (Anatma vada) has an important role in understanding the teachings of Buddha.

Again, for Buddha, from a psychological point of view, man may be considered as a combination of five kinds of changing states called 'Pañca-skan?dhas'. These are: (a) Form (rupa) which consists of the different factors that we perceive in this body having form; (b) feelings (vedana) of pleasure, pain and indifference; (c) perception including understanding and naming (sañjñ?); (d) tendencies generated by the impressions of past experience (samskaras) and (e) consciousness (vijñ?na). The last four are known as Nama. Thus, there is no eternal soul in human being except this 'nama-rupa' combination.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 9:** What are the two types of meaning of Buddha's 'No-soul theory'?

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**Q 10:** What is soul according to Buddha ?

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## 8.8 LET US SUM UP

- According to Buddhism everything is impermanent in this universe.
- Buddha's theory of impermanence was developed by his followers as the theory of Momentariness.
- For Buddha life is nothing but only a series of manifestations of becoming and extinctions.
- Everything is changeable, impermanent and flux.
- The law of universal causation with its corollary of the eternal continuity of becoming is the chief contribution of Buddhism to Indian thought.
- According to Buddhism permanent existence is self-contradiction.

# UNIT 9: BUDDHISM: THE CONCEPT OF NIRVANA

## UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 Brief Outlook on Buddhism
9.4 Concept of Four Noble Truths
9.5 First Noble Truth
9.6 Second Noble Truth
9.7 Third Noble Truth
9.8 Fourth Noble Truth
9.9 Concept of Nirvâna
9.10 Let us sum up
9.11 Further Reading
9.12 Answers to Check Your Progress
9.13 Model Questions

## 9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to :

- analyse the Four Noble Truths
- explain the Concept of 'Astângika mârga'
- describe the concept of Nirvâna

## 9.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces you about the Buddhist concept of Nirvana. Nirvana means 'Moksa' or liberation. To analyse the concept of Nirvana, at first we have to discuss about the Four Noble Truths (Arya Satya) or catvari arya satyani. Basically, Buddha was an ethical teacher and reformer rather than a metaphysician. He preached orally. The message of his enlightenment shows people the way to lead towards Nirvana. Buddha found metaphysical questions useless in our practical life. So, he tried to enlighten people on

the most important questions of life: suffering, its origin, cessation from it and the path leading to its cessation.

## 9.3 BRIEF OUTLOOK ON BUDDHISM

Buddhism is known as Nastika school of Indian philosophy. Like the great teachers of ancient times, Buddha taught people through the medium of conversation. For a long time his disciples imparted his oral instructions to successive generations. The knowledge of Buddha's teachings may be found in 'Tipitaka' or the three baskets of law namely, Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka and Abhidhamma Pitaka.

The teachings of Buddha were variously interpreted and developed by his disciples. Religiously, Buddhism is divided into two important sects: Hinayana and Mahayana. Like Jainism Hinayana is religion without God and Karma takes the place of God. Hinayana emphasizes liberation for and by the individual himself. According to Hinayana, Nirvana is negative. On the other hand, Mahayana believes that Nirvana is not a negative cessation of misery but a positive state of bliss.



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** State whether the following statements are true or false:

a. Buddha taught people orally. (True/False)

b. The knowledge of Buddha's teachings may be found in 'Tipitaka'. (True/False)

c. Religiously Buddhism is divided into three kinds. (True/False)

d. Buddha did not accept that the world is full of suffering. (True/False)

e. Nirvâna means bondage. (True/False)

**Q 2:** What are Hinayâna and Mahâyâna schools of Buddhism ?

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## 9.4 CONCEPT OF FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

Buddha basically was an ethical teacher and reformer. He did not prefer to discuss to metaphysical questions. Instead, he always tried to enlighten persons on the most important questions of life: suffering, its origin, its cessation and the path of its cessation. Hence, from his spiritual experience Buddha became convinced of the four noble truths that (i) there is suffering, (ii) there is cause of suffering, (iii) there is cessation of suffering or it can be suppressed and (iv) there is a way to accomplish it or there is a way leading to its cessation.

Let us discuss about the four noble truths in the following way:

## 9.5 FIRST NOBLE TRUTH

The first noble truth 'There is suffering' (Du?kha) is considered as the tyranny of pain. Life is full of misery and pain. Each and everything in this universe is painful. Birth is painful, death is painful, disease is painful, decay is union with the unpleasant and is painful and separation from the pleasant is painful. It means that all that springs from attachment are painful. It is a common experience that the world is full of suffering. Poverty, disease, old age, death, selfishness, greed, anger, hatred, conflicts, exploitation are flourishing excessively in this world. No one can deny this fact. Hence life of an individual is painful.

## 9.6 SECOND NOBLE TRUTH

The second noble truth is 'There is cause of suffering' (Dukha-samudaya). It is concerned with the causes of suffering. According to Buddhism, everything has a cause; nothing comes out of nothing- 'ex nihilo nihil fit'. The existence of every event is dependent upon its cause and condition. Everything in this universe is considered as conditional, relative and limited. So, being a fact suffering also must have a cause. It must depend on some conditions. Craving generates the cycle of birth and death and is the cause of suffering. Craving is of three fold: (a) Craving for sensual pleasure, (b) craving for being and (c) craving for wealth.

Buddha stated that because of birth (jati) humans suffer or there is suffering (jara-marana). If a man were not born, he would not have been subject to the miserable states. Again, birth has its own condition i.e. the will to become (bhava) or born. Mental craving (upadana) to objects is the responsible condition for the will to born. The craving is also because of thirst (trsna) or desire to enjoy objects. Thirst again is due to sense experience (vedana) which is due to sense-object-contact (sparsa). Sense-object-contact is also because of the six sense organs of cognition (sadayatana). It is again due to psycho-physical organism (nama-rupa), which is dependent upon initial consciousness of the embryo (vijñana). Vijñana again is based on impressions of karmic forces (samaskara). It is also because of the ignorance of truth (avidya) which is the root cause of all suffering.

## 9.7 THIRD NOBLE TRUTH

The third noble truth is related to the cessation of suffering (dukha nirodha). Buddha viewed that though the world is full of suffering, it is not without a cause. Again, there is cessation of suffering i.e. it can be suppressed. Everything in this universe is dependent upon some causes and conditions. If these causes and conditions are removed, the effect also will cease to exist. Hence, as an effect suffering also have causes and conditions. If these causes and conditions are removed, then suffering will definitely be destroyed. Ignorance is the main cause of suffering and if it is removed suffering will cease to exist. By removing ignorance man can attain liberation or nirvana. It may be mentioned here that Buddha believed that Nirvana can be attained in this life. When the control of passions and constant contemplation of truth lead a human being to perfect wisdom through the stages of concentration, then he becomes free from the worldly attachment. He is therefore liberated and called as 'Arhat.' This state of human being is called Nirvana.

## 9.8 FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH

The fourth noble truth is known as 'Dukha-Nirodha-Marga' or there is a way leading to the cessation of suffering. There is an ethical and spiritual path by following which suffering or pain can be removed. Buddha himself followed this path and suggested to follow it. The right knowledge regarding the causes of suffering shows the way of liberation. Buddha recommended eight steps or rules to attain liberation. These are known as 'Noble Eightfold Path' or 'Astangika-marga'. For liberation, eight fold path should be practised. It consists of eight steps. These are as follow:

**(i) Right View (Samyag drsti):** The first step towards liberation is right view. It is defined as the correct knowledge about the four noble truths. It was stated by Buddha that the knowledge about the four noble truths helps moral reformation and leads the human being towards the goal-Nirvana.

**(ii) Right Resolve (Samyag sankalpa):** The mere knowledge of truth would be meaningless, if one is not firmly determined to reform life in their light. Therefore, the human being who wants to attain liberation should renounce worldliness, give up ill feelings towards others and stop doing any harm to others. These tree are the constituents of right resolve.

**(iii) Right Speech (Samyag vak):** Samyag sankalpa or right determination should be used in practice. It should guide and control our speech. People should keep away themselves from lying, slander,unkind words etc.

**(iv) Right Conduct (Samyag karmanta):** Right resolve is not limited to right speech only but it includes right conduct too. The concept of 'Pañca-Sila' i.e. abstention from killing, stealing, sensuality, lying and intoxication is included in right conduct.

**(v) Right livelihood (samyag ajiva):** Right livelihood means maintaining one's life by honest means. Human beings should perform action in consistency with good determination. They should never follow forbidden means to lead their lives.

**(vi) Right Effort (Samyag vyayama):** People should maintain a constant effort to root out evil thoughts. Because, if a person tries to live a reformed life through right views, resolution, speech,action and livelihood, he may be misled by the evil ideas that deep rooted in the mind. So, people should have constant endeavour to maintain moral progress by removing evil thoughts.

**(vii) Right Mindfulness (Samyag smrti):** The person who is willing to attain liberation should always remember and contemplate the body as body, the sensations as sensations, mind as mind and the mental states as mental states. We should have constant meditation on the knowledge gained through the feeling of soul, body, or perishable objects. If we cannot become mindful, we think that the body, the senses, the mind and the mental states are permanent and valuable. Hence, attachment arises to such things and we feel grief when we loss them. In this way, we become subject to bondage and misery. But, our contemplation on the perishable nature of these things helps us to remain free from attachment and misery.

**(viii) Right Concentration (Samyag samadhi):** Right concentration is the last step in the path that leads to 'Nirvana'. Any individual who has successfully guided his life in the light of the seven rules and thereby freed himself from all passions and evil thoughts is eligible to enter into the stages of concentration. These stages lead the human being to his goal i.e. cessation of suffering. These stages of right concentration are: (a) The first stage is on reasoning and investigation regarding the truths. Here is a joy of pure thinking. (b) The second stage is unruffled meditation, free from reasoning. Here is a joy of tranquility. (c) The third stage is detachment from even the joy of tranquility. There is then indifference even to such joy but a feeling of bodily ease still persists. (d) The fourth stage is detachment from bodily ease too. There are perfect equanimity and indifference and it is the state of Nirvana or perfect wisdom.

Thus, it may be mentioned here that the eightfold path of Nirvāna consists of three main things - conduct (sila), concentration (samrdhi) and knowledge (prajña).



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 3:** Mention whether the following statements are true or false :

a. According to Buddha ignorance is the root cause of suffering. (True/False)

b. Buddha emphasized ninefold path to attain liberation. (True/False)

c. Buddha did not mention any path for cessation of suffering. (True/False)

d. Buddha argued that right knowledge can remove ignorance.

e. Pratityasmutpâda is known as 'Bhava-cakra'. (True/False)

**Q 4:** What is the second noble truth according to Buddha?

.....

.....

**Q 5:** What is right concentration ?

.....

.....

## 9.9 CONCEPT OF NIRVĀNA

The concept of Nirvāna is considered as the highest end for human beings. The word 'Nirvāna' literally means 'blowing out' or 'cooling'. Blowing out suggests extinction. Cooling suggests not complete annihilation, but only the dying out of hot passion. According to Buddhism, Nirvāna is not the blessed fellowship with God. By nirvāna Buddha meant only the extinction of false desire. Nirvāna which is the consummation of the spiritual struggle is a positive blessedness. It is the goal of perfection and not the abyss of annihilation. Through the destruction of all that is individual in us, we enter into communion with the whole universe and become an integral part of the great purpose. Nirvāna is an eternal condition for being, for it is not a samskāra or what is made or put together, which is impermanent. The illusion of becoming is founded on the reality of nirvāna. Nirvāna is the root principle of all and so is indefinable.

Nirvāna is compared to deep sleep and is stated that in Nirvāna the soul loses its individuality and lapses into the objective whole. It is neither annihilation nor existence as we conceive it. It is the state of activity which is not the subject of causality, for it is unconditional freedom. It is the state of real and enduring though not existent in the world of time and space. In one sense it is self-extinction, in another sense absolute freedom. According to Buddha, to think that Nirvāna is annihilation is 'a wicked heresy.'

Nirvāna is the extinction of greed, hate, anger and delusion. It is the extinction of becoming or rebirth. It is considered as complete extinction of passions and consequent suffering. It is neither annihilation nor inaction, but compatible with active intellectual and social life. It is that state of enlightenment which removes all ignorance. It is the state of perfect self-possession and unconditioned freedom. The liberated person is devoid of egoism or the sense of individuality. There is extinction of individual existence in the state of Nirvāna. However, attainment of Nirvāna does not make a person inactive and indifferent to the world around him. Buddha himself led an active life from his Enlightenment to the day of his death. Nirvāna is a way of life, in conformity with the spirit of Buddha's teachings that wisdom consists in treading the middle path, avoiding the extremes of asceticism, inactivity and indifference on one hand, and that of frantic pursuit of mindless pursuit of pleasure on the other.

In the Pali texts Nirvana has been described as a state of bliss. The liberated person is free from evil desire, he has perfect knowledge about the four noble truths. The Dhammapada states that Nirvāna is a state of bliss, crown of happiness, perfect peace, free from greed, hatred and delusion. It is that happiness which is distinct from pleasure. It is the blissful end.

The depth of Nirvāna is immeasurable and unfathomable as the ocean. It is inconceivable. According to Buddha, Nirvāna is neither annihilation nor eternal existence but an indescribable state of perfect wisdom.

We may mention here about two kinds of Nirvāna. These are: (a) Upādhisesa and (b) Anupādhisesa. In upādhisesa Nirvāna only human

passions are extinct and in anupādhisesa Nirvāna all being is extinct. When we say that people attain Nirvāna in this world, we mean upadhisesa Nirvāna. It is the arhatship which becomes pariNirvāna when the Arhat disappears from this transitory world. Parinirvāna means absolute perfection of being.

According to Hinayana school of Buddhism, liberation is only for and by the individual himself. It is the difficult path of self-help. Its goal is Arhathood or the state of the ideal saint who obtains personal salvation. On the other hand, Mahāyāna school which is considered as Great vehicle, the Big ship can accommodate a much larger number of people and can safely and securely take them to the shore of Nirvāna from the troubled waters of the ocean of sa?s?ra. Hinayana is considered as a small vehicle that aims at attaining arhathood. Mahāyāna considers Nirvāna as a positive state of bliss.

Thus, according to Buddhism the world is full of suffering. Ignorance is the root cause of suffering. Ignorance can be removed only through knowledge. Hence, knowledge is the sole means of liberation. To get rid of suffering people should have the right knowledge about four noble truths and they should follow the eightfold path or Astangika mārga provided by Buddha. When an individual follows the eightfold path, he can attain nirvana in this life.



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 6:** (a) What is the etymological meaning of Nirvāna ?

(b) Is Nirvâna the abyss of annihilation ?

(c) What does Dhammapāda state about Nirvâna ?

(d) Can the depth of Nirvāna be measured ?

(e) What are the two kinds of Nirvāna ?



## 9.10 LET US SUM UP

- Buddha taught people through the medium of conversation.

- The knowledge of Buddha's teachings may be found in 'Tipitaka' i.e. Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka and Abhidhamma Pitaka.
- Religiously, Buddhism is divided into two important sects: Hinayâna and Mahâyâna.
- Hinayâna emphasizes liberation for and by the individual himself.
- Mahâyâna believes that nirvâna is not a negative cessation of misery but a positive state of bliss.
- Buddha basically was an ethical teacher and reformer who always tried to enlighten persons on the most important questions of suffering, its origin, its cessation and the path of its cessation.
- According to Buddha, life is full of misery and pain.
- According to Buddhism, everything has a cause; nothing comes out of nothing- 'ex nihilo nihil fit'.
- Ignorance is the root cause of suffering which can be removed only through right knowledge.
- Buddha showed eightfold path to attain liberation.
- Nirvâna is the goal of perfection.



## 9.11 FURTHER READING

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# UNIT 10: REALISTIC SCHOOLS OF BUDDHISM: VAIBHASIKA AND SAUTRĀNTIKA

## UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives
10.2 Introduction
10.3 Sarvastivada or Vaibhasika
10.3.1 The Dharma Theory
10.3.1.1 The Doctrine that 'All Exist'
10.4 Sautrantika
10.4.1 Theory of Momentariness
10.4.2 Skandhamatratas
10.4.3 Nirvāna
10.5 Let us sum up
10.6 Further Reading
10.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
10.8 Model Questions

## 10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain why Sarvastivāda and Sautrantika are called Realist Schools of Buddhism
- explain the basic doctrines of Sarvastivāda School
- discuss the dharma theory of Sarvastivāda School
- Explain the theory of 'All Exist'
- describe the no-soul doctrine
- discuss the basic doctrines of Sautrantika School
- Explain the theory of Momentariness
- Explain the theory of skandhamatratas

## 10.2 INTRODUCTION

Sarvasitvada, also often called Vaibhasikas, came to be a prominent school of Theravadins or Staviravadins. It is a Hinyana school with its pitakas in Sanskrit. Sarvastivada came to denote important realistic school of Buddhism. The school is characterized by its sober, realistic spirit. Unlike the Sarvasitvadins, the Sautrantikas reject the authority of Abhidharma. In fact they derive their name from the fact that they accept only the sutras as the word of the Buddha. Sautrantikas are not really an independent school with own cloisters and order-rules. They are rather a group of thinkers who came to disagree on intellectual issues with the Sarvastivada. They opposed the supposed existences of the traditional Sarvastivadins. The Sarvastivadins, for example, held the view, that past and future have real existence, an entity passing from past to future only changes its mode, but does not come into existence or cease to be. Sautrantikas replied that entities should not be multiplied without necessity and kept to the common sense view that past is that which did exist, but does not exist now anymore, and the future that does not yet exist, but shall exist in the future. Sautrantikas deny the existence of Nirvana as a separate state, defended by Sarvastivadns, saying that the end of something existing, namely, suffering at the circle of rebirth, is not itself an existence but simply the end of existence. The Sautrantikas must have been counted among the Hinyana schools, because they accept the reality of the temporal world and share the essentials of dharma-theory with the Theras and the Sarvastivadins.

## 10.3 SARVASTIVADA OR VAIBHASIKA

The Tripitaka of Sarvastivadins is composed of Vinaya-pitaka, Sutra-pitaka and Abhidharma-pitaka. There are two different Vibhasas commenting on Abhidharma-pitaka. The more important of the two is a commentary on Jnanaprasthanasastra. The doctrinal importance of the Vibhasa was such that it gave Sarvastivada its name Vaibhasikas.

The most unique thought in the system of Sarvastivadins is denial of soul or self. Whereas the Theravadins only say that a self or soul cannot be

found, the Sarvastivadins denied the existence of soul outright. Sarvasitvadins explain the process of rebirth without a soul. They also discuss the dharma theory according to which all existing things are reduced to dharmas in the sense of them being the last principles or basic realities.

### 10.3.1. The Dharma Theory

Sarvastivada believed in plurality of principles or dharmas in the universe. Number of dharmas listed by Sarvastivadins is seventy-five. Out of these, three are non-conditioned (asamskita) and seventy-two are conditioned (samskrta). From the beginning one has to keep two groups of dharmas, non-conditioned and conditioned separately. Non-conditioned (asamskrta) dharmas are eternal in the sense that they are not conditioned by karmic causes and are not subject to formative power of karma. These do not participate in creation of the sorrowful world. The Sarvastivada counts three non-conditioned dharmas: space (akasa), suppression without knowledge (apratisamkhyanirodha), and suppression through knowledge (pratisamkhyanorodha).

Set against these non-conditioned dharma are the conditioned (samskrta) dharmas. The Sarvastivadins classify the conditioned dharmas into four types:

(1) Citta (mind): Consciousness and thought-activity

(2) Caitta (mental state): The innate abilities and talents of an individual as well as his moods, emotions, impulses and interests

(3) Rupa (matter): The sensual or perceptive faculties, the corresponding sense-spheres, namely, the visible, audible, etc. and the contents of perception

(4) Visamprayukta-samskaras (states independent of the mind): Non-physical relations and processes like obtaining, non-obtaining, vitality, ageing, impermanence etc.

According to dharma theory, all empirical beings and everything that is reflected in them as the external world are phenomena formed by conditioned dharmas. The dharmas are the structural elements of empirical existence that cannot be further reduced. Caused and directed by karma, they combine

in certain ratios and form the phenomena which we experience as ourselves and as the world. The whole of reality is exhausted in the phenomena constituted by conditioned dharmas there is no substratum, or 'essence' behind or beyond them.

It is the shortness of their activity which qualifies conditioned dharmas to enact the dharma process. Sarvastivada holds that conditioned dharmas are effective only for a short time. But, these dharmas do not have origination and have existed always. The dharmas simply change from a latent state to activity. The Sarvasitvadins explain the functioning of dharma by the example of a stone on a mountain peak: For a long time the stone lies there ineffective. One day it begins to fall and thus becomes effective until it comes to rest and slides back once more to ineffectiveness. The stone on the hill is comparable to dharma of the future, while its falling is like dharma of the present and when it comes to rest, it is dharma of the past. In the stone, as in dharma the three times are not dead: past, present and future co-exist in them.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** Fill up the blanks:

a. Sarvastivada is a Hinyana School with its pitakas in _____.

b. The most unique thought in the system of Sarvastivadins is denial of _____.

c. The Sarvastivada counts three non-conditioned dharmas: _____, _____, and _____.

**10.3.1.1 All things exist- Sarvam asti**

Thus, Sarvastivada believed that it was not only the things in present that existed, but also the things in the past and future which are in continuity with present. 'All exist'- this is the axiom of Sarvastivadins from which the school took its name. The Sarvastivadins maintain the existence of five kinds of dharmas (asamskrta and four classifications of samskrta) in their states at all times- whether in the past, present or future. That is, in some

sense, all principles, all dharmas, exist, including those of the past and the future. The dharmas of the past are transmitted into the present while the dharmas of the future are latent in the present. This may be illustrated with an example: the past mango seed transmits its 'mangoness' into the present; and similarly, the 'future mango' receives its 'mangoness' from the present. It is here that that the Sarvasitivadins are different from other Buddhist schools. Other Buddhist schools maintained that only those of the present exist with, perhaps in a sense, some past actions which have not yet produced their full results.

However, regarding the existence of being and objects in past, present and future, the Sarvastivada exponents differed amongst themselves and interpreted in diverse ways:

(a) Dharmatrata states that the objects remain the same and undergo only modal changes, that is, in form and quality, giving rise to different notions, such as past, present and future. A thing originates when it takes new modes or form or quality and is destroyed when they are abandoned. For example: in case of gold and gold ornaments, gold remains the same though it undergoes change in form and quality; similarly in case of milk and curd, the substance milk remains the same while its form and quality change in curd. There is only change in modality in both the examples. These modal changes are described as past, present and future or as origin and decay etc. A certain object gives up the future mode or form and quality and reaches the present mode. Similarly, it may abandon its present mode or form and quality and attain a past mode. It is because of this fact that an object changes only in its mode, that the future, past and present objects are not entirely different from one another.

(b) According to Ghosaka, every phenomenal object has three characteristics, namely birth, old age and death, which exist with the object all the time. For example, when a baby is born, it carries with it the characteristics of old age and death too. Similarly, when milk is drawn or gold ornaments are made, they carry with them old age and death. Origination, old age and death together exist in an object. The presenteness is actual use while past and the future are distinguished as attainable. The

inception of an object is called birth or present while old age and death, which will be forthcoming, are future. When the baby grows old, or the milk turns into curd, or the gold ornament is worn out, its old age becomes present while its inception becomes past and death becomes future. Dharmatrata deals with the object and quality and form separately while Ghosaka takes the two inseparably. Ghosaka holds that if the three characteristics do not exist together, then present cannot be come past and future cannot become present.

(c) Vasumitra states that objects exist at all the three times- past, present and future. Objects do not undergo any change either in substance or in their form and quality or in their characteristics as held by Dharmaratra and Ghosaka. According to him, it is activity or function that determines the pastness, presentness and futureness of an object. When activity is taking place, it is called present; when activity ceases, it is called past and when activity will take place it is called future. For example: when eyes function and see and object as it is in a substance, it is present; when eyes have completed seeing the object, the object is regarded as past and when the object will be looked at, it is future. In other words, in all objects all the three time-factors are co-existent and it is the activity or the function that determines the time or nature of an object. If the three time-factors did not co-exist, then the past and the future would become non-existent like hare's horn and pastness and futureness are not absolutely non-existent. All phenomenal objects exist in the past, present and future.

(d) There is a fourth view expressed by Buddhadeva. According to him, phenomenal objects exist at all the time. They are referred to as past, present and future only relatively. Like Vasumitra he rejects the view that objects undergo changes in form and quality or in time-characteristics. According to him, an object remains the same at all times. He says that while every object possesses all the three time-factors at the same time, only one time-factor is pointed out in relation to another. To give an example: a certain object is curd in its presentness, milk in its pastness and cream in its futureness. In this manner, Buddhadeva established existence of an object at all times.

### 10.3.2 No-soul Theory

Sarvastivada believed in no-soul, the absence of any permanent substance in an individual, though they admitted the permanent reality of all things. The dharma process provides the Sarvastivadin the theoretical basis to rebirth without a soul. Dharmas come into being due to karmic pre-conditions which on account of one's karma unite to compose an individual. Karma is the causing and formative power for the dharmas. When the dharmas that constitute a being today disintegrates at his death, the action-intentions which the being had endorsed while alive determine which new dharmas will unite in 'his' new form of existence. This new existence is not identical with the old one, but owes it to the old one for the nature of one's being for without the earlier existence the new existence would not have come into existence.

Sarvastivadins hold that personality is a dynamic stream of conditioned dharmas. Such an interpretation has enabled the Sarvastivadins to talk of personality while denying existence of a soul or self. Being, like objects in general is nothing beyond what is so given. Beings are actually designations of the series of successive existences. They are nothing but a collection of dharmas and have no stable nature of their own. Expressions like 'suffering', 'karma', and 'liberation' do relate to the subject but this is only an empirical one: a dharma combination. The identity of a living being can be compared to that of a fire consuming a forest. The fire can be denoted as one fire, but in fact the flames renew themselves constantly, and no one of them subsist for the shortest time.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** State True or False

a. Sarvastivāda believed that it was only the things in present that existed.

b. According to Dharmatrata, every phenomenal object has three characteristics, namely birth, old age and death, which exist with the object all the time.

c. Vasumitra states that objects exist at all the three times- past, present and future.

## 10.4 SAUTRĀNTIKA

The Sautrantikas are often called nominalist in contrast to the realism of Sarvastivadins. Sautrantikas state that many of the dharmas of Sarvastivadins exist only as designations (prajnaptita). For example, space is mere emptiness and nirvana is mere extinction. The terms 'space' and 'nirvana' are used not to refer to real entities but as designations. The Sautrantikas are characterized by their doctrine of momentariness, the doctrine that skandhamatratas are transferred from existence to existence and that everything ceases in Nirvana.

### 10.4.1 Theory of Momentariness

The Sautrantikas subscribed to a doctrine of extreme momentariness that held that only the present moment exists. The Sarvastivadins argued that dharma lasts through all three times: past, present and future. This means that past and future are somehow contained in the present, since they are present in the dharma now given. Past, present and future, all exist. The Sautrantikas regarded the Sarvastivadin position as a violation of basic Buddhist principle of Impermanence (anicca). For the Sautrantikas only the present is real. They hold that the present only is what exists, the past what did exist, and the future what shall exist in the future when its conditions are given. The Sautrantikas also denied the existence of a past which is still to yield its fruit. They do not admit that the fruit springs directly from the past act, for that does not exist anymore. The fruit springs from a certain moment in the series following the act. On the moment the act is completed, it transforms the series, and this transformation determines as evolution (parinama). The last moment of evolution has a special efficacy, the capacity to produce the fruit immediately. This moment is called the distinguishing moment (visesa). In the same way, in nature the seed does not yield the fruit immediately, but only after a

process of long development. First, there is the sprout, stalk, leaves, flower and only finally the fruit.

### 10.4.2 Skandhamatratas

The Sautrantikas maintained that though dharmas are only momentary, existing only as long as they are effective, but behind the chain of dharmas there is a substratum (asraya), namely, a consciousness acting as a continuum that transmigrates from birth to birth. They held that there is transference of skandhamatras from one existence to another. This view is wholly opposed to the cardinal doctrine of Buddhism- momentary existence of skandhas. According to early Buddhism, the skandhas disintegrate every moment to give rise to another. The Sautrantikas, however, in defence of this doctrine of early Buddhist philosophy said that skandhas in their gross form do not pass from one existence to another. It is the mulantika skandhas, i.e., the original or the subtlest form of skandhas that pass from one existence to another. The mulantika of all the five skandhas are of one nature. In other words, there are not five mulantika corresponding to five skandhas. They are in reality one substance and not five different substances passing from one existence to another. It is of the form of consciousness that is like a seed out of which develops the whole temporal world. It is impersonal and universal and is to be distinguished from balance of merit.

For the doctrine of transference of sakndhamatras through several existences, the Sautrantikas are also called Samkrantivadins or Samkrantikas.

### 10.4.3 Nirvāna

The Sautrantika view of nature of Nirvana is a logical extension of their general point of view that the asamskrtas do not have real existence. Non-conditioned things are not real and distinct entities, but pure absences. Space is absence of tangible. Apratisamkhyanirodha is the absence of the arising of future things obtained through the absence of causes and independently of power of wisdom. They consider pratisamkhyanirodha or nirvāna as the absence of latent tendencies and existence acquired with

the aid of wisdom. Nirvāna means the end of the process of life without any dharma as residue in which life has been extinguished. It is absolute end of manifestations, the end of passion and life, without any positive counterpart. The subtle skandhas, which may continue through several existences totally cease in Nirvāna. They oppose the realistic view of Sarvastivāda who consider Nirvāna as a distinct entity. At the attainment of Nirvāna, defilements and defiled factors no longer arise in the future. According to Sautrantikas, non-arising means mere non-existence. Thus they conclude that Nirvāna is a non-existence, a mere nothing.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** Write short answers to:

a. Why the Sautrāntikas are called nominalist?

b. Why the Sautrāntikas are called Samkrantikas?

c. Do the asamskrtas have real existence according to Sautrāntikas?



## 10.5 LET US SUM UP

- Sarvasitvāda, also often called Vaibhasikas, came to be a prominent school of Theravadins or Staviravadins. It is a Hinyana school with its pitakas in Sanskrit. Sautrantikas are not really an independent school with own cloisters and order-rules. They are rather a group of thinkers who came to disagree on intellectual issues with the Sarvastivada.
- The most unique thought in the system of Sarvastivādins is denial of soul or self. They also discuss the dharma theory according to which all existing things are reduced to dharmas in the sense of them being the last principles or basic realities.
- Sarvastivāda believed in plurality of principles or dharmas in the universe. Number of dharmas listed by Sarvastivadins is seventy-

five. Out of these, three are non-conditioned (asamskita) and seventy-two are conditioned (samskrta).

- The Sarvastivāda counts three non-conditioned dharmas: space (akasa), suppression without knowledge (apratisamkhyanirodha), and suppression through knowledge (pratisamkhyanorodha).
- Set against these non-conditioned dharma are the conditioned (samskrta) dharmas. The Sarvastivadins classify the conditioned dharmas into four types: Citta (mind), Caitta (mental state) Rupa (matter), and Visamprayukta-samskaras (states independent of the mind)
- According to dharma theory, all empirical beings and everything that is reflected in them as the external world are phenomena formed by conditioned dharmas.
- Sarvastivāda holds that conditioned dharmas are effective only for a short time. But, these dharmas do not have origination and have existed always. The dharmas simply change from a latent state to activity.
- Sarvastivāda believed that it was not only the things in present that existed, but also the things in the past and future which are in continuity with present. 'All exist'- this is the axiom of Sarvastivadins from which the school took its name.
- However, regarding the existence of being and objects in past, present and future, the Sarvastivada exponents differed amongst themselves and interpreted in diverse ways.
- Dharmatrata states that the objects remain the same and undergo only modal changes, that is, in form and quality, giving rise to different notions, such as past, present and future.
- According to Ghosaka, every phenomenal object has three characteristics, namely birth, old age and death, which exist with the object all the time.
- Vasumitra states that objects exist at all the three times- past, present and future. According to him, it is activity or function that determines the pastness, presentness and futureness of an object.

- According to Buddhadeva, phenomenal objects exist at all the time. They are referred to as past, present and future only relatively.
- Sarvastivada believed in no-soul, the absence of any permanent substance in an individual, though they admitted the permanent reality of all things.
- Beings are actually designations of the series of successive existences. They are nothing but a collection of dharmas and have no stable nature of their own.
- The Sautrantikas are characterized by their doctrine of momentariness, the doctrine that skandhamatratas are transferred from existence to existence and that everything ceases in Nirvana.
- The Sautrantikas subscribed to a doctrine of extreme momentariness that held that only the present moment exists.
- The Sautrantikas maintained that though dharmas are only momentary, existing only as long as they are effective, but behind the chain of dharmas there is a substratum (asraya), namely, a consciousness acting as a continuum that transmigrates from birth to birth.
- They consider pratisamkhyanirodha or nirvana as the absence of latent tendencies and existence acquired with the aid of wisdom. Nirvana means the end of the process of life without any dharma as residue in which life has been extinguished.



## 10.6 FURTHER READING

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# UNIT 11: IDEALISTIC SCHOOLS OF BUDDHISM: MADHYAMIKA AND YOGACARA

## UNIT STRUCTURE


11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Madhyamaka: Nāgārjuna

- 11.3.1 Unreality of the External World
- 11.3.2 The Highest Reality

11.4 Yogācāra

- 11.4.1 Existence of Mere Ideas (vijnaptimatrata)
- 11.4.2 The Store Consciousness (alayavijnāna)
- 11.4.3 The Three Kinds of 'Own Being' (svabhāva)

11.5 Let us sum up

11.6 Further Reading

11.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.8 Model Questions


## 11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the ways Nāgārjuna proved unreality of the world
- describe the nature of ultimate reality in Nāgārjuna's philosophy
- discuss Nāgārjuna's philosophy
- describe the theory of mere ideas
- explain the concept of store-conscioisness
- analyse the three kinds of 'svabhavas'
- explain Yogācāra's philosophy

## 11.2 INTRODUCTION

About four hundred years of Buddha's passing away a new form of Buddhism appeared which calls itself Mahāyāna, 'Great vehicle' (across the ocean of suffering). It points out new ways to emancipation and thus

makes this supreme goal accessible to a wider range of human beings than the older Buddhism for which a derogatory name Hinyāna or 'Small Vehicle' has come into use. According to the Mahāyānists, Hinyāna is merely the introductory part of the teaching of Buddha. Conversely, the Hinyanists call the Mahāyāna a distortion of what Gautama had taught.

There are basically three concepts which differentiate Mahāyāna from Hinyana and at the same time bind different schools of Mahayana under the same head. They are: Buddhology, the doctrine of three bodies (trikaya) and concept of Bodhisattva.

The Philosophical Mahāyāna schools developed from the religious ones through systematization and elaboration of the teachings of the Sutras. The philosophy of the Mahāyāna concentrates on one main problem: the relationship between the many and the one. The multiplicity of the phenomena which compose the world and the unity of the principle which is sensed in them as the absolute and which has to be realized through individual experience.

Mahayana Buddhism is divided into two schools of philosophical thought: Madhyamaka and Yogacara. Mādhymaka was founded by Nagarjuna. Other thinkers of the Madhyamaka are Aryadeva who was a direct disciple of Nagarjuna; Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka, Candrakirti, Santideva, Santaraksita and Kamalasila. Another central philosophical school of Mahayana is Yogacara. Three important personalities of Yogacara School are: Maitreyanatha, Asnaga and Vāsubandhu. Other significant philosophers of the Yogacara School are: Dignaga, Sthiramati, Dharmapala, Candragomin, Dharmakirti, Dharmottara and Haribhadra. The writings of these latter Yogacara philosophers mainly deal with epistemology and logic.

## 11.3 MADHYĀMIKA: NĀGĀRJUNA

The Mādhyamikas were so called because of the emphasis they laid on mādhyama-pratipat (the middle view). In his first sermon in Varanasi, the Buddha preached the Middle Path, which is neither self-mortification nor a life devoted to pleasure of the senses. However, the middle path

advocated by the Mādhyamaka system, is not the exactly the same as preached by the Buddha. The middle path propounded by the Buddha in Varanasi has an ethical meaning, while that of Madhyāmikas is a metaphysical concept.

Nagārjuna was the first to create a philosophical Mahāyāna system. But, Nagārjuna did not develop a system of philosophy. His philosophy was not a systematically presented complete structure. However, he tried to give a proof of unreality of the external world which was merely stated in the Mahāyāna sutra of Prjnaparamita. He also developed and defined the fundamental concepts of Madhyamaka School.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** Fill up the blanks:

a. Mahāyana points out new ways to emancipation and thus the supreme goal accessible to a wider range of human beings than the older Buddhism for which a derogatory name _____ or _____ has come into use.

b. There are basically three concepts which differentiate Mahayana from Hinyana and at the same time bind different schools of Mahāyāna under the same head. They are:, _____ , _____and concept of _____

c. The middle path propounded by the Buddha in Varanasi has an_____, while that of Madhyamikas is a_____

### 11.3.1 The Unreality Of External World

The main goal of Nāgārjuna is to prove the unreality of the external world. He tries to do this by demonstrating with the help of logic that the most ordinary concepts of daily life are impossible. The phenomenal world as it presents itself is so because the phenomenal world rests on these concepts. And as the concepts are impossible, phenomenal world is also impossible.

Phenomenal world has generally been described in Buddhism in terms of five aggregates. Nāgārjuna replaces this with dependent origination. It is a fact that since the time of Buddha himself, the impermanence of phenomenal world had been asserted. The nature of the world was seen in the continuous becoming and ceasing which is governed by law of dependent origination. Nāgārjuna considered this very law of dependent origination as the appropriate formula through which to express the nature of phenomenal world.

For Nāgārjuna, dependent origination is itself unreal as opposing possibilities of becoming and ceasing, of permanence and impermanence does not apply. Nāgārjuna shows that neither an arising nor a passing away is possible. One of the views with which Nāgārjuna works to show this is the relativity of opposed concepts. Such concepts are mutually dependent on one another since the one is possible only if the other is also given. From this, Nāgārjuna draws the conclusion that corresponding entities cannot exist, because the existence of one always presupposes the existence of the other. A cause for example, is a cause only with respect to an effect. A cause therefore cannot exist as long as the effect does not exist. Without a cause, however, an effect cannot exist. The true doctrine consists in rejection of both opposites; it consists in the middle way. With this Nāgārjuna makes a link to the declaration of Buddha who himself designated his doctrine as the middle way. Nāgārjuna asserts that he is proclaiming the genuine doctrine of Buddha. It is for this reason that his system is called middle doctrine- Madhyamakadarsana.

More important is Nāgārjuna's concept of intrinsic nature (svabhava). For Nāgārjuna intrinsic nature means a being in and for itself and conditioned by only itself, independent of everything else. From this view it follows that such an intrinsic nature has not arisen, and that it is not subject to passing away as its existence is not dependent on anything else. Thus it is permanent and imperishable. Now, Nāgārjuna draws the conclusion that entities of the phenomenal world which are subject to constant becoming and ceasing, cannot possess an intrinsic nature. Hey are therefore without nature, that is, they are unreal.

Though the entities of the phenomenal world are shown to be unreal, the phenomenal world is not to be considered as not existing at all. It just does not exist intrinsically. Nāgārjuna characterizes this nature of phenomenal world with the expression- emptiness (sunyata). The things of the phenomenal world thus are empty, are natureless (sunya). We can therefore neither say the entities exist nor that they do not exist. Both are mistaken, both are opposites. The truth lies in the middle, in the middle way, in emptiness.

It is this characteristic of the phenomenal world, says Nāgārjuna, that makes the phenomenal world as we know it in fact possible. If things possessed an intrinsic nature, they could neither arise nor cease. It is only because of their unreality that the entire course of the world unfolds in accordance with law of dependent origination. The phenomenal world exists in accordance with its own fixed laws and thus a certain truth is allowed to it. The truth allowed to the phenomenal world is not in terms of highest truth but a restricted truth (samvrtisatya). In terms of the restricted truth, the events of the world, the Buddhist path of liberation and declaration of the Buddha, have validity. From the point of view of highest truth (paramarthasatya), which exclusively applies to the highest reality, there is neither a Buddha, nor a doctrine, nor a community, since all these belong to the phenomenal world.

There is a second view regarding the nature of phenomenal world in Nāgārjuna. The nature of the phenomenal world is diversity (prapanca). Nāgārjuna, however, did not analyze the concept. The world of dependence is based on manifoldness, which is provided by diversity. More importantly, our conceptions, which do not apply to highest reality that is free of all diversity, but which invents the phenomenal world for us, rest on diversity.

### 11.3.2 The Highest Reality

When it comes to the highest reality, Nāgārjuna avoids the positive expressions and designations. He does not speak of an element of principles (dharmadhatu), of a suchness (tathata), but only of extinction (nirvāna). Nirvāna is without arising or passing away, without ending, and also is not

permanent. Most importantly, it is neither existent nor non-existent, since existence and non-existence, as opposing concepts, belong to the world of dependence. Furthermore, Nirvāna is free from all diversity and therefore does not offer any basis for our concepts and thus is unimaginable and inexpressible. In Nirvāna the manifoldness of appearance and law of dependent origination are set aside.

In this way, the same statements proceed about Nirvāna as the statements about phenomenal world. And so Nagārjuna asserts the unity of phenomenal world and Nirvāna. The characterizations that are valid for things (dharmata) are also valid for Nirvana. Nirvāna and phenomenal world are two forms of appearance of same nature. Conditionality and dependency constitutes phenomenal world and free from conditionality and dependency is Nirvāna. Nagārjuna emphatically asserts the sameness of phenomenal world and Nirvāna. There is not the least difference between them. Nirvāna thus is not something separate that one attains by freeing oneself from the phenomenal world. It consists rather only in the fact that the deception of the phenomenal world is not longer perceived, as the diversity on which it is based disappears.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 2:** State whether the following statements are True or False

a. According to Nagārjuna, the external world is real.

b. Nagārjuna describes the phenomenal world in terms of five aggregates.

c. When it comes to the highest reality, Nagārjuna avoids the positive expressions and designations.

## 11.4 YOGĀCĀRA

The Yogācāra School bears its name because the practice of yoga played a special role in the circles from which it arose. Here yoga is understood in a general sense as the entire striving, the practice, the

activation of all virtues demanded for a future Buddha, a Bodhisattva. The description of a path that a Bodhisattva has to travel was elaborated in an imaginative way. However, various philosophical schools emerged alongside this. These were later fused with and expanded through variety of other ideas from various important teachers. It is in this way that an all-encompassing system of Yogācara finally arose. The school is also known as Vijnānavāda on account of the fact that it holds vijnaptimatra or ideas alone to be real. The "Yogacara brings out the practical side of philosophy while Vijānavāda brings out its speculative side". The title Yogācāra was given by Asanga while the term Vijananavāda was used by Vasubandhu. Yoagacāra considered the transcendental in terms of Absolute Mind and tried to explain why and how the seemingly objective universe came to evolve out of Absolute Mind.

### 11.4.1 Existence of Mere Idea (vijnaptimatrata)

One of the best ways of demonstrating the sole reality of the Absolute Mind is by disproving the existence of matter. Vasubandhu attempted to show in his Trimsika-Vijnaptimatrata that there is no such thing as a material substance, whether atomic or non-atomic, and that only ideas exist. Vasubandhu, however, does not deny the existence of sensible qualities but an independent material substratum in which they are supposed to inhere. For example, a flower is merely the subtotal of certain visual, olfactory, and tactile sensations. It is not a lump of matter which possesses these sensations as its attributes. We can never perceive or infer an object besides the sensations. Matter is an abstraction, a mere word. Strictly speaking, we should refer, not to having a perception of a thing, but only to having perception. According to Vasubandhu, only vijnaptimatra-only ideas-that is to say perceptions-exist. He holds that when we realize that the so called objective universe exists nowhere except in our mind, all our attachments to it will be destroyed, and with the destruction of that attachment, liberation will be attained. In Vasubandhu's own words, "Where there is nothing to grasp there is no more grasping". Vasubandhu appeals for support in his conclusion not only to logic and analogy of dreams but

also to testimony of the yogis, who in exalted stage of Samādhi perceives vivid sensuous impressions without there being any objective stimulus. Vasubandhu suggests that only by personal experience of meditation one can gain a living conviction of the truth of vijnaptimatrata-before one is awake from the dream, one cannot know that what is seen in the dream does not exist.

### 11.4.2 The Store Consciousness (alayavijnana)

If it is accepted that matter does not exist, and that universe has no reality except as the aggregate of our sensations, the question that arises is, why do we think that matter exists? What is the cause of illusion of objective existence? The doctrine of alavijnana or store consciousness is a part of Yogacara attempt to answer this question in a systematic manner. Maitreyanatha, besides positing Absolute Mind as the sole reality, had also posited the existence of the abhutaparikalpita, or unreal imagination, by which the radiance of Absolute Mind becomes obscured. These two principles, while in one sense identical, in another sense are different from each other. Regarded as different, Absolute Mind is the static, and the unreal imagination the dynamic, or potentially dynamic principle. Out of this dynamic principle, which comprises of two aspects, eventually emerges the whole so-called universe, which is in reality nothing but a transformation of the mind. The two aspects referred to are: the alayavijnana or store consciousness, and the pravrtti-vijnana or evolving consciousness. Every willed action produces an effect, technically known as vāsana. These 'vāsanas' are stored in the alayavijanana in the form of 'seed'. As these seeds fructify and produce results, they develop touch, mental activity (manaskara), feeling, perception, and will (cetana)- corresponding to five aggregates of older tradition. This is the first transformation of consciousness. The second transformation takes place when manas, or ego-consciousness, evolve from the alayavijanan, and the third when, by means of the six-fold sense activity, perception of colour, sound, temperature, resistance etc., arise and are wrongly interpreted as the objective and subjective world, each independent of the other. This is the

origin of illusion of the reality of things and of the self. The vijnanas associated with the six faculties of sense together with the mano-vijnana or ego-consciousness, comprise the evolving consciousness (pravrtti-vijnana) and these seven and the alayavijnana make up the eight consciousness of Yogācara.

### 11.4.3 Three Kinds of 'Own Being' (svabhāva)

While the doctrine of alayavijnana is part of an attempt to explain the causal relation between Absolute Mind and its hypotheses, the doctrine of svabhāvas, differentiates their ontological status and determines the nature of their interrelations from the ontological point of view. The three svabhāvas are knwon as parnispanna, absolute nature, paratantra or dependent nature, and parikalpita, imputed nature or mere illusion. The first corresponds to Absolute Mind, the second to the unreal imagination, and the third to the wrong notion of objective and subjective existence. While for the Yogācārins the subject-object distinction is wholly unreal, the mind and the mental states on which it is superimposed are real in the relative sense. They are in fact identical with abhutaparikalpita, which is unreal only in comparison with the absolute reality of the One Mind. By admitting the dependent nature of the mind and the mental states, Yogācāra could incorporate the Sarvastivadin classification of dharmas. Vāsubandhu tried to explain the differences between these svabhāvas by means of an illustration. He says that by the power of a mantra a piece of wood may be made to appear in the form an elephant. The non-existence of the elephant in the wood is the absolute nature; the form of the elephant- the dependent nature; and the elephant itself is the imputed nature; the mantra corresponds to alayavijnana. Vāsubandhu makes it clear that the distinction between the three svabhavas is pragmatic only. Ultimately only the One Mind exists. Just as, when the illusory elephant and its form are no longer perceived, the piece of wood is seen- so when the imputed nature and the dependent nature vanish, the absolute nature is realized.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 3:** Write short answers to:

a. Why is Yogācāra School called Vijnānavāda?

b. What is the view of Yogācāra regarding matter?

c. What are the three svabhāvas of Yogacārā?



## 11.5 LET US SUM UP

- About four hundred years of Buddha's passing away a new form of Buddhism appeared which calls itself Mahāyāna, 'Great vehicle' (across the ocean of suffering). It points out new ways to emancipation and thus makes this supreme goal accessible to a wider range of human beings than the older Buddhism.
- There are basically three concepts which differentiate Mahāyāna from Hinayāna and at the same time bind different schools of Mahayana under the same head. They are: Buddhology, the doctrine of three bodies (trikaya) and concept of Bodhisattva.
- The Mādhyamikas were so called because of the emphasis they laid on madhyama-pratipat (the middle view). However, the middle path advocated by the Mādhyamaka system, is not the exactly the same as preached by the Buddha. The middle path propounded by the Buddha in Varanasi has an ethical meaning, while that of Mādhyamikas is a metaphysical concept.
- Nāgārjuna was the first to create a philosophical Mahāyāna system. His philosophy was not a systematically presented complete structure. However, he tried to give a proof of unreality of the external world which was merely stated in the Mahāyāna sutra of Prjnaparamita.
- Phenomenal world has generally been described in Buddhism in terms of five aggregates. Nāgārjuna replaces this with dependent origination. Nāgārjuna considered the very law of dependent

origination as the appropriate formula through which to express the nature of phenomenal world.

- For Nāgārjuna, dependent origination is itself unreal as opposing possibilities of becoming and ceasing, of permanence and impermanence does not apply. One of the views with which Nāgārjuna works to show this is the relativity of opposed concepts.
- Nāgārjuna says that the entities of phenomenal world which are subject to constant becoming and ceasing, cannot possess an intrinsic nature. Hey are therefore without nature, that is, they are unreal.
- Nāgārjuna characterizes the nature of phenomenal world with the expression- emptiness (sunyata). The things of the phenomenal world thus are empty, are natureless (sunya). We can, therefore, neither say the entities exist nor that they do not exist. Both are mistaken, both are opposites. The truth lies in the middle, in the middle way, in emptiness.
- The phenomenal world exists in accordance with its own fixed laws and thus a certain truth is allowed to it. The truth allowed to the phenomenal world is not in terms of highest truth but a restricted truth (samvrtisatya).
- When it comes to the highest reality, Nāgārjuna avoids the positive expressions and designations. He does not speak of an element of factors (dharmadhatu), of a suchness (tathata), but only of extinction (nirvāna).
- Nirvāna consists in the fact that the deception of the phenomenal world is not longer perceived, as the diversity on which it is based disappears.
- The Yogācāra School bears its name because the practice of yoga played a special role in the circles from which it arose.
- The school is also known as Vijnānavāda on account of the fact that it holds vijnaptimatra or ideas alone to be real.
- One of the best ways of demonstrating the sole reality of the Absolute Mind is by disproving the existence of matter. Matter is an abstraction,

a mere word. Strictly speaking, we should refer, not to having a perception of a thing, but only to having perception.

- These 'vāsanas' are stored in the alayavijānana in the form of 'seed'. As these seeds fructify and produce results, the first transformation of consciousness takes place. The second transformation takes place when manas evolve from the alayavijanan, and the third when, by means of the six-fold sense activity, perceptions arise and are wrongly interpreted as the objective and subjective world.
- The three svabhāvas of Yogācāra are known as parnispanna, absolute nature, paratantra or dependent nature, and parikalpita, imputed nature or mere illusion. The first corresponds to Absolute Mind, the second to the unreal imagination, and the third to the wrong notion of objective and subjective existence.



## 11.6 FURTHER READING

1. Bapat, P.V. (ed), 1956, 2500 Years of Buddhism, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Reprint 2012
2. Frauwallner, E., 1956, The Philosophy of Buddhism, translated by G.L. Sangpo, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, Edition 2010
3. Sangarakshita, 2001, A Survey of Buddhism, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, 2006
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5 Scheepers, A., 1994, A Survey of Buddhist Thought, Motilal Banrasidass, New Deldi, 2008



## 11.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Ans to Q. No. 1:** a. Hinayāna or 'Small Vehicle'

b. Buddhology, the doctrine of three bodies (trikaya), Bodhisattva.

# UNIT 12 : JAINISM : THEORY OF SYĀDVĀDA

## UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives
12.2 Introduction
12.3 A Brief Account of Jainism
12.3.1 Jaina Epistemology
12.3.2 Jaina Metaphysics
12.4 Syādvāda or the Sapta-bhangi-naya
12.5 Criticism of Syādvāda
12.6 Let Us Sum Up
12.7 Further Readings
12.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
12.9 Model Questions

## 12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain jaina epistemology
- describe jaina metaphysics
- analyse syādvāda or sapta-bhangi-naya
- discuss some critical comments on Syādvāda.

## 12.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you the theory of syādvāda in jainism. But before we go into the concept of syādvāda we have to discuss the concept of epistemology and metaphysics. Jaina epistemology and metaphysics are dealt with the jaina concept of syādvāda. Therefore, this unit informs the Jaina epistemology and metaphysics. Like other Indian systems, jaina system also deals with the sources of knowledge. Jaina epistemology talks of the three sources of knowledge, perception, inference and testimony. Apart from this, it holds that it is not possible for ordinary people to know all

the qualities of a thing. It indicates that people can know only some qualities. That is why, people can get relative knowledge. This relative knowledge of a thing is called syādvāda. So, syādvāda is the relativity theory of knowledge. On the other hand, The Jaina metaphysics is realistic and relativistic pluralism. The Jaina holds that reality consists of the manyness of reality. Therefore, the Jaina metaphysics is known as anekānatavāda. So, metaphysics and epistemology are the two aspects of the same teaching in Jaina system.

## 12.3 A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF JAINISM

The origin of the Jaina faith can be traced out in the pre-historic time. The Jaina system believes in 24 Tirthankaras or the liberated propagators of the faith. Mahāvira, the last Tirthankara, is not regarded as the founder of the system, because even before him Jaina teachings were existent. Although Mahāvira is not regarded as the founder of the system, still his teachings gave a new outlook to Jaina system. Mahāvira, who is also known as Vardhamāna, was contemporary to Gautam Buddha.

### 12.3.1 Jaina Epistemology

The Jainas admit three sources of knowledge. They are respectively: Perception, inference and testimony. The Jaina shows that inference produces valid knowledge when it obeys the logical rules of correctness. Like inference, testimony also produces valid knowledge when it is the report of a reliable authority. From these sources of knowledge, it can be held that Jainas admit two kinds of knowledge. They are immediate and mediate or direct and indirect.

According to Jaina system, knowledge is again, divided into two kinds. The first one is Pramāna. It imeans knowledge of a thing as it is. The second one is Naya. It means the knowledge of a thing in its relation. Naya means a standpoint of thought about a thing. Nyaya, as a Pramāna, holds that we can get partial knowledge of a thing. So, Partial knowledge of different aspects of a thing is called

Naya. It is not at all possible to get complete knowledge of a thing. Therefore, according to Jaina, truth is relative to our different standpoints of thought about a thing.

The Jaina system holds that there are seven nayas. The first four nayas are called 'Artha Naya', because they relate to objects or meanings. The last three are called 'Sabda Naya', because they relate to words. Nyaya involves a fallacy, when we take it as absolute (final statement of a thing). This fallacy in Naya is called nayabhāsa.

## 12.3.2 Jaina Metaphysics

The Jaina metaphysics holds that reality possesses innumerable qualities. So, an object possesses infinite number of characteristics of its own. Therefore, it is not possible for ordinary people to comprehend all the qualities of a thing. People can know only some qualities. Therefore, the Jaina metaphysics is relativistic pluralism. It is also called anekāntavāda in the sense that an object or a thing includes infinite number of characteristics. Ordinary people cannot cover all the aspects of a thing. So, different standpoints or statements of a thing is called anekantavada.

Again, Jaina metaphysics is relativistic in the sense that no statement or a standpoint of a thing can claim to be absolute. Therefore, all truths are relative in comparison to others. Every standpoints or statements are partially true. So, the Jaina metaphysics is called anekāntavāda or many ness of reality.

From Jaina metaphysics it can be derived that knowledge is relative. In this context it can be said that human knowledge is relative and limited regarding an innumerable characters of an object. From the epistemological standpoint we can know only some characters of an object; this is called 'Syādvāda'. Again, from the metaphysical standpoint this is called anekāntavāda, because an object has infinite number of characteristics. Indeed, the two doctrines like Syādvāda and Anekāntavāda are the two sides of the

same coin. We commit a mistake in Jaina metaphysics when we regard a statement or a standpoint as an ultimate or absolute view regarding an object. Then we commit a fallacy of ekāntatavāda.

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**



**Q.1.** What are the sources of knowledge in Jaina system?

.....

**Q.2.** What are the two kinds of knowledge in Jaina system?

.....

**Q.3.** What is naya, according to Jaina system? (Answer in about 40 words)

.....

.....

**Q.4.** What is anekāntavāda? (Answer in about 50 words)

.....

.....

.....

**Q.5.** State whether the following statements are True or False :

a) Jaina metaphysics is relativistic (True/False)

b) Jaina epistemology is called Syādvāda (True/False)

c) Jaina metaphysics is called anekāntavāda. (True/False)

d) The Jaina system holds that there are eight nayas. (True/False)

## 12.4 SYĀDVĀDA OR THE SAPTABHANGI NAYA

Syādvāda is the theory of relativity of knowledge. It is also called saptabhangi naya or the seven fold judgment. The word 'syat' literally means 'may be', 'probable', 'perhaps'. Therefore, it is also known as the probability theory of knowledge. Jainism through the theory of 'syādvāda' holds that reality has infinite number of characteristics. People cannot know all the characteristics of a thing. Therefore, human knowledge regarding the

absolute nature of a thing is probable. People can get partial knowledge of a thing. This indicates that Jainism advocates the probability theory of knowledge. But it does not mean that Jainism leads to skepticism or the impossibility of knowledge. Reality has infinite characteristics. It is not possible to bring out the complete nature of reality from one standpoint or angle. Therefore, all judgments are relative or conditional in relation to other judgments from different standpoints or perspectives.

We can take an example here to describe the nature of relativity or probability theory of knowledge. When we say "this mountain exists", we do not mean that this mountain exists absolutely or unconditionally. Here, human knowledge of the mountain is necessarily relative, because we think that the mountain exists in a particular shape, length, breadth, height and also in a definite time and space. But the mountain does not exist in another form, matter and at other space and time. It is clear that we can make a judgment that the 'mountain exists' from one standpoint, and also make a judgment that 'the mountain does not exist' from another standpoint. Therefore, Jainas say that judgements are relative or conditional.

The theory of Syādvāda holds that all judgments are conditional, relative and limited. No judgment can be absolutely wrong or true. This indicates that judgments are partially true or partially false. It means that all affirmative judgments presuppose negations as well as all negative judgments presuppose affirmation. Affirmation and negation are the two edges of a judgment.

In case of explaining the nature of Syādvāda, Jainas put forward a story of the six blind men and an elephant. The blind men put their hands on the different parts of the elephants in order to describe the whole animal. The first blind man who touched the ear of the elephant opined that the elephant was like-a-country made fan. The second blind man who caught the leg of the elephant viewed that the elephant was like pillar. The third blind man who touched the trunk of the elephant said that the elephant was like a python. The fourth blind man who caught the tail of the elephant viewed that the elephant was like a rope. The fifth one who touched the side said the elephant was like a wall. The last one who touched forehead

opined that the elephant was like the breast. From the story of the six blind men and an elephant it is derived that each blind man thought that his explanation regarding the elephant was correct. But he, who can see the animal, can view that each explanation regarding the elephant was partially correct. Therefore, the syādvāda theory of the jainas shows that our judgments or standpoints bring out the different aspects of reality. Our judgments express only partial truth. No judgments are absolutely true. The word 'syāt' should be incorporated to all judgments to point out the conditional character of judgments. There are seven different ways of expressing judgments by the word 'syāt'. These seven different ways are known as syādvāda or sapta-bhangi-naya. These are as follows:

1. Syādasti : Relatively, a thing is real. It can be symbolically expressed as 'Perhaps S is'.
2. Syādnnāsti : Relatively, a thing is unreal. It can be symbolically expressed as 'Perhaps S is not'.
3. Syādasti nāsti : Relatively, a thing is both real and unreal. Symbolically expressed as, perhaps S is, is not.
4. Syādavaktavyam: Relatively, a thing is indescribable. Symbolically expressed as, perhaps, S is indescribable.
5. Syādasti cha avaktavyam : Relatively, a thing is real and is indescribable. Symbolically expressed as, perhaps S is and indescribable.
6. Syādnnasti cha avaktavyam : Relatively, a thing is unreal and is indescribable. Symbolically expressed as, perhaps S is not and indescribable.
7. Syādasti cha nāsti cha avaktavyam : Relatively, a thing is real, unreal and indescribable. Symbolically expressed as, perhaps S is, is not, and indescribable.

Now, we can explain the seven fold judgments of Syādvāda.

1. Syādasti (Perhaps S is) : This is an affirmative judgment. From the point of its own substance, place, time, and nature, a thing exists. The pot exists as an earthen substance possessing red colour in summar at Guwahati.

2. Syādnnasti (Perhaps Sis not) : This is a negative judgment. From the point of view of substance, place, time, and nature, a thing does not exist as other things. The pot does not exist as watery substance possessing dark colour in spring at Nagaon.
3. Syādasti nāsti (Perhaps S is, is not): The third is an affirmative and negative judgment in succession. The pot exists as its own substance in its own place at a particular time with its own nature. It does not exist as substance in another place at another time with another quality.
4. Syādavaktavyam (perhaps, S is indescribable) : This is simultaneously both affirmative judgment, and negative judgment. The present nature of the pot as an earthen substance with its red colour and absence of its watery substance with dark colour inhere in a substance. But it cannot be expressed. But in another sense it cannot be absolutely indescribable. Like the concept of maya of Advaita Vedānta it includes both the thesis and the anti-thesis at the same time.
5. Syādasti cha avaktavyam (perhaps, S is and indescribable) : This is an affirmative judgment combined with simultaneous affirmative judgment and negative judgment. This indicates that when a predicate is affirmed of a thing with reference to its substance, place, time, and nature, and a predicate is affirmed of it as decribed above and denied of other things as different substances in other places and times and with different natures simultaneously. Hence, we get affirmation and indescribability.
6. Syādnnasti cha avaktavyam (perhaps S is and indescribable) : This is a negative judgment combined with simultaneous affirmative and negative judgment. It shows that when a predicate is denied of other substances in different places at other times and with different natures and a predicate is simultaneously affirmed of the thing and denied of other things. Hence, we get negation and indescribability.
7. Syādasti cha nāsti cha avaktavyam : (Perhaps S is, is not, and indescribable) This is successive affirmative judgment and negative

judgment combined with simultaneous affirmative and negative judgment. It indicates that when a predicate is affirmed of a thing as its own substance in its own place at its own time and with own nature, and the same predicate is denied of other substances in other places at other times and with other natures. So, affirmation and denial are made simultaneously. Here, we get affirmation, negation, and indescribability.

From these seven fold judgments it is clear that an affirmative judgment holds that a thing exists in its own substance, its own place, its own time, and with its own nature. On the other hand, a negative judgment holds that a thing is non-existent in its other substances, other places, other times, and with other natures. The five other judgments are the combinations of affirmative and negative judgment. Affirmation implies negation and negation implies affirmation. It shows that a thing is existent with its own nature and non-existent with other natures. Therefore, it is clear that Jaina's concept of Syādvāda advocates relative pluralism or a many-sided of reality.

Although Syādvāda seems to be the correct view of Syādvāda, still it creates some confusing states in mind, some of which are really subject of discussion critically.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q.6.** Fill in the blanks :

a) Jainas say that judgments are ..... or conditional.

b) The word 'Syāt' means .....

c) The seven different ways are known as .....

d) The fallacy in naya is called .....

**Q.7.** What do you mean by the theory of relativity of knowledge? (Answer in about 70 words)

.....

.....

.....



**ACTIVITY 13.1**

a) Does the theory of relativity of knowledge or syādvāda lead to the impossibility of knowledge? What do you think? Discuss.

.....

.....

.....

b) Are the seven standpoints of Jaina enough to critically discuss a reality? What do you think? Discuss.

.....

.....

.....

## 12.5 CRITICISM OF SYĀ DVĀ DA

**A)** According to Buddhists and Vedāntins, the word 'syāt' in the theory of Syādvāda involves a problem. They hold that Syādvāda is a self contradictory doctrine. It asserts that the contradictory attributes like existence and non-existence belong to the same thing in the same context. Against this self contradictory doctrine it can be held that light and darkness cannot be present in the same thing at the same time. In this context Dharmakirti points out that Jainas make a contradictory statement like a mad man. Shankārachārya views that unity and plurality, existence and non-existence, momentariness and permanence, affirmation and negation, lightness and darkness cannot remain in the same thing at the same time. Similarly, Rāmānuja holds that we cannot combine contradictory attributes like existence and non-existence, unity and plurality, momentary and permanence, lightness and darkness in the same thing at the same time.

**B)** The relativity theory of knowledge or Syādvāda holds that all judgments are relative or conditional. Every affirmative judgment presupposes negation. And every negative judgment presupposes affirmation. All truth is partially true or partially false. In this context, it

can be held that if truth is partially true or partially false, the theory of Syādvāda will be probable or partially true or partially false. But the Jainas by the theory of Syādvāda do not mean the theory of probability. Shankarāchārya holds that relativity of judgments presupposes an Absolute. Relativity of judgments cannot sustain without an Absolute in which all judgments fall and through which they are manifested.



## 12.6 LET US SUM UP

- Jainas admit perception, inference and testimony as the sources of knowledge.
- Jainas divide knowledge into two kinds: Pramāna and Naya.
- Naya means knowledge of a thing in its relation.
- Pramāna means knowledge of a thing as such or as it is.
- Jaina metaphysics holds that all judgments are relative.
- From the epistemological standpoint knowledge is relative in the sense that we can know only partial nature of reality. It is called Syādvāda.
- From the meaphysical standpoint reality has innumerable characteristics. It is called Anekāntavāda.
- Syādvāda is the theory of relativity of knowledge. It is also called saptabhanginaya or sevenfold judgment.



## 12.7 FURTHER READINGS

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2) Hiriyanna, M. (1993). *Outlines of Indian philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

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# UNIT 13: JAINISM: ANEKĀNTAVĀDA

## UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives
13.2 Introduction
13.3 Literal Meaning of Anekāntavāda
13.4 Explanation of change in the context of Anekāntavāda
13.5 Analysing positive and negative characters of an object
13.6 Understanding Anekāntavāda with a concrete example
13.7 Ekantavada
13.8 Let us sum up
13.9 Further Reading
13.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
13.11 Model Questions

## 13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:-

- define Anekāntavāda
- discuss what change is
- explain meaning of positive and negative characters of an object
- explain positive and negative characteristics of an object
- analyse Anekāntavāda with concrete examples
- discuss ekāntavāda

## 13.2 INTRODUCTION

The Jaina philosophy is an important branch of Indian philosophy. It is a non-vedic philosophy, Nāstika darshana or what we call as heterodox system. The Jaina philosophy can be traced, to the present stage through the twenty-four teachers or tirthankara, and the origin of the Jaina system is not adequately established. The first tirthankara was Rsabhadeva, and, the last among them was Vardhamana, referred to as Mahāvira or the 'Great

Hero'. It is believed that Mahavira lived around 6th Century B.C., during the time of Gautama Buddha.

It is said that the word 'Jaina' is derived from the word 'Jina'. The literal meaning of 'Jina' is conqueror. 'Jina' refers to all the twenty four tirthankara. 'Jina' means one who has been able to conquer all passions (raga and dvesa). By conquering passions, he is able to raise above all emotions and feelings, and attain liberation or Moksa.

Jaina philosophy is characterized by common-sense realism and pluralism. This means that there are objects in the universe and they are real and many. There are two kinds of reality in the world, living and non-living. Jainism believes that every living, even the imperfect one, possesses a soul or Jiva. They, therefore, advocate the practice of Ahimsa or avoiding injuring all life. Another important element in Jainism consists in respecting the opinion of others. This element is presented by them through their metaphysical theory of reality, as being many-faced (Anekāntavāda). The logical doctrine which state that every judgement is conditional, that is, it is made from relative standpoints and conditions is known as Syadvada. Syādvāda may be said to be a consequent logical doctrine from Anekāntavāda. The Jainas advocates various theories like, Epistemology or theory of Epistemology which includes logic, Metaphysics and Ethics and Religion. These theories help us to have an idea about the philosophy of the Jainas. However, from an academic point of view, Anekāntavāda and Jaina Metaphysics have been seen to have held the attention of both the scholars and researchers. Anekantavada is being discussed in this chapter.

Anekāntavāda is one among the three Jaina doctrines of relativity used for logic and reasoning. The other two doctrines are: (i) Syādvāda or the doctrine of conditioned predication, meaning that all judgements are conditional; (ii) Nayavāda or the theory of partial judgement. Anekāntavāda refers to the principles of pluralism and multiplicity of viewpoints. This theory may be understood as advocating the view that reality can be perceived from different points of view and no single point gives us the complete truth. Yet, if these single points of views are taken together, they comprise the complete truth.

## 13.3 LITERAL MEANING OF ANEKĀNTAVĀDA

The literal meaning of Anekāntavāda lies in the compound root of two Sanskrit words: anekānta ("manifoldness") and vāda ("school of thought"). The Sanskrit word anekānta is a compound word and is derived from the Sanskrit negative prefix 'an', 'eka' (one), and 'ante' meaning attribute. Hence, anekanta may be literally understood as "that which does not have a single (sole) attribute". The Jainas emphasise on Samyaktava, meaning rationality and logic. The Jainas insist that the ultimate principle should be always logical, and need to be based on reason.



**ACTIVITY - 13.1**

Why do you think the Janias advocated Anekāntavāda? Discuss.

Answer : .....

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.....



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** Who is the founder of Jainism?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 2:** How many tirthankaras are there is all?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 3:** From which Sanskrit word, the word Jaina is believed to have originated?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 4:** Write the meaning of anekantavada?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 5:** Write the meaning of the word 'Jina'

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 6:** What are the kinds of reality, according to Jainism?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 7:** What is Syādvāda?

Ans : .....

.....

## 13.4 EXPLAIN CHANGE IN THE CONTEXT OF ANEKĀNTAVĀDA

The Jainas assert that reality is complex in its nature. In order to understand the complex nature of reality, we must view an object from all possible standpoints. An object may be judged according to one of its particular aspects and from a particular standpoint. We fail to understand that an object has innumerable qualities and it can be judged from uncountable standpoints. It is due to our finiteness that we have limitations to judge an object with all its characteristics and from innumerable standpoints. But when we fail to realize this fact and regard the judgments about objects to be unconditionally true, then we commit error. When we regard the partial aspects of an object to be the object itself, our knowledge of the object becomes incomplete, partial and untrue. In the Chandogya Upanishad, change is described as unreal. Underlying, all change lays the real. What we mean by 'variety' or 'many' is found in name and form only. Therefore, name and form are unreal. But for the Buddhists, nothing is permanent. All things in the universe are changing and becoming. Whatever attributes we can experience are also changing conditionally. The Buddhists

say that there is no reality which is permanent. But the Jainas say that both these views are partial since each of these views gives accounts of reality from one among many of its (reality) viewpoints. Hence their views are 'ekanta'. A view which is one-sided and given from partial standpoints is known as Ekāntavāda.

## 13.5 ANALYSING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE CHARACTER OF AN OBJECT

The Jainas assert that every object has innumerable characters. By 'innumerable' we mean here that the characters cannot be counted; in other words, they are 'countless'. This is what they mean by ananta-dharmakam vastu. Here, we must give a little more explanation in order to understand the full implication of the Jaina view. Every object in the universe viewed as what it is, because of its positive and negative characters. For example, by positive characters of an object, say, man, we mean, his colour, size, shape, weight, heredity, family, race, employment, education, nationality, place of birth, date of birth, age, habitation etc. Positive characters are those 'defining characters' that makes the object what it is. These characters help us to define the object in the positive sense, meaning that these characters are possessed by the object concerned. Along with these characters, he may have innumerable relations with countless number of other objects of the world. By negative characters of man, we mean those characters which are not possessed by him. Man, as described in the example, will be known in his fullest content, only, if we distinguish him from everything else. We should know what he is not - that he may not be an Indian, nor an American, nor coloured; he is not a Mohamedan, nor a Hindu; again, he is not dishonest, nor shrewd, nor cunning, etc. These negative characters of man are such distinctions that help to distinguish man from all other objects in the universe. In this sense, the negative characters are far more in number than the positive characters. The negative characters are equally important. It tells us about those characters which are not possessed by the object concerned. Thus, we can distinguish the object in relation to other objects of the universe. Just as the positive

characters have been described as the "defining characters" of an object the negative characters may be described as the 'distinguishing characters' of the object. Thus, the object, in this case, man, possess positive characters present in it, and the negative characters absent in it. Thus the two sets of characters together prove that the object is not a simple one, having limited characters. The object may appear to be simple, possessing limited qualities, because of our limitations in viewing it. But in reality, the object is a complex one, possessing infinite number of qualities and characters. Even, when the element of time and change are taken into consideration, the object is understood to have taken new characters. Thus, the Jainas believe that the object in this sense has innumerable characters (ananta-dharma). Therefore, it can be rightly said that the Jainas have advocated Anekāntavāda by analyzing positive and negative characters. This analysis proves that all objects possess infinite characters and that all objects of the universe can be described from infinite number of standpoints.

## 13.6 UNDERSTANDING ANEKĀNTAVĀDA WITH THE HELP OF A CONCRETE EXAMPLE

The Jaina concept of Anekāntavāda and Syādvāda are often described with the help of the story of "The Blind men and an Elephant". The Jainas describe this story as 'Andhagajanyayah', which when translated mean "the maxim of blind men and elephant". This story may be understood as follows: A group of six blind men touches a strange animal called an elephant. None among them is aware about its shape and form. The first blind man, who touches the trunk of the animal, says that it (the elephant) is like a pipe. For another one, who reaches up to the ear of the animal, the elephant, says that the animal is like a fan. Again, another blind man who touch the leg of the animal, said, that the elephant is like a pillar. For the blind man who touched the back of the animal, the elephant is like a throne. In this way, each of the blind men describes the animal, the elephant, differently. But, each of these gives a true picture about the elephant, gained from each of their experiences. For every one of them, his own knowledge is correct and absolute, while

the views of others are wrong and contrary to facts. Yet, their descriptions fall short of describing the true appearance of the elephant.

The Jainas say that the elephant has been described differently because each of the blind man described the elephant from different standpoints, one from the standpoint of the trunk, another from the standpoint of the ear, yet, again, another from that of the leg, etc. Though, in this sense, their descriptions are true, these descriptions are not complete. In a similar manner, an object can be known from diverse standpoints. Yet the characters of the objects, though true from individual standpoints, do not give us knowledge about the infinite number of characters of the object. The Jainas, therefore, say that there are innumerable numbers of objects in the universe, possessing infinite characters and these objects can be described from uncountable number of standpoints.

## 13.7 EKĀNTAVĀDA

The Jainas accuse the other systems of Indian philosophy of committing the fallacy of mistaking a relative truth to be the absolute truth. This view is called Ekāntavāda. Every object in the universe has many characters and it exists independently. It is called substance (Dravya). Substance is that which possess qualities and modes. Some qualities are permanent and essential; they are gunas or qualities, while others are accidental and changing and they are called paryaya or modes. Reality is defined as a unity-and-difference or difference-and-unity. Brahmanism laid emphasis on that which is one, the permanent and the real. On the other hand, Early Buddhism advocated the Many, the changing and the unreal Jainism says that these two views may be referred to as being same, they being two sides of the same coin. Substance is that which possess the characteristics of production, destruction and permanence. Substance is permanent because it possesses an unchanging essence. But substance has origin (i.e. production) and is subject to decay or destruction since substance possesses changing modes. Both the above views are true from their individual standpoints, but not the complete truth. To accept any one-sided and partial view to be the whole truth is to commit the fallacy of

Ekāntavāda. In contrast to Ekāntavāda, Jainism believes that there may be many partial views about objects of the universe. But only when these innumerable views are compiled, can we have a real and true knowledge about the objects of the universe. All the partial views. In this sense, the Jainas advocate Anekāntāvada, that is reality can be viewed from the 'anek' or innumerable view points.



**ACTIVITY - 13.2**

Why do you think the Jainas have brought in concept of positive and negative characters while describing Anekāntavāda?

Answer : .....

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.....

.....



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 8:** State whether the following statements are True or False

a) For the Buddhists, nothing is permanent. (True / False)

b) Positive characters are those 'defining characters' that makes the object 'what it is' (True/False)

**Q 9:** What is 'ekāntavāda'?



## 13.8 LET US SUM UP

- Mahavira Jaina or Vardhamāna, the last one among the twenty-four tirthankaras is generally believed to be the founder of Jainism. The word Jaina is derived from 'Jina' meaning conqueror. Here conqueror means one who can conquer all emotions and feelings, and attain liberation or Mokṣa.

- The Jainas put forward various theories of Epistemology which includes logic, metaphysics and Ethics and Religion.
- The word "Anekāntavāda is derived from two Sanskrit words – Anekānta meaning manifoldness, and Vada meaning school of thought.
- The word 'Aneka' is derived from the Sanskrit prefix 'An' and eka (one) and 'anta' meaning attributes.
- Anekāntavāda is based on the common-sense Realism and Pluralism.
- The Jainas assert that reality is complex in nature. Therefore, no single account of reality can be given.
- The Jainas talk of change. Underlying all change, lies that which is real.
- About change, the Chandogya Upanisad says that change is unreal.
- The Buddhists say that nothing is permanent. The universe is constantly changing and becoming.
- Jainism says that every object has innumerable characteristics.
- Every object in the universe can be viewed as having positive and negative characters.
- Positive characters are those characters which an object possess those defining characters which makes the object what it is.
- Negative characters are those characters which are not possessed by the object; they are 'distinguishing characters' and help to distinguish the object concerned, from other objects in the universe.
- The Jainas describe Anekantavada through as story of "The Blind Men and an Elephant".
- Substance exists independently. It possesses qualities and modes.
- Reality is unity-and-difference or difference-and-unity.
- Jainism say that all other systems of Indian philosophy commit the fallacy of Ekāntavāda.
- The fallacy of Ekāntavāda is committed when a partial or one-sided view is taken as the whole truth.

# UNIT 14: JAINA METAPHYSICS

## UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objectives
14.2 Introduction
14.3 What is Jaina Metaphysics?
14.4 Two Important Concepts In Jainism
14.4.1 Substance (Drevya) : A brief Introduction
14.5 Dravya: Elaborated
14.6 Soul or Jiva
14.7 Ajivas – The Inanimate Substance
14.8 Let us sum up
14.9 Further Reading
14.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
14.11 Model Questions

## 14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:-

- define the meaning of Jaina Metaphysics.
- analyze two important concepts in Jaina Metaphysics- (i) Astikayas (ii) Dravya.
- explain Dravya in detail.
- discuss the meanings of concepts like Jiva and Ajivas
- analyze the various inaimate substances (Ajivas)- (i) matter or Pudgala, (ii) Akasa or Space, (iii) Kala or time and (iv) Dharma or Adharma

## 14.2 INTRODUCTION

Jaina philosophy is regarded as the oldest Indian Philosophy that separates body (matter) from the soul (consciousness) completely. This philosophy concerns itself with reality, cosmology, epistemology (study of

knowledge) and vitalism. Jainism rigidly upholds individualistic nature of soul.

By its own admission, Jainism asserts that its teachings are eternal and therefore has no known founder. However, its origin may be traced to Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara of the 6th century B.C., a contemporary of Buddha. Jainism, Buddhism and Carvakas, the schools of materialism of Indian Philosophy, are called the unorthodox (non-vedic) or nastika darsanas of Indian Philosophy, because these three darsanas believed that the Veda and the Upanishads has no authority to give us knowledge.

## 14.3 WHAT IS JAINA METAPHYSICS

Jaina Metaphysics offers a view on reality. Jaina Metaphysics and Epistemology are intimately related. Jaina Epistemology asserts that reality is multifaceted (anekanta). Therefore, no one view can give a true account of reality. That is, no single statement or set of statements can give the whole truth about the difficult objects of the Universe. None of the pramanas (as discussed in different schools of Indian Philosophy) can give perfect knowledge. Though Kevala, enjoyed solely by the perfected soul, and which cannot be expressed in language, may give us true knowledge. Therefore, any knowledge gained through singular standpoint, and few qualities known about any object is only tentative and provisional.

According to Jainism, this world of reality consists of two items (i) Loka, the concrete; Loka is the object of our experience; (ii) Aloka, the beyond, which consists of pure space. In Jainism, we find several elements of ancient natural philosophy, for e.g. the theory of atoms that explains the nature of the universe without taking the help of a creator. Besides, it also interprets Karma as particles of subtle matter, Jiva, that which is animate or soul, in Jainism is the "sentient" or principle of consciousness. The non-sentient principle is Ajivas or the inanimate. Both Jiva and Ajivas are exclusive categories as their intrinsic nature show. They co-exist as in the case of human beings but one cannot assume the nature of the other.

## 14.4 TWO IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN JAINISM

There are two concepts in Jainism which are quite baffling for readers of Jaina Philosophy. These two concepts are Astikayas and Dravya. Astikaya is a compound word and is derived from 'asti' meaning existing and 'kaya' meaning extensive magnitude. So, by astikaya, taken together, by conjoining asti and kaya, mean 'a real that has extensive magnitude'. Dravya means the real that is flowing, fluid or changing.

**ASTIKAYAS :** The Asthikayas are five in number. They are (i) Jiva (soul), (ii) Pudgala (matter), (iii) Dharma (principle of rest), (iv) Adharma (principle of motion) and (v) Akasa (space).

The five Astikayas are eternal. They are not created by anything, or by any external agency. In magnitude they may be huge or they may be minute. But since we can see them, they are Kayas. So Astikayas are existent reality and are connected to space. The five Astikayas build up the entire cosmos. All material objects relate to space. The living conscious being is conditioned by an organic body and it exists in space. Because, Jiva has this relation to an organic body, Jiva is also an Astikaya.

### 14.4.1 Substance (Dravya) : A Brief Introduction

Generally, a distinction is made between characters (dharma) possessed by an object and dharma, meaning that which possess the characters. The Jainas say that every substance possesses two kinds of characters - (i) Essential and (ii) Accidental. So long as the substance remains, the essential characters remain in the substance. The substance cannot be a substance without these characters. Consciousness is said to be an essential characters of the soul. The accidental characters of the substance change. They do not remain the same or constant. They come and go. The accidental characters like, desires, volitions, pleasure and pain, for example, in the soul-substance, help the substance to undergo change, mutation and variation. These accidental characters are the 'modes' of a substance. For the Jainas, the essential characters are the 'gunas' and the changing and varied characters which are accidental in nature are paryaya.

So we may define a substance or dravya as that which possesses unchanging qualities or gunas and also the changing modes or paryaya.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** What are the two concepts you find in Jaina metaphysics?

Ans. (i) ..... and (ii) .....

**Q 2:** According to the Jainas, the Astikayas are ..... in number. They are

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 3:** What are the two characters possessed by every substance?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 4:** What are 'modes' according to the Jainas?

Ans : .....

.....

## ACTIVITY - 14.3



1. Give a brief description between essential and accidental characters of substance.

Answer : .....

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.....

## 14.5 DRAVYA : ELABORATED

Dravya is a dynamic reality. It is a "permanent substantiality' and it manifests through changes, that of appearing and disappearing, Dravya is characterized by the triple natures of the Real - (i) Utapada or origin, (ii) Vyaya or decay and (iii) Dharauvya or permanency form. Dravya is characterized by difference, permanence and expresses itself through change.

Astikayas or substances are divided into two kinds - (i) Living or Jiva and the non-living or Ajiva. Living substances are identified with the souls or spirits.

Souls are again sub-divided into free or perfect and are Mukta; and again, there are souls which are bonded or 'baddha'. The baddha souls are of two kinds - (i) those which can move (trasa) and (ii) Immobile or Sthavara. Sthavara souls have imperfect bodies; they are five in number. They are earth, water, fire, air and plants. They possess the sense of touch or tactual consciousness.

Trasa or mobile living substance possesses different degrees of perfection. Hence, each of them possess different number of senses, some two, some three and few others, three or four senses. Worms possess two senses - touch and taste. Again, ants possess the senses of touch, taste and smell. Whereas, bees possess the senses of touch, taste, smell and sight. Living substances like beasts, birds and men, the higher animals possess the five senses of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing.

Dravya or substance has some intrinsic and inalienable qualities. These are called Gunas as have been mentioned earlier. For example, in the case of yellow Gold, the yellow colour, softness etc. are the qualities or Gunas of the substance gold. Along with these inalienable qualities, substance or dravya must have some state or form. The state of form is its mode of existence or paryaya. Mode or paryaya changes. It may be destroyed. A new mode may come into existence. But dravya is the constitutive substance and therefore it is not subject to creation and destruction. Creation and destruction belong to modes or paryaya. Dravya is, thus eternal.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 5:** Dravya is characterized by the triple nature of (i) ……, (ii) …….. and (iii) ……..

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 6:** What are Jivas and Ajivas according to the Jainas?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 7:** Give example of Baddha souls.

Ans : .....

.....

## 14.6 SOUL OR JIVA

Soul or Jiva is referred to as a conscious substance. The essence of soul is consciousness, though there may be variation in its nature and degree in different souls. Keeping this is mind the souls may be arranged vertically according to the degree of presence of consciousness in the souls. At the top end of the vertical order, we have souls that free from Karma, are free and perfect and are omniscient. At the lowest end of the vertical order, lie the perfect souls inhabiting the bodies of earth, water, fire, air or vegetable. Life and consciousness may appear to be absent in them. But inspite of this, some form of consciousness may be there in them, though in a dormant state, due to the compelling influences of Karma. In between the highest and the lowest ends of the vertical order, we find souls, like those of worms, ants, bees and men, having different number of senses. [This fact has already been mentioned in a previous section of this chapter.]

The soul experience may states - it knows things, performs activities, enjoys pleasures, undergoes pains, can illuminate itself as well as other

objects. Though the soul is eternal, it is subject to change of states. Soul is different from the body. The existence of the soul can be proved through its consciousness of itself. Due to the effect of the past Karma, a Jiva occupies different bodies in a successive manner. Thus, though Jiva is formless, the Jiva is said to be occupying different bodies, and therefore has extension and occupies space. In this sense, Jiva becomes finite (not infinite) and is said to be co-extensive with the body consciousness, in this case, is found only in the body.

## 14.7 AJIVAS - THE INANIMATE SUBSTANCE

DHARMA, ADHARMA, AKASA and PUDGALA are the non-living or inanimate substances that possess extension. The physical world in which we live in is constituted by two parts - (i) the material bodies occupied by souls, and, (ii) the other material objects which constitute the environment. Apart from these material substances, the world is accounted for, by space, time and the conditions of rest and motion.

**MATTER OF PUDGALA :** The Jainas refer to matter as Pudgala. The literal meaning or the etymological meaning of Pudgala is "that which is liable to integration' and disintegration. Matter or material substances have the capacity to structure them to form smaller wholes and then form larger and still, larger wholes; further, material substances can also disintegrate, and break into smaller and smaller fragments. The smallest fragments of the material substances which cannot be further divided are partless and are called atoms or anu. Compounds (Sanghata or Skandha) are formed by the combination of two or more atoms, our bodies and the objects of the world are Skandhas or compounds, constituted by the combination of the material atoms. Pudgala or the material substances are qualified by the characteristics of touch, taste, smell and colours. These characteristics are similarly possessed by the atoms and their products, those combine together to form compounds. Unlike the other Indian Philosophers who believe that sound is an original quality of matter, the Jainas do not hold such a view. They say like light, heat, shadow, darkness, union, disunion

grossness, shape, sound is produced later as an accidental change of matter.

**ĀKASA OR SPACE** : Space or Akasa is a quality possessed by all extended substances. In space, soul, matter, dharma and Adharma exist. But space cannot be perceived, that is, it is imperceptible. Space can be inferred in the following way - when we say that substances are extended, we mean that they have extension in some place. This is called Akasa. Extension is an intrinsic character of material substance, substance devoid of this character, can never be extended in space. However, one should bear in mind that as a necessary factor, for extension, a substance requires space.

Extension cannot be fully explained merely by referring to substances being extended. It requires for its accurate explanation, the necessary condition of "Space". Substance occupies space, spread, permeate. In other words, they pervade. It is space that is occupied or pervaded. Unlike Descartes, the Jainas say that space is not same as extension. It is, as Locke asserted, it constitutes the locus of all extended things. The Jainas classify space into (i) Lokasa - that space in the world occupied by souls and other substances. (ii) Alokasa refers to the empty space beyond Lokasa.

**KĀLA OR TIME :** Jaina scholars like Gunaratna do not refer to time as a separate substance. He says that time is simply a mode (paryaya) of other substances. But, we need to have a proper explanation of what time or Kala is, and how the Jainas explain it.

Kala is an element which cannot be experienced or sensed directly. Therefore, it is not an element of physical experience. Like change and motion which are considered to be real, time is also regarded as real. Unlike the other elements of the universe, which are extended and are astikayas, Kala or time, in its absolutedness, is real. We need to contrast it with 'relative time' and break kala into parts. In reality, kala has no parts. But for all practical purposes, kala or time is divided into parts in order to understand other physical objects in reference to kala or time. The relative time is constituted of simple elements known as KALANUS, or instants. We find that the Jainas, while differentiating kala from the five Astikayas, refer to the Astikayas

characteristic of extensive magnitude by a technical term, known as TIRYAK pracaya or horizontal extension.

Each surface or extension may be referred to as series. We have arrangements of points or simple elements in a series where one term, as item may belong to another series. This is the two-dimensional series and corresponds to surface or extension. But this is not the case with Time or Kala. Time has only Urdhvapracaya where elements are arranged in forward direction. The series so arranged is mono-dimensional and is said to be in linear order. Therefore, from this, we can say that kala has no extension. It is not an astikaya. But without being an astikaya, it is a distinct and positive real entity, since it brings changes in other things. These are the real characteristics of Real Time or Paramarthika Kala. Thus we contrast Real time with relative or Vyvahara kala. Kala refers to traditional units of long and short periods. These long and short periods or durations have significance only when they are co-ordinated by a single Real Time series. The essence of Real time is continuity or duration (vartana).Whereas, the essence of empirical time is seen in all changes of the universe. Its is empirical or vyavahara time which we call 'SAMAYA' and which we conventionally and conveniently divide into moments, seconds, hours. We believe that empirical time has a beginning and an end, when in reality; it is beginning less and endless. Kala is the only non-extended substance, while the rest are astikayas or extended. Unlike Relative or Vyvahara time, Real or Paramarthika Time is indivisible, and is formless. It is eternal. Kala is Anastakaya.

**DHARMA AND ADHARMA :** Just as the existence of space and time cannot be proved directly, but whose existence is derived inferentially, similarly the existence of Dharma and Adharma are determined inferentially. The grounds of such inferences are mobility or motion and immobility or rest. The Jainas explain this in the following way - though the fish appears to begin its movement in water on its own, this movement would not have been possible without the necessary condition (medium) of water. Similarly, the soul, for its movement requires some assisting or supplementary conditions. Such

a condition is referred to as Dharma. But dharma helps a moving-object; it cannot offer its help to a non-moving object. Though the fish moves in water, water by itself cannot make the fish move. Adharma is the condition for the restful state or that which is responsible for the objects to be immobile. For, example, when a traveler takes rest under the shade of a true, or the objects is supported by the earth when they (the objects) rest on it (the earth). These are instance of Adharma. However, Adharma cannot restrain the movement or mobility of moving objects. We find that though dharma and Adharma contradict each other, the similarity between the two can be stated as that both are eternal, formless, non-moving and both occupy the entire world (Lokasa). They are not active, but passive, as they are the necessary conditions of motion and rest respectively. But one should bear in mind, that, in the Jaina philosophy, dharma and Adharma do not refer to the moral terms of merit and demerit, but dharma and Adharma are used by the Jainas in a purely technical sense.



## 14.8 LET US SUM UP

- Jaina is the oldest Nastika school of Indian philosophy that separates body from the soul.
- Jaina Metaphysics offers a view of reality. According to the Jainas reality is multifaceted (anekanta).
- The world of reality consists of two items – (i) Loka and (ii) Aloka. Loka is the 'concrete' and Aloka is the 'beyond'.
- Two important concepts of Jainism are Astikayas and Dravya.
- Astikaya is the real that has extensive magnitude.
- Dravya is the real, that which is flowing, fluid or changing.
- Astikayas are five in number – (i) Jiva (Soul), (ii) Pudgala or matter, (iii) Dharma (Principle of rest), (iv) Adharma (principle of motion) and (v) Akasa (space). Astikayas are eternal.
- Karma is interpreted as particles of subtle matter. Jiva is animate and is the 'sentient' or principle of consciousness. Ajiva is inanimate and is the 'non-sentient' principle.

- According to the Jainas, every substance possesses two types of characters – (i) Essential and (ii) Accidental. The essential characters are the gunas, and the changing and the varied characters which are accidental in nature, are paryaya.
- A substance or Dravya is defined by the Jainas, as that which possess gunas and paryaya. Gunas are unchanging qualities and the changing qualities are modes or paryaya.
- Dravya is characterized by the Triple nature of the Real. It has (i) Utapada or Origin, (ii) Vyaya or decay, and (iii) Dharauvya or permanency form.
- Astikayas are substances and divided into Living or Jiva (souls or spirits) and non-living or Ajiva.
- Souls are sub-divided into free or Mukta souls and bonded or baddha souls. Baddha souls are (i) Trasa or mobile, and (ii) Sthavara or immobile.
- Though the soul is eternal, it changes. It knows things, performs activities, enjoys pleasure, undergoes pain, and can illuminate itself as well as other objects.
- Ajivas or inanimate substances are Dharma, Adharma, Akasa and Pudgala.
- The physical world in which we live is constituted by – (i) the material bodies occupied by souls, and (ii) the other material bodies which constitute the environment.
- About Pudgala, the Jainas say that it is subject to integration and disintegration. The smallest particles of substances are partless and cannot be further divided, are called atoms or anu. Compound substances are called Sanghhata or Skandhas and are combination of two or more atoms.
- The characteristics of Pudgala are touch, taste, smell and colour.
- The Jainas say space or Akasa is a quality possessed by all extended substance.
- Space is imperceptible. Space can only be inferred.
- Jainas refer to space as (i) Lokasa and (ii) Alokasa.

- Kala cannot be experienced directly. Kala is non-extended, and is therefore anastikaya.
- Kala is absolute and is Real. But we need to break Kala into parts in order to understand other physical objects in the universe in reference to Kala or time. Therefore we have Relative time.
- Relative time is constituted by simple elements called KALANUS.
- Jainas differentiate between Kala and the five astikayas. The Jainas further, refer to the character of extensive magnitude by a technical term, TIRYAK pracaya or horizontal extension.
- Relative time or Vyavahara Kala refers to the traditional units of long and short periods.
- Dharma and Adharma cannot be experienced directly, but can be determined inferentially.
- The grounds of such inference are mobility or motion and immobility or rest.
- Dharma helps a moving object, but it cannot help a non-moving object. Adharma cannot restrain the movement of moving objects.
- Dharma and Adharma are both eternal formless and non-moving. Both occupy the entire world.



## 14.9 FURTHER READING

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# UNIT 15: NYAYA: CONCEPT OF PRAMĀ

## UNIT STRUCTURE

15.1 Learning Objectives
15.2 Introduction
15.3 Definition of pramā
15.4 Nyaya : Sources of knowledge
15.4.1 Perception
15.4.2 Inference
15.4.3 Upamana
15.4.4 Testimony
15.5 Let us sum up
15.6 Further Reading
15.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
15.8 Model Questions

## 15.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After you read this unit, you will be able to:-

- define pramā
- discuss the sources of knowledge
- explain anumana as a source of knowledge
- explain inference as a source of knowledge
- explain upamana as a source of knowledge
- explain testimony as a source of knowledge

## 15.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces to you 'Nyaya concept of Pramā'. After going through this unit, you will find the basic issues related to this unit. The issues are i) definition of pramā, ii) perception as a source of knowledge, iii) Anumana as a source of knowledge, iii) Comparison as a source of knowledge, and iv) Testimony as a source of knowledge.

## 15.3 DEFINITION OF PRAMĀ

Definition of Pramā : According to Nyāya, knowledge is defined as the manifestation of objects. Just as the light of a lamp reveals the physical objects existing around us, so also knowledge can manifest objects or help us to know objects before us. Nyāya holds that knowledge is classified into two: the first one is anubhaba or presentative cognition and the second is memory or representative cognition. These two types of knowledge can be valid or invalid.

According to Nyāya, valid knowledge is called pramā. And invalid or representative knowledge is called aprama. There are different types of valid knowledge. They are such-perception, inference, comparison, and testimony. Invalid knowledge also is divided into three types. They are-doubt, error (bhrama or viparyyaya) and hypothetical argument (tarka).

According to Nyāya, Valid presentative knowledge is a certain, unerring, and non-reproductive experience of the objects. For instance, I perceive the book on the table and get the knowledge that there is a book on the table. And this knowledge is valid (prama) because there is a direct relation between knowledge and the object. Thus, valid knowledge is a certain, unerring, and a production of a direct relation between knowledge and the object.

As memory is a non-presentative or a mere reproduction of past knowledge, so it may be valid or invalid in a sense as it is a reproduction of a previous valid or in-valid presentative knowledge.

Doubtful cognition cannot be called pramā because it is not certain knowledge. Error is either considered undoubted knowledge or presentative knowledge, but it is not true to the nature of the object. For instance, when we perceive a snake as a rope in the dark then we cannot have any doubt at that moment about the reality of the object that we see. But, this perception is erroneous, because the knowledge which we gain from the perception of the object is not true knowledge. Tarka is also not a valid knowledge, because it does not give us any true knowledge of the objects. For instance, when we perceive smoke in our neighbors' house, we say that the house has

caught fire. But my friend contradicts the previous statement that the house has caught fire. He asserts that there is no fire. Now, the question arises, if there is no fire, how can there be smoke? This undoubtedly leads us to tarka or debate. Thus, it can be said that tarka can give us indirect knowledge which can be derived from inference. Therefore, it is not prama or valid presentative knowledge.

In case of valid knowledge Nyāya raises a significant query, that is, how does true knowledge differ from false knowledge? Nyāya in this context asserts that a true knowledge is that which corresponds to the real object. For instance, 'milk is white' is considered as true knowledge, because in reality we see that the colour of milk is white. On the contrary, it can be opined that we have never seen that milk is black, red, green etc. Therefore, the assertion of the colour of milk, apart from white colour cannot be held to be true. Thus, the question is necessarily involved-how can we know that the first assertion, milk is white, is true or the other assertion, milk is black, is false? It clearly involves another important question, that is, how do we test the truth or falsity of knowledge? It can be explained through an example. For instance, the statement or proposition water quenches thrust is true in the real sense that when we feel thirsty and take water immediately, it quenches thrust. Nyāya in this context significantly shows that truth and falsity of knowledge consists in its correspondence and non-correspondence to facts. If the proposition corresponds to fact, our knowledge is to be true. On the other hand, if the proposition or statement fails to correspond to facts, our knowledge regarding the statement or proposition will be false. True knowledge leads to successful practical activity, while false knowledge fails to correspond reality or ends in unsuccessful activity.



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Q 1:** What is knowledge, according to Nyāya?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 2:** What are the kinds of knowledge, according to Nyāya?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 3:** What are the different types of valid knowledge, according to Nyāya?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 4:** What is pramā?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 5:** What are the different types of invalid knowledge, according to Nyāya?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 6:** What is apramā?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 7:** How does true knowledge differ from false knowledge?

Ans : .....

.....

## 15.4 NYĀYA: SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

Nyaya admits four sources of true knowledge. They are: i) Anumana or inference ii) Perception or pratyaksa iii) Upamana, iv) Testimony

### 15.4.1 Perception

Perception: Perception is considered as true cognition in logic. Nyāyayikas define perception as a definite cognition which is produced by sense-object contact and which is considered true or unerring. For instance, when I perceive the table in my room, it is due to the direct contact of my eyes with the table. And it is also clear that my perception of the table is

definite with the object table. The distant or unclear perception regarding an object is a doubtful perception. Therefore, it is not considered as true perception. Again, the perception of the snake as a rope in the dark is a result of illusion. Therefore, this kind of perception is different from valid perception.

Another definition of perception is a kind of cognition which arises due to the stimulation of our sense organs by the perceived object. This definition is accepted by some Indian and Western philosophers. On the other hand, some Nyayikas and Vedantins reject this doctrine on the ground that there may be perception without sense-object contact. For instance, we can think of the concept of God, who is thought to be perceived in all things, without the sense-object contact. Again, when a person perceives a snake as a rope, there is really no snake to come in contact with the eyes. Besides, the feelings of pleasure and pain are perceived by us without the help of any sense organ. Therefore, the sense-object contact is not the defining condition of perception. But, the common fact is that perception is a directness or immediacy of the knowledge of the objects perceived by sense-organ. Again, some Indian logicians define perception as immediate cognition, although they admit that perception is, in most of the cases, conditioned by sense-object contact.

### 15.4.2 Inference

Inference: Anumāna is a kind of knowledge or cognition which follows some other knowledge. It consists of two words, one is 'anu' and the other is 'mana'. Anu means 'after' and 'māna' means a cognition or knowledge. Therefore, anumāna means a kind of knowledge or cognition which follows or comes from other knowledge. For instance, the hill has fire, because it has smoke. Therefore, we can say that 'whatever is smoky is fiery.' This example shows that we perceive the existence of smoke in the hill, and from the existence of smoke in the hill, we infer that there is fire in the hill. This also asserts an invariable relation between smoke and fire. Thus, inference is a process of reasoning in which we pass from known to unknown or observed case to the unobserved case. The basic character

of inference is that it depends on the invariable relation of concomitance between two terms- smoke (hetu) and fire (Sadhya).

### 15.4.3 Upamāna

Upamāna or Comparison: According to Nyāya, upamāna is the third source of valid knowledge. As a source of valid knowledge, it implies a relation between name and things or between a word and its denotation. We get knowledge through upamana or testimony when some authoritative person tell us of objects through description. On the basis of description of some objects, although we do not know the object before hand, we apply the word or knowledge of the object to the actual object and are able to know that the word corresponds to the object, and finally get knowledge of the object through upamana. For instance, a man does not know anything about a gavaya or wild cow, but he may be told by a forester that a wild cow or gavaya looks like a cow. Subsequently, he perceives such an animal in a forest and recognizes it as a gavaya. And this knowledge of a wild cow or a cow is due to upamana or comparison, because the word or the object fit with the description of the objects. Therefore, it can be said that upamāna is the way of knowing the description of the words (denotation of words) or the relation between the words and the objects denoted by them. On the basis of the description of the objects, which is considered the grounds of our knowledge in upamana, we perceive the similarity of the object and then recognize the object (gavaya or the cow) as such. It means that the gavaya is an animal which corresponds to the cow.

Upamāna or comparison, as a source of valid knowledge recognized by Naiyayikas, has not been acknowledged by other schools of Indian philosophy. Cārvāka holds that upamana is not a valid source of knowledge because it cannot provide us any true knowledge about the denotation of words. The Buddhist logicians also hold that upamana or comparison is not a distinct or independent source of knowledge, because it is the result of perception and testimony. Rather, they hold that it is a form of valid knowledge. The Vaiśesika and the Sānkhya system hold that upamāna is a form of inference. Therefore, it is neither a distinct type or knowledge nor

an independent way of knowing. The Jaina system holds that it is the result of pratyabhijna or recognition. Thus, this system reduces upamāna to pratyabhijna or recognition.

### 15.4.4 Testimony

Sabda or testimony: Nyāya system accepts sabda or testimony as a source of valid knowledge. Literally, it means verbal knowledge. It is the knowledge of objects derived from words or sentences. But, all verbal knowledge is not considered as valid knowledge. Nyāya defines it as a valid verbal testimony. Sabda, as a valid pramāna, consists of a trustworthy person. A verbal testimony becomes true when it comes from a person who not only knows the truth but also speaks the truth for the guidance of other person. It also shows that a sentence or a statement is not valid in itself and is also not considered as sufficient to provide ground for acquiring knowledge. Again, the mere perception of the words of a sentence does not lead to any knowledge of objects. Rather, it can be asserted that when we perceive the words of a sentence and understand the meanings of the words then we acquire knowledge from a verbal testimony. Thus, validity of a verbal knowledge not only depends on the statement of a trust worthy person but also on the understanding of the meaning of the statement. Thus, testimony as a source of valid knowledge depends on the understanding of the meaning of a statement of a trustworthy person.

Classification of Sabda: There are two ways of classifying sabda or verbal knowledge. According to one way, verbal testimony or sabda is of two kinds. The first one deals with perceptible objects in which we include the trustworthy assertions of ordinary persons, saints, and the scriptures. For instance, we can talk about the assertions of a reliable farmer regarding the proper cultivation of crops. On the other hand, scriptures prescribe some commands or directions to perform certain rituals in order to bring about rainfall to be free from draught situations. And the second one deals with imperceptible objects in which we include also all the trustworthy assertions of ordinary persons, saints, prophets, and the scriptures. As for instance, we can talk of the saints and prophets, who deliver the message

of humanity, brotherhood, tolerance, unity, harmony, virtue and vice etc. On the other hand, the scriptures talk of God, freedom and immorality.

According to another way of classification, there are two kinds of testimony. One is scriptural or vaidika and other is secular. The first one deals with the words of Gods. Therefore, it is perfect and infallible. On the other hand, the second one is not perfect and infallible. Rather, it may be true or false. But, it is not the case that laukika testimony is invalid in all cases, because the assertion of a trustworthy person becomes valid. From the above classification of testimony, it is clear that the first way of classification consists of the nature of objects of knowledge, while the other refers to the nature of the source of knowledge. Both the classifications agree on the point that testimony must always be personal, which is based on the assertions of trustworthy person whether human or divine. In respect of the truth, there is no difference among the assertions of trustworthy person, saint, prophet, and the scriptures as revealed by God.



## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 8:** What are the sources of knowledge, according to Nyāya?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 9:** According to Nyāya, what is perception?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 10:** Define inference or anumāna with an example.

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 11** What are the two words consisting of anumāna?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 12:** What is upamāna?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 13:** Give an example of upamāna.

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 14:** Why do the Buddhist logicians hold that upamana or upamana is not a valid source of knowledge?

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 15:** Write the literal meaning of testimony.

Ans : .....

.....

**Q 16:** State the basic character of inference.

Ans : .....

.....



## 15.6 LET US SUM UP

- Nyāya holds that knowledge is defined as the manifestation of objects. Just as the light of a lamp reveals the physical objects existed around us, so also knowledge can manifest objects or help us to know objects before us.
- According to Nyāya, knowledge is classified into two: the first one is anubhaba or presentative cognition and the second is memory or representative cognition
- Nyāya advocates different types of valid knowledge. They are—perception, inference, comparison, and testimony. And invalid knowledge also is divided into three types. They are—doubt, error (bhrama or viparyyaya) and hypothetical argument (tarka).
- Valid presentative knowledge is defined as a certain, unerring, and non-reproductive experience of the objects. As for instance, 'x'

perceives the duster on the table and get the knowledge that there is a duster on the table. And this knowledge is valid (prama), because there is a direct relation between knowledge and the object. Thus, valid knowledge is certain, unerring and a production of a direct relation between knowledge and the object.

- According to Nyāya, Tarka is not a valid knowledge, because it does not give us any true knowledge of the objects. For instance, when we perceive smoke in our neighbors' house, we say that the house has caught fire. But my friend contradicts the previous statement that the house has caught fire, because he asserts that there is no fire. Now, the question arises, if there is no fire, how can there be smoke? This undoubtedly leads us to tarka or debate. Thus, it can be said that tarka can give us indirect knowledge which can be derived from inference. Therefore, it is not pramā or valid presentative knowledge.
- Nyāya significantly shows that truth and falsity of knowledge consists in its correspondence and non-correspondence to facts. If the proposition corresponds to fact, our knowledge is true. On the other hand, if the proposition or statement fails to correspond to facts, our knowledge regarding the statement or proposition will be false. True knowledge leads to successful practical activity, while false knowledge fails to correspond to reality or ends in unsuccessful activity.
- Nyāya prescribes four sources of true knowledge. They are: i) Anumana or inference ii) Perception or pratyaksa iii) Upamana iv) Testimony
- According to Nyāya, perception is a kind of cognition which is defined as a definite cognition and it is produced by sense-object contact, and which is considered true or unerring.
- Anumāna means a kind of knowledge or cognition which follows or comes from other knowledge. As for instance, the hill has fire, because it has smoke, is an example of inference. The unperceived