



**INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR JAIN STUDIES
&
MANGALAYATAN UNIVERSITY**



**Invites scholarly papers for
Two Days International Seminar
On
Determinism in *Śramaṇika* traditions (particularly Jainism and
Buddhism) and their moral and ethical effects**

(11th - 12th January, 2018)

**at
Mangalayatan University
Aligarh**

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Determinism in Śramaṇika traditions (particularly Jainism and Buddhism) and their moral and ethical effects

Preamble

Occurrence of an event or phenomena (like creation, change, destruction etc), which may be regular or different from the routine life/events like day and night, birth and death etc arouse our inquisitiveness as to the cause and its effect. For example, in our childhood, when we saw a falling star, we were made to believe the likely occurrence of an evil event or when a peacock starts making shrill musical sounds, we were made to believe that rains are around the corner. When we enquired from our parents or teachers about these, we were simply told, - 'this is a traditional belief.'

Inquisitive persons, particularly philosopher and now scientists look at these as potential avenues for creative thinking and logical explanations for these. This had been more so in the past with Indian philosophers and spiritual masters as India was endowed with abundant natural resources, climate, and fertile soil. The Indian cultural and philosopher scenario over ages had been of seekers. We find Śramaṇas, who were primarily non believers in God (as creator/sustainer/destroyer) as well as in divine grace for good fortune. Śramaṇas believed in the doctrine of self sacrifice-effort for auspicious events and ultimate liberation.

Fatalism, Determinism and Pre-determinism (*Niyativāda*) are the terms generally used interchangeably. However, they are discrete in stressing different aspects of the futility of human will or the fore-ordination of destiny. Further, all these doctrines share common ground. Let us take a look at these terms;

Fatalism is a philosophical doctrine stressing the subjugation of all events or actions to fate.

Determinism, in philosophy, implies that all events, including moral choices, are completely determined by previously existing causes.

Pre-determinism, a specific type of determinism, believe that every single event or effect is caused by an uninterrupted chain of events that goes back to the origin of the universe, as against a more generic view of Determinists, who believe that each event is at least caused by recent prior events, if not also by such far-extending and unbroken events as those going back in time to the universe's very origins.

Indeterminism, on the other hand, is the view that at least some events in the universe have no deterministic cause but occur randomly, or by chance.

The Śramaṇika tradition

Jain and Buddhist religious traditions belong to Śramaṇika tradition. Ājīvika, of Śramaṇika tradition were firm believers of fatalism.

Lord Mahavira in Sutratrakanga elaborated the doctrine of fatalism and then vehemently refuted the same as heretic. Siddha Sen Diwakar (Sanmati Tarka Sutra) on the other hand talks of five cofactors (Samvayas) to explain the rise of a new mode / event. The expositions on soul and karma doctrine in Jain holy literature expresses different views, sometimes partially supporting *Niyativāda* but the generally emphasize the activism of soul and ten states of karmas. However certain factors in story literature, like forecasting the future *Tirthankaras* and some universal truths like only 24 *Tirthankaras*, or 12 *chakravartis*, only 608 living beings exit from *nitya-nigod* in 6 months and eight time-instants (*samay*) and metaphysical considerations like serial existence of modes (*paryyas*) i.e. *kram-badda-paryāya* etc make the proponents of *Niyativāda* extend its application globally.

Buddhist text Dighanikāya's chapter Sāmnajasya-sutta, refutes the description of Ājīvika fatalist Makhlī Gośālaka. It talks of two types: (1) theistic determinism (*issaranimmānahetu*) and *kammic* determinism (*pubbekatahetu*). *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, alerts us against absolving our responsibility for anything one does by giving examples such as “Don't blame me, it is the will of God” or inactivity, “What can I do? It's my past *kamma*.” Regarding theistic determinism, the famous Buddhist text *Buddhacarita* points out that “If God is the cause of everything that happens, and then what is the use of human striving?” However, Buddhism does not teach that we have complete freedom or that we are determined, but that our will is conditioned or limited to a greater or lesser extent. Introspection will reveal to us that our ability to choose and act is often under the influence of and thus limited by our desires, our skill or lack of it, the power of circumstance, and our health, the strength of our habits and convictions, and numerous other factors.

Ājīvika was a system of ancient Śramaṇika tradition in the Indian subcontinent. Ājīvika followers believed that a cycle of reincarnation of the soul was determined by a precise and non-personal cosmic principle called *niyati* (destiny or fate) that was completely independent of the person's actions. The same sources therefore make them out to be strict fatalists, who did not believe in karma. Makkhali Gośāla was an ascetic teacher, who was a contemporary of Lord Buddha and Lord Mahavira, the last and 24th *Tirthankara* of Jainism.

Invitation for Papers:

Scholarly, referenced papers are invited for presentation and discussions during the seminar. For comprehensive discussions on the subject, the following categories of topics for research are suggested. Please note that *Niyativāda* implies fatalism, determinism and pre-determinism.

1. Evolution and traces of *Niyativāda* in Jain and Buddhist literature
2. Cause and effect relationship (single and multiple like five *samvayas*) in Jain and Buddhist doctrine. Does it imply *Niyativāda* only?
3. Karma doctrine vis a vis *Niyativāda*
4. Role of free will and activism of soul vis a vis *Niyativāda*
5. Impact of *Niyativāda* in behaviour, ethics and morality
6. Examples/universal laws in *Śramaṇa* literature that support *Niyativāda*
7. Omniscience and *Niyativāda*
8. Jain and Buddhist doctrines support both *Niyativāda* as well as freewill and self effort together to achieve one's objectives

Paper Details:

Language: English is the preferred language for presenting the paper. However papers in Hindi are welcome as well.

Presentation: For English papers: Soft copy using MS word, A4 size using Times New Roman, font size 12 are the desired formats for ease compiling and evaluation. For Hindi papers, commonly used fonts are preferred

Schedule for submission of papers:

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| 1. Intention to present the paper along with the title | : September 15 th , 2017 |
| 2. Submission of Abstracts | : September 30 th , 2017 |
| 3. Submission of final paper | : December 15 th , 2017 |

Facilities provided to scholars:

Competitive stipend; travel, board and lodge facilities to those scholars whose papers are accepted for presentation at the seminar

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