

Cognition in Jainism

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Abstract

Cognition is an activity of soul in Jainism. Cognition with its two aspects of *jnana*, intelligence, and *darsana*, intuition, is a permanent feature of the soul, cognition is the application of the faculty of knowing of the soul. Cognitions are of two types, articulate and inarticulate. Cognition establishes a relation between the subject and the object. The truth or falsehood of cognition is a subjective experience and is known on subsequent cognition. Perceptual cognition is made through senses and mind; direct cognitions are made by the soul bypassing the senses and mind.

Keywords: Cognition, consciousness, soul, knowledge, perception

1. Introduction

In Jainism the soul is the knower and perceiver. The soul is a substance having two important characteristics, consciousness and *upayoga* (manifestation of consciousness). The soul is consciousness (*cetana*) itself and consciousness is invariably soul. Consciousness manifests as attributes, two important attributes are *jnana* and *darsana*. The *jnana* is invariably soul, for consciousness is inherent quality of *jnana*. The soul is also invariably self-awareness (*darsana*) and self-awareness is invariably soul itself. Two other terms intelligence and knowledge for *jnana* have now come in vogue in modern philosophy. Many scholars use the term knowledge for *jnana* but these two are thought to have different connotations. It is more appropriate to use the terms intelligence and knowledge for *jnana* when referring to soul and when used for external objects respectively. Similarly, intuition and perception may be used for *darsana* in context with internal and external use. Cognition is *upayoga* or application of *jnana* and *darsana* attributes of consciousness.

2. *Jnana* (Knowledge).

The soul is known and identified through its *jnana* attribute. *Jnana*, a special attribute, is the identifying property of the soul; it is not found in matter (*pudgala*) or in other non-living substances. As a substance *jnana* and soul are one and the same, then why a distinction is made between them? This is because existence of *jnana* can be experienced and proved, soul cannot. Soul has infinite attributes, the other attributes of soul, which may exist simultaneously or temporally, though different from *jnana*, are

not different spatially. The *jnana* attribute is the means to establish contact with the self as well as the external objects. *Jnana* was a means for the ethical progress of the soul in Agama¹ period (spanning about one thousand years starting from the date of liberation of Mahavira in 527 BC); it was one of the constituent of the path of Moksa (emancipation or liberation). *Jnana* which did not help in Moksa was *ajnana* (ignorance) or *mithyajnana* (perverted knowledge). The difference between *jnana* (knowledge) and *ajnana* (ignorance) was not objective but subjective. In the period of logic (5th-6th century AD), *jnana* was defined as apprehending the reality. *Jnana* now became objective.

There are four fundamentals of *jnana* [1].

- (i) *Jnana* is identical with soul, but the soul is not identical with *jnana* as it contains certain other qualities also.
- (ii) The function of *jnana* is to 'illuminate' the objects. It does not create anything new.
- (iii) The soul is the instrument as well as the agent of cognition.
- (iv) The objects are presented to the soul directly.

Cognition, with its two aspects of *jnana* and *darsana*, is a permanent activity of the soul. It is not an accidental phenomenon produced by the external factors. Different forms of cognitions also are modes (*pariyaya*) of the soul; they belong to attribute of consciousness

Gautama: "O Lord! The soul is *jnana* or *ajnana*? [2]"

Mahavira : "O Gautama! The soul is *jnana* as well as *ajnana*, but *jnana* is positively soul.

Thus both *jnana* and *ajnana* are part of the soul.

3 Darsana (Perception)

Regarding the actual nature of *darsana* the Jain scholars hold widely different views. It is agreed that *darsana* or perception or intuition is devoid of judgment; it is more like awareness, generality, without any predication. Perception is right (*samyaka*) if soul leans towards spiritual progress and believes in liberation as the highest goal. It is perverted (*mithya*) if the soul is engrossed in worldly pleasures. As far as the cognizer and the object are concerned the Jain does not hold any difference between *jnana* and *darsana*. Like *jnana*, which is veiled by karma, the *darsana* is also veiled by karma. In the veiled state the manifested *darsana* attribute is divided in five categories, the last category, slumber (*nidra*) is further divided in five types. Among these 9 types of *darsana*, defined by the respective obscuring karma, the first four follow the corresponding types of perceptions [3].

1 Agamas are scriptures composed by Ganadharas, the chief disciples of Mahavira

(1) Ocular Perception (*Chaksu darsana*) – the soul apprehends the object through the sense of sight

(2) Non-ocular perception (*Achaksu darsana*) - there are different views. The general view is that this is apprehension of the object through non-visual senses and the mind (some scholars have objections to mind as it has no *darsana*).

(3) *Avadhi darsana* – clairvoyance qua intuition [4]

(4) *Kevala darsana* – omniscience qua intuition

In the last two types of *darsana* (intuition) the soul directly apprehends the object without the medium of senses. The remaining 5 types of slumber (*nidra*) do not obscure *jnana* according to theory of karma. They are related with *darsana* only and do not put any obstruction merely to the cognition of generality. They obstruct the very activity of the soul towards knowing.

4 Upayoga (Cognition, Application)

Upayoga (Manifestation) is a general term comprehending all activities related to consciousness. Literally it means application, attention or coordination of the subject (soul) and the object. It is the application of the faculty of knowing possessed by the soul. It is attention of the soul when the later knows the object. Cognition is also *upayoga*. This is of two types; inarticulate cognition (*nirakara upayoga*) is perception or *darsana* and articulate cognition (*sakara upayoga*) is knowledge or *jnana*. The articulate cognition is designated as knowledge, *jnana*, or ignorance, *ajnana*, according to the faith of the knower. *Upayoga* is a mode of the soul related to consciousness. The term *upayoga* literally means a relation by coming near; expressing the relation of the object with *jnana* by coming into contiguity.

Siddhasena [5] defined *upayoga* in two ways. (1) The consciousness, which is a constant characteristic of the soul, manifests itself into the stages of *jnana* and *darsana*. This manifestation is *upayoga*, and (2) *upayoga* means attention of *jnana* and *darsana* towards the object. This definition can be applied to the case of constant cognition also.

Akalanka [6] said that *upayoga* is a mode of cognizer, related to consciousness; occurring at the possible presence of external and internal means. Is every mode of the soul an *upayoga*? No; but only that which is related to consciousness. As a matter of fact consciousness is power and *upayoga* is its application. There are two types of causes of *upayoga*, external and internal. Each of them is further divided into two, inseparable and separable. Thus there are four types of causes of *upayoga*

(1) External inseparable - physical senses

(2) External separable - the object, light etc.

(3) Internal separable - physical mind, material cause of thinking (mental state) etc.

- (4) Internal inseparable - activity of the soul (*bhava-* yoga) resulting from partial or complete destruction of the karmic matter.

In certain cases all causes are necessary, in others, three, two or even one can do. The 4th cause is essential in all activities.

Vidyananda [7] mentions two types of *upayoga*, *ksayika*, emanating from annihilation of karma, and *ksayopasamika*, emanating from annihilation-cum-subsidence of karma. The former does not require any external or separable means; it solely depends upon the fourth type of cause, which is always present. *Ksayika upayoga* is permanent, once appeared it never vanishes. *Ksayopasamika upayoga* is temporary; it appears and vanishes according to the external and internal conditions. Temporariness here means a change in respect of objectivity, intensity, kind, etc., and not total disappearance.

5 Ignorance (*Ajnana*)

Ajnana (ignorance) is not an independent attribute like *jnana*. Ignorance may be interpreted to have four meanings [8].

(i) Wrong knowledge. According to Jain logic valid knowledge (*prama*) means a decisive cognition of the self as well as the object. The wrong knowledge is known as false imposition (*samropa*) which has three type (a) doubt (*samsaya*) (b) illusion (*viparyaya*) and (c) indistinct appearance (*anadhyavasaya*). *Darsana* also is generally included in the last category; but *anadhyavasaya* stops with its flash of indistinct appearance, *darsana* later on develops into *jnana*.

No demarcation line can be drawn between the right and wrong as far as incomplete knowledge is concerned. According to Jaina logic difference between truth and falsehood is not that of quality, but is of degree.

(ii) Perverted attitude. Knowledge is enlightened knowledge when it cannot be reversed; it is perverted knowledge when it can be reversed. Knowledge in itself is neither enlightened nor perverted; it is enlightened or perverted according to the attitude of the subject, which is influenced by deluding karma. Knowledge may change according to the attitude of the subject. The knowledge of one possessing perverted attitude is not held to be rational, and is ignorance.

(iii) Absence of knowledge. The absence of knowledge is due to the veil of intelligence and intuition obscuring karmas. The intelligence obscuring karma is compared to cloth bondage on the eyes; it obscures the power of knowledge. The intuition obscuring karma is compared with the door keeper who does not allow a person to visit the king.

(iv) Cause of ignorance. *Ajnana* is the cause of ignorance or lack of knowledge.

6 Relation between Subject and object

There are two important views on relationship between subject (soul) and object. Kundakunda in *Pravacansara* [9] says "The knower has *jnana* of his nature and all

the objects are within the range of *jnana*, just as the objects of sight are within the ken of the eye, though there is no mutual inherence." Further, "The knower, who transcends sense- perception necessarily knows and sees the whole world neither entering into nor entered into by the objects of *jnana*." He says that *jnana* exists as power and a function. The *jnana* power is confined to the body but the function is not limited, it covers the whole universe. The soul is co-extensive with *jnana* and *jnana* is co-extensive with the object. The *jnana* operates on the object, just as a sapphire thrown in the milk pervades the whole if it with its luster. In the case of omniscient the object of *jnana* comprises the whole physical and the non-physical world.

The later scholars have not appreciated this explanation of Kundakunda. Akalanka [10] states that consciousness has two forms, the cognition form and the object form. Cognition- form is like the mirror without any reflection. The object form is like that with reflection. Cognition form is common in all apprehensions; but the object form is different with every appearance. The cognition form is pure consciousness. The reflection in a mirror is just like its prototype but the latter is not the content of the mirror. The mirror contains the reflection only. Similarly, *jnana* contains the images or concepts only. They distinguish one cognition from another; and not the physical objects. The content of *jnana* is not something different from *jnana* itself.

Jaina holds that the soul does not come into direct contact with the objects; nor are they represented by via media but 'illuminated' by the soul when the obscuring karma is removed. Thus *jnana* means the removal of this obscurance which naturally results into the illumination of an object. The *jnana* does not take the form of object and the object is not the cause of *jnana*. The object does not stand in *jnana*, it only manifests in it. Cognition never appears without having an object as its datum. Whenever there is cognition it must be associated with some object, self or external.

In the mundane soul the *jnana* is clouded by karma. Irrespective of the karma veil some *jnana* always manifests. This manifested *jnana* is divided in four classes based on the intensity of the veil and the function performed by *jnana*. When the veil is thick the manifested *jnana* is known as *mati jnana*, empirical knowledge, that takes help of senses and mind to cognize the object. This is the ability of the individual soul. *Sruti jnana*, articulate knowledge, is comprehending the knowledge manifested by another soul; it is also cognized through senses and mind. When the karma veil is thinner the soul attains the ability of cognition without the help of senses and mind. In this state the soul extends his capacity to cognize the objects which are beyond the limits of senses and mind. These direct cognitions are of two types. *Avadhi jnana* directly perceives the external objects, which transcend the limitations of senses and mind, as well as the self. *Manahaparyaya jnana* also perceives the thoughts of other mundane souls. When the psychical karma veil is completely eliminated these four divisions of *jnana* cease to exist

and the natural pure *jnana* of the soul, *kevala jnana*, that can cognize all objects , small and big, near and far, past and future, and the self, manifests.

In the absolute sense the soul can only be conscious of itself, because it alone exists as that state of pure singularity [11]. When we say 'it is conscious of itself', we separate the intellectual level into two aspects: (1) the aspect that it is observer and (2) the aspect that it is observed (although they are one and the same). Intellectual examination, in fact, reveals the existence within consciousness of three values, inherent in any process of conscious experience or any process of observation: (1) the observer, (2) the observed, and (3) the process of linking the observer and the observed.

Even though there is nothing but one consciousness, this principle of three emerges. Consciousness being awake to itself experiences itself, and is at once the knower, the process of knowing, and the known- observer, process of observation, and observed; or subject, object, and the process of linking them. In this state of absolute consciousness, these three values are one and the same, yet they represent these aspects of the same singularity.

As one consciousness leads to three aspects, the interaction between the three and the resultant aspects, relationships, and their interaction, etc. leads to an infinite number of ever-expanding possibilities. All these possibilities, all these forces of interaction and relation, exist in the soul.

The interaction of forces, even though within the soul, creates a dissymmetry, as if a distortion, in the flat and homogeneous- yet infinitely flexible- absolute singularity of soul. The virtual pull and push, rise and fall, vibration and silence, dynamism and silence, leads to the formation of structure within the soul. Structure is the result of apparent breaking of infinite symmetry. With all interactions always taking place in accordance with the fundamental forces that uphold them, structure is the result of the virtual distortion generated by the interaction of forces.

In the pure soul or the soul of the Omniscient the structure is absent and the subject and the object is the same pure consciousness. In the impure soul the subject is the consciousness and the object is the structure created by the virtual distortion. The structure describes the perverted state of the soul.

7 Cognitions: True or False

Before we consider the truth or falsehood of cognition it is pertinent to introduce an important principle of reality in Jainism. According to Jainism a thing is possessed of infinite number of attributes and characteristics. Out of them some qualities are natural (*svabhava*) while others are derivative (*vibhava*) i.e. caused on external association. Consciousness of soul is a natural quality. But the possession of body is not an independent act; the soul depends upon matter (*pudgala*) for it. Similarly, matter has corporeality as its natural quality but its transformation into a physical body

is derivative. Anything that exists, temporary or permanent, natural or derivative, is real, it is objective. The reality is not confined to the existence only, which is only one aspect of it. The reality also consists of many other aspects in addition to the existence. Existence implies non-existence in relation to the factors other than governing the existence. Similarly, non-existence implies existence in different relations. One without the other is unconceivable. To say, that one is real and objective and the other as unreal and merely conceptual has no reason.

Objectivity or subjectivity of cognition has nothing to do with its truth or falsehood. Cognition is false when something appears in the context other than its own. False knowledge is that which represents things in relation to which they do not exist. Falsehood consists in the misrepresentation of objective facts in experience. Illusion consists in attributing such spatial, temporal or other kinds of relations to the objects of our judgment that do not actually exist, but the objects themselves actually exist in other relations.

The truth and falsehood of the context are ascertained by the subsequent correspondence or contradiction. The criterion of falsity is not subjectivity of the appearance, but its contradictions. If a judgment is contradicted by another judgment of unquestionable truth, the former is to be rejected as untrue. The problem of falsity is thus, ultimately a question of experience. The problem of truth also is no less a matter of experience and a prior logic is absolutely incompetent to deal with it.

How do we explain the cognitions based on personal attitude? It is concerned with *jnana*, knowledge, as well as feeling. When both of them are intermixed, they result into confusion. Knowledge of every being except that of omniscience is alloyed with passions and other karmic effects; which disfigure or color the vision like colored glasses. This disfiguring sometimes amounts to a very high degree and we call it illusion. When the degree is not so high we consider it valid cognition. The difference between the two is that of degree and not of quality. The cognition of a layman is valid to certain degree only. Nothing is absolutely valid or invalid. The difference between knowledge and the disfigurement is this, that the former is the result of the removal of karmic obscurance while the later results from the karmic rise. The first depends upon the object while latter on the subject.

A thing possesses innumerable qualities without depending on the cognizer. In the case of derivative (*vibhava*) qualities also, they are generated by a cause different from the self. But while they exist they are as real as the natural ones.

The cognizer is free to choose any of the qualities already existing for his expression. He cannot impose anything new. All the qualities and relations are not physical. The existences are physical as well as non-physical. But non-physicality does

not necessarily mean subjectivity. There are many non-physical objective qualities such as knowledge, actions etc. which are neither subjective nor physical.

We now study the different forms of cognitions in some detail.

8 Indirect Cognitions

(i) Perceptual Cognition or Empirical Knowledge (*Mati Jnana*)

There are different elements of perceptual cognition. Perceptual cognition (*mati*) takes stock of a present objective datum, recollection (*smriti*) has reference to a datum perceived in the past; recognition (*samjna*) is the cognition of the identity of a past object of perception with the present; thought (*cinta*) is the cognition of a future event. All these different varieties of cognition are regarded as identical in spite of the difference of determinations, because the substantive object is the same. *Abhinibodha* is cognition competent to take stock of an object with all its temporal determinations as past, present and future. Empirical knowledge (*Mati jnana*) is a comprehensive class of cognitions which includes a large variety. Thus, for example, there are purely sensuous cognitions, purely mental cognitions and cognitions which are generated by both the senses and the mind. The sensuous cognition of animals, beginning with one-sensed and ending with five-sensed, but destitute of mind, are purely sensuous. Recollection and instinctive intuition are purely mental. The normal cognitions of beings endowed with mind are generated by the cooperation of the mind and the senses. According to Jain epistemology, all cognitions are nothing but different states of soul as stated above

The process of perceptual cognition has four steps [12] (i) *Avagraha*-sensation (ii) *Iha*- speculation, (iii) *Avaya*-judgment, and (iv) *Dhahrna*-retention. Sensation means cognition of a generic character in the wake of the intuition of the contact between the sense and the object without the manifestation of any particular characteristic of the contact. The sensation is in respect of the *vyanjana* (possible object) and the *artha* (plausible object). The *vyanjana* sensation means indeterminate cognition of the objects such as sound and the like through the contact between the object and the sense organ. This is a judgment like 'there may be something'. There occurs in the trail of this sensation another sensation called *artha*-sensation, which cognizes the object a little more distinctly, though devoid of the concepts of class, substance and attributes. This is a judgment like 'there exists something'. Speculation consists in the experience "this must be that". The speculation constitutes the intermediate stage between indeterminate perception and determinate perceptual judgment. Speculation is an attitude of the mind which leads to the determination of the specific character of the object by laying emphasis upon the real characteristics that are perceived and the elimination of the unreal attributes that are not cognized. Perceptual judgment is the

specific determination of the object 'this is that'. The persistence of the perceptual judgment is called retention.

The memory of past lives is also a kind of perceptual cognition. The memory of past lives arises in a rational being, engaged in speculation, discrimination, investigation and research, inspired by a particular occasion, on the purification of mind and emotions on account of the requisite auspicious transformations.

(ii) Articulate knowledge (*Sruti jnana*)

The cognition made by the soul by means of material symbols like words, gesture etc. is called articulate knowledge. It has *mati* as its cause. Really, it is *mati* with prolonged activity. *Sruti jnana* like *mati* is also produced by senses and the mind. Both the empirical knowledge and articulate knowledge refer to the states of the soul transformed by removal cum subsidence of the respective obstructing karmas. Corresponding to such transformations there are processes taking place in the physical body and here they refer to activities of the senses and mind, which are instrumental in production of knowledge. In case of empirical knowledge the process goes through four steps of sensation etc. At the end of this process the soul assumes a certain mode and the memory of the object or event is stored in the mind (and the brain). *Mati* and *sruti* are very much interdependent and it is difficult to separate them. In brief, we can say that perceptual knowledge that is due to the activity of the sense organ(s) is *mati* and when it is also capable of expressing to others, in some manner, it becomes *sruti*.

The following points apply to articulate knowledge.

Articulate knowledge is preceded by empirical knowledge. It means that mere listening to an oral presentation or reading a book is not enough cause for articulate knowledge; the process must be followed by removal of doubts and retention of memory of the object or the subject so that a transformation in the state of the soul corresponding to this event takes place.

Articulate knowledge is also defined as application of empirical knowledge. For instance one learns that fire burns the hand when he places his hand near fire. This is empirical knowledge that shows the burning quality of fire. Based on this knowledge the measures taken by him to prevent burning and using fire for cooking and other purposes is articulate knowledge. The same knowledge of burning quality of fire is articulate knowledge for the other individual learning this without experimenting himself. So it is difficult to draw a line between articulate knowledge and empirical knowledge.

All beings from one-sense to five-sense possess both empirical and articulate knowledge. A soul could never be bereft of *mati* and *sruti*. In case of beings not endowed with mind this knowledge is sensual. Sensing of sunlight by plants is empirical knowledge and growth of branches in the direction of sunlight is articulate knowledge. Sensing of moisture in soil by plants is empirical knowledge and growth of roots in the direction of moisture is articulate knowledge. In a laboratory experiment worms were given a card board to feed on. It refused to eat it the second time. When bread was given

it ate it repeatedly. The sense what is worth eating is empirical knowledge and using this knowledge in selecting the food is articulate knowledge. Articulate knowledge gained with the help of mind is much superior to that obtained without mind. This is why human life for a soul is a rare opportunity of unparallel value.

All knowledge available in written or oral form irrespective of its source e.g. teachings of omniscient, scientific investigations, etc, is empirical knowledge in the strict sense and it becomes articulate knowledge when it is understood and followed and corresponding transformation in the state of the soul of the reader takes place. Traditionally *sruti* refers to Agamas, the canonical scriptures. *Sruti jnana* leads the soul to the state of omniscience, and therefore its importance has been compared to *keval jnana*. However, it cannot equal *keval jnana* which knows all modes of all substances in *loka*; *mati* and *sruti jnana* can know all substances but not all of their modes.

9 Direct Cognitions

There are three types of direct cognitions described in Jain philosophy.

(i) Clairvoyance.

Clairvoyance is the cognition dependent on the self alone (soul) and takes stock of material substances as its objects. Clairvoyance is limited cognition. In the case of the denizens of heaven and hell clairvoyance is congenital, immediately caused by genesis. It does not require the assistance of sense organs but emerges in the soul directly and immediately. This happens only if the veils of obscuring karmas are held in check. In the case of denizens of heaven and hell, their very birth brings about the relevant destruction - cum - suppression of karma, which is thus regarded as the direct cause of the knowledge in question. In case of other beings i.e., humans and lower animals, it is due to the occasional destruction - cum - suppression of the relevant obscuring karmas. Clairvoyance is limited to objects having shape and form; it does not cognize formless substances like soul, space, time, etc. Clairvoyance transcends the barriers of time and space in proportion to the difference of destruction-cum-supsidence of karmic veils. The highest type of clairvoyance will cognize all objects having form irrespective of past, present and future or near or far and the lowest type can perceive very small fraction of the object and can penetrate only a small part of time and only a part of all modes. When a person has partially destroyed the influences of karma, he acquires the power of direct knowledge of objects that are too distant or minute or obscure to be observed by the ordinary senses and mind.

(ii) Telepathy (Mind-reading)

Telepathy, cognition of mental modes, is the revealer of the modes of the mental substance. Telepathy is the direct knowledge of the thoughts of others. Scholars are divided as to the fact whether telepathy should be conceived as perceiving the states and modes of mind alone as held by Jinabhadra [13], Hemchandra [14], etc. or it perceives also the external objects as held by Pujyapada Devanandi [15]. The later view holds that as minds are conscious of objects, the objects are also perceived by

telepathy. Telepathy has been recognized of two varieties. Simple Direct knowledge (*Riju-mati*) of simple mental things, viz., of what a person is thinking now, and Complex Direct knowledge (*Vipulmati*) of complex mental things, viz., of what a person is thinking now along with what he has thought in the past and will think in the future. Naturally, the later is purer and more lasting, more vivid though less wide in scope and therefore superior in the spiritual sense.

Mind-reading is different from clairvoyance on account of its difference in respect of purity, scope, and knowing subject and content. The mind-reading takes cognizance of a large number of details than the clairvoyance. The clairvoyance is possible in all four realms of existence, human beings, animals and denizens of heavens and hells. The mind-reading, on the other hand, is possible only in human beings. The object of clairvoyance consists of all the material objects possessed of color and shape, whereas that of mind-reading is limited to an infinitesimal part of the substances known by the former. A closure study will reveal that the line of demarcation between clairvoyance and telepathy is not very clear; qualitatively they appear to be the same.

(iii) Omniscience.

Omniscience directly cognizes all the substances, material and non-material, with all their modes, at all places and in all times, nothing is unknown to him. It is pure and perfect knowledge.

10 Cognitions and Happiness

Desires are source of unhappiness. One of the causes of desires is incomplete knowledge. A soul having incomplete knowledge is in search of truth which is experienced when all the aspects of all objects are known. The cognitions in a soul having empirical knowledge and articulate knowledge are temporal and take place sequentially. The process of knowledge of multiple aspects of objects in such a soul spans a long period of time, usually across several births. That is, the quest for truth is an ongoing process because the soul suffers the limitations of the cognition process, senses and mind. In the absence of complete knowledge, both of the external objects as well as of the self, the desires continue to persist and permanent happiness is not achieved. Therefore the soul possessing empirical knowledge and articulate knowledge is necessarily unhappy, the happiness, if any, is relative and temporary.

The temporal process of cognition of aspects of any object is expected to take place in a random order, its occurrence must be uncertain. That what aspect of the object shall be revealed in the next cognition is not decided. The process of knowledge is very complicated and we illustrate this with the help of an example. Let an object A have five aspects a_1 to a_5 . Suppose the soul is aware of aspect a_1 at any given time. The soul does not know whether this aspect truly describes the object in its entirety. The deficiency is known only when the second aspect, any one from a_2 to a_5 , is revealed. This process continues till all the five aspects are revealed over a period of time after which the soul

realizes the truth of that object. It can be seen that the journey to truth can have several paths depending on the order in which the aspects of the object are cognized and revealed.

There is another factor affecting the revelation of the aspects of the object. Normally, the cognitive process of knowing is dependent on two factors, (i) the material (*upadan*) cause pertaining to the object in question, and (ii) the auxiliary or helping (*nimitta*) cause relevant to the relationship of this object with another object. It is difficult to identify the second object and therefore the cognition of truth may proceed in a probabilistic way. To clarify the point let there be total of 26 objects A to Z each having five aspects. The revelation of aspect a_2 of our object may depend on its relationship with any of the objects B to Z and all their aspects b_1 to b_5 up to z_1 to z_5 . This imposes two important conditions on a_2 . First, the required aspect of the objects B to Z must be revealed prior to a_2 . Second, a relationship between aspect a_1 of our object and the concerned aspect of the objects B to Z is established. Even when this is accomplished the desired output a_2 is subject to the state of the perception deluding karma of the cognizer for cognition. We now see how complicated is the process of knowing the truth for a soul having empirical knowledge and articulate knowledge, specially knowing that all objects in nature have infinite aspects.

The omniscient perceives and knows all objects simultaneously. This has two connotations. First, the temporal limitations do not apply and his experiences are instantaneous. Second, the aspects are not cognized by him in serial order, all aspects of the object concerned and of all other auxiliary objects are revealed in parallel and he at once experiences the truth. And this happens in a natural way because of direct cognition. The experience of truth means that the cause of unhappiness is absent and the omniscient continuously experiences bliss, the natural attribute of the soul.

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