

## *Interplay of Destiny And Endeavor*

Based on Acharya Haribhadrasuri's YOGABINDU, couplets 319-327.

(Please also see the article 'Jain Concept Of Reality And Determinism', Jain Study Circular, July 2008.)

The auspicious and inauspicious karmas associated with the soul of a living being constitute the destiny. The conscious effort and exertion of the living being comprises endeavor. Evidently, endeavor includes self-confidence as well as the mental state – thoughts and feelings, of the worldly being.

In some instances, a worldly soul enjoys (suffers) the consequences of the auspicious (inauspicious) karmas with trivial or limited effort. In other instances, the soul does not suffer or enjoy the fruits of karmas in spite of considerable endeavor. In either instance, the occurrence or nonoccurrence of any incident is generally deemed as destiny. In plain words, when an individual does not attain the desired result in spite of his/her best effort, he/she considers it as an act of fate.

Endeavor is concerted puissance and exertion by individuals. It is yoga, the activities of mind, speech and body. The Jain theory of karma states that yoga is responsible for the influx of material karma. Moreover, worldly beings have feelings of pleasure and pain on account of the karmas associated with their souls. Thus endeavor and destiny (karmas) are mutually dependent. Endeavor leads to karmic bondage and fruition of karmas generates thoughts and emotions - an aspect of endeavor.

A worldly soul may choose not to be affected by the fruition of his inauspicious or auspicious karmas. This is the practice of equanimity - a balanced state of mind. This shows that fruition of karmas does not befall without human effort.

From the above discussion it is evident that best efforts may fail in the face of strong destiny (karmic bondage), and consequences of weak destiny (karmic bondage) can be suppressed through modest endeavor.

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### *An Insightful Teaching*

Acharya Haribhadrasuri, in UVAESAPAAYA couplets 778 and 779 writes:

It is asserted that an individual should adopt the activity that is appropriate according to substance (DRAVYA), place (KSHETRA), time (KAAL) and mental state (BHAAV), keeping his/her mental state genuinely pure. He/she should act and behave in a manner that is propitious to the self as well as others.

The omniscient TEERTHANKARS, who reinstate the Jain system, did not enjoin us to perform a certain act absolutely under all circumstances. Further, they did not forbid us to perform a particular act absolutely under all circumstances. Their teaching is that we should behave and act veritably and sincerely, keeping in mind the welfare of self as well as of others.