

THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY PRESENTS...

Piotr Balcerowicz

"Jainism and Multiplexity of Reality: Logic and Semantics vis-à- vis Ethics"

Jainism, an ancient religion of South Asia originally related to ascetic groups, has been often associated with its flagship philosophical theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekānta-vāda*). The theory, comprising also the method of the seven-fold modal description (*syād-vāda*), provides powerful semantic and logical tools to analyze language, including natural languages, as the basis both for everyday communication and for philosophical enquiry, as it will be demonstrated. We can trace an early form of the theory to the very beginnings of Jainism, i.e. to the fifth century BCE. A vexed question is why such a complex philosophical theory was ever developed by religious recluses who were in the first place preoccupied with moral and salvific questions, who laid considerable emphasis on the protection of all kinds of living beings (*ahimsā*) and undertook extreme forms of asceticism in order to attain perfection and liberation (*mokṣa*)? The lecture will also attempt to demonstrate how such complex theory was the very outset linked to certain moral questions that constituted the cornerstone of Jaina epistemology.

Where: 55 Humanities Instructional Building (Seminar Room)

When: May 4, 2018

Time: 3:00-5:00PM