

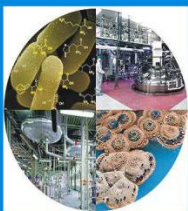
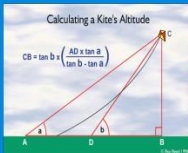
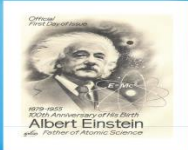
# NTA UGC NET

## PHILOSOPHY

**SAMPLE THEORY - *(English Medium)***

- \* Rta : THE COSMIC ORDER
- \* THE INSTITUTION OF YAJNA (SACRIFICE)
- \* THEORIES OF CREATION





## UGC NET- PHILOSOPHY

### SAMPLE THEORY

- **Rta: THE COSMIC ORDER**
- **THE INSTITUTION OF YAJNA (SACRIFICE)**
- **CONCEPT OF Rna: (DUTY/OBLIGATIONS)**
- **THEORIES OF CREATION**
- **CONCEPT OF ATMAN**
- **CONCEPT OF BRAHMAN**
- **CONCEPT OF KARMA**
- **CONCEPT OF SAMSARA**
- **CONCEPT OF SAMSARA**
- **CONCEPT OF MOKSHA**

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1. **Rta : The cosmic order**
2. **The institution of Yajna (sacrifice)**
3. **Concept of Rna : (Duty / Obligations)**
4. **Theories of Creation**
5. **Concept of Ātman**
6. **Concept of Brahman**
7. **Concept of Karma**
8. **Concept of Samsāra**
9. **Concept of Moksha**

## 1. **RTA**

In the Vedic religion 'Rta' is the principle of natural order which regulates and coordinates the operation of the universe and everything within it. 'Rta' is properly joined order, rule and truth. In the hymns of the Vedas 'Rta' is described as that which is ultimately responsible for the proper functioning of the natural, moral and sacrificial orders. Conceptually, it is closely allied to the injunctions and ordinances thought to uphold it, collectively referred to as 'Dharma', and the action of the individual in relation to those ordinances, referred to as 'Karma' - two terms which eventually eclipsed. 'Rta' in importance as signifying natural, religious and moral order in later Hinduism. 'Rta' is one of the most important religious conceptions of the 'RigVeda'.

'Rta' appears most frequently as representing abstract concepts such as "law", "Commandment", "Order", "sacrifice", "truth" and "regularity", but also occasionally or concrete objects such as the waters, the heavens or the sun as manifestations of the operation of 'Rta' in the physical universe, 'Rta' is also frequently used to reference to various Vedic deities. Thus, Brahaspati is referred to as possessing a powerful bow with 'Rta as its string' and as one prepared to "mount the chariot to Rta", "Agni is described as one who "rejoicing in the house of 'Rta', one who is Rta- minded" and as he who "spread Heaven

and Earth by Rta", the Maruts are referred to as praising as 'having the form of Rta' and along with Mitra as Mitra-Varun as "destroying the foes by 'Rta' and as "Professing Rta by Rta".

While the concept of Rta as an abstract, universal principle generally remained resistant to the anthropomorphic tendencies of the Vedic period, it became increasingly associated with the actions of individual's deities, in particular with those of the god Varuna as the omniscient, all-encompassing sky. The connection of Varuna and Rta extended beyond the physical realm and into the sphere of ritual worship, with the sacrificial for itself being landed as that which "harnesses the steeds and holds the reins of Rta, becoming Varuna when he strives for 'Rta.

The ordering principle of nature, the inflexible law of harmony, the universal cosmic flow which gives to everything from the vast galaxies down to the nucleus of an atom, their natural and course of 'Rta', 'Rta' then is observable everywhere.

Consequently, Rta finds a conspicuous place in the Mantras (Hymns). Expressions Like, 'guardians of Rta' (Rtasyagopa) and 'Practisers of Rta' (Rtayu) occur frequently in the description of the gods. This word originally meant uniformity of nature or the ordered course of things such as indicated by the regular alternation of day and night, while in Mantras is not only bears this significance but also the additional one of 'moral order'. The Vedic gods are accordingly to be viewed not only as the maintainers of cosmic order but also as upholders of moral law. This equal responsibility of divinity for the maintenance of cosmic as well as moral order is particularly dear in the conception of Varuna. He represents the sky and is the God of heavenly light. He is described as having fixed the laws of the physical universe which no one can violate.

The conception of Varuna was soon superseded in Vedic Mythology by that of Indra who in a God of battles rather than of righteousness.

The great importance given to Rta in the Vedas can be appreciated from the description of these laws in Rigveda 1-75-5 where it says, "ritam satyam vijñani" which would literally mean knowing of truth, which is Rta, is the only true knowledge. These laws are part of Vedic higher knowledge. According to these laws one is only free to do any action if he obeys and

follow these commands of the God and without following them no individual can seek Moksha-the state of eternal bliss. It is also the state when one reaches the abode of God and avoid rebirth in the phenomenal world.

Vedic Metaphysicists have found that having created these laws God himself follows them sternly, lest a cosmic disorder or chaos may result in the destruction of the universe.

## 2. THE INSTITUTION OF YAJNA (SACRIFICE)

Yajna, a mean to save the worldly creatures from natural hazards in vedic period, became a way to attain heavenly position in Brahmanic period.

The emphasis on sacrifice, the observance of caste and the Asrams, the eternity of the Vedas, the supremacy of the priest, all were the central theme of this age.

Prayers come to mean to muttering of Mantras or the utterance of sacred formulas. Loud petitions were thought necessary to rouse God to action. The words became artificial sounds with occult powers. Nobody could understand the mystery of it all, except the priest who claimed for himself the dignity of a god on earth. The one ambition was to become immortal like the Gods, and that status was supposed to be attained only by performing sacrifices. All are subject to the influence of sacrifices. The sacrifices please the Gods and profit men. Through them the gods become the friends of men. The sacrifices were made art a rule for gaining earthly profit and not heavenly bliss. The sacrifices of the Vedic hymns were a superfluous appendage of prayers indicative of true religion but now they occupy the central place. Every act done, every syllable uttered at the ceremony is important.

### CONCEPT OF YAJNAS

Yajna is a ritual of offerings accompanied by chanting of vedic mantras, derived from the practice in Vedic times. It is called worship or prayer or praise or sacrifice. Yajna is an ancient ritual of offering and sublimating the havana samagri in the fire. The sublime meaning of the word 'yajna' is derived from the sanskrit verb 'yaj', which has a three-fold meaning of worship of deities or devapujana, unity or Saogati karana and charity (dana). An essential element is the ritual fire-the divine Agni-into which oblations are poured, as everything that is offered into the fire is believed to reach God,

Vedic yajnas are typically performed by four Vedic priests,

- (i) **The Hota** : recites invocations and litanies drawn from the Rigveda. The Verses recited by hota are of three kinds - introductory verses, verses pertaining to yajna and eulogistic verses. The hota is also supposed to contemplate on **k** and identify with the deity of the speech-fire.
- (ii) **The Adhvaryu** : is in charge of the physical details of the ritual like measuring the ground, building the altar etc. mentioned in the Yajur-veda. The adhvaryu offers three kinds of obligation those that blaze up, those that make great noise and those that sink. Adhvaryu is supposed to contemplate one and identify with the deity of the eye-sun.
- (iii) **The Udgata** : is the chanter of hymns set to melodies drawn from the Samveda. Those three types of hymns like hota; (chants the introductory, yajna and eulogistic verses) are identified with the three kinds of vital breath prana, Apana and Vyana in the body and the Udgata himself contemplates on the Vital breath.
- (iv) **The Brahman** : is the superintendent of the entire performance and is responsible for correcting mistakes by means of supplementary verses invoking the Visvedevas. Brahman has to identify himself with the deity of the mind-moon.

### TYPES OF YAJNAS

Four hundred yajnas are described in the Vedas, of which 21 are deemed compulsory. These compulsory yajnas are also called 'Nitya Kar mas'. The rest of the yajna are optional and are performed for kamyakar ma (particular wishes and benefits). The Aupasana Yajna, though not a part of these 21 is still compulsory.

Out of the 21 Nityakarmas, only the Agnihotra and the Aupasana are to be performed twice daily, at dawn and at dusk. The remaining are performed over the course of the year.

1. First seven yajnas are called **Pakayajnas** : they are astaka, sthalipaka, parvana, sravani, agrahayani, caitri and asviyuji. These involve consecrating cooked items.
2. Second sevens are called **Waviryajnas** : they are agniyadhana, agnihotra, Darsa-purnamasa, agrayana, caturmasya, nirudha pasu bandha, Sautramani. These involving offering havis or oblations.

3. Remaining sevens are called **Somayajnas** : They are Agnistoma, Atyagnistoma, Uktya, Shodasi, vajpeya, atiratra and aptoryama. These involve the extraction utility and consumption of soma (an extract of a particular chosen tree.)

There are five Panch Maha Yajnas :-

- (i) Rishi yajna : honouring Rishis by the study of holy scriptures.
- (ii) Deva yajna : Worship of the Celestials by pouring oblations into the sacred fire.
- (iii) Pitri-yajna : offering libations to ancestors or pitrs.
- (iv) Manushya-yajna : Charitable offerings of food to fellow humans.
- (iv) Bhuta-yajna : feeding animals, especially cows and birds.

### 3. THE CONCEPT OF RINA : DUTY / OBLIGATIONS

The concept of Rina, the human indebtedness or the primary obligation is unique to Indian tradition. It is an fact the source of Dharma, because it weans one away from desire-gratification and leads towards duty-fulfillment.

Rina, according to Panini, signifies a want or a deficiency.

Taittiriya Samhita speaks about three kind of basic duties every human being carries with him.

They are the debt one owes:

- (i) to his ancestors (Pitr)
- (ii) to the sages/seers (Rishi) and
- (iii) to the Gods (Deva).

The Shathapath Brahman adds one more, the fourth one is the duty one owes to him fellow beings. So the very basic Rinas are :

- (i) **Pitr Rina**: The way of fulfilling this Rina is that by bringing up a family, by getting and raising children in a proper manner.
- (ii) **Rishi Rina**: It can be fulfilled by study and by understanding the cultural context into which one is born.
- (iii) **Deva Rina** : It can be fulfilled by honouring, worshipping the elemental and natural forces like sky, air, water, earth, rivers, mountains etc.

- (iv) **Fellow beings** : It can be fulfilled by cultivating compassion, fellow -feeling (saha-bhava) and by showing hospitality.

Shathapath Brahman further says that the fulfillment of these duties should be the preliminary aim of human beings and it would add value to their life. The Atharva remarks pursuit of the purusharthas would be meaningful when one fulfills one primary obligations or is in the process of doing so.

Chandogya upnisad describes the duties in three stages of life as "trayo-dharma-skandha", this mentions the obligations and privileges of a student, a house-holder and a hermit. So according to Chandogya Upanisad 'Rna' is at the core of this 'tray-dharma'.

**Consequently** in Vedic and Upanisadic world, man is bounded by some duties and obligations. These duties are not mere boundations, but are the real mode of social freedom. He who discharges them all is the good man. No man can touch his daily meal without offering a part of it to gods, fathers, men and animals and saying his daily prayers. This is the way to live in harmony with the world around him. Life is high and noble whatever the actual fulfillment of the ideal may be. Accordingly a man can be free from all his duties when he properly practices his duties in all stages of life; Asramas

**Asramas** : The Vedic Aryan's life has four stages or asramas -

- (i) Brahmacharin : When one is expected to study Vedas.
- (ii) The Grahastha : When one has to fulfill the duties mentioned in scriptures, social and sacrificial.
- (iii) The Vanaprastha : When the devotee spends his time in fasting and penance.
- (iv) The Sanyasin : Who has no fixed abode. He is without any possessions or property and longs for union with God.

In the Vedas, the most important Asram is Grahastha Asramas. One practices in this stage, to fulfill all his duties towards society, ancestors and he practices sacrifices as well.

#### 4. THEORIES OF CREATION

In their search for the first ground of all changing things, Vedic thinkers looked upon water, air etc. as the ultimate elements out of which the variety of the world is composed.



Water is said to develop into the world through the force of time, Samvatsara or year, desire or kama, intelligence or Purusa, warmth or tapas. Sometimes water itself is derived from night or chaos, tamas or air.

Sometimes the world ground is said to be the asat or the non-existent, with which is identified Aditi, the infinite. All that exists is diti, or bounded from the infinite, cosmic forces arise, though the latter is sometimes said to be the source of the infinite itself. These theories, however, soon related themselves to the non-physical and physics by alliance with religion became metaphysics.

In the pluralistic stage the several gods, Varuna, Indra, Agni, Visvakarman were looked upon as the authors of the universe. The method of creation is differently conceived. Some gods are supposed to build the world as the carpenter builds a house. Some gods are supposed to be like matter out of which world is made. The gods are said to create the world by the power of sacrifice.

As we get to the monotheistic level, theory arises that God himself created the world out of his own nature without any pre-existent matter or through his power action on eternally pre-existing matter.

Another theory can be drawn from a later hymn called the Nasadiya Sukt; We find in it a very advanced theory of creation. That is - First of all there was no existent we cannot on that account call it the non-existent for it is positive being from which the whole existence arrives.

The first Line brings out the inadequacy of our categories. The absolute reality which is at the back of the whole world cannot be characterised by us as either existent or non-existent. The one breathed breathless by its own power. Other than that there was not anything beyond. It is beyond time, beyond space, beyond age, beyond death and beyond immortality. We cannot express what it is except that it is, such is the primal un-conditions ground work of all being.

The Creation of the world is sometimes traced to an original material as it were; in the Purusasukta, the gods are the agents of creation, while the material out of which the world is

made is the body of the great purusa. The act of creation is treated as a sacrifice in which purusa is the victim. Purusa is all this world, what has been and shall be.

The theory of creation from the one absolute described above says the whole world even according to it is due to the self-diremption of the absolute into subject and object. Purusa and Prakriti Only the idea is rather crudely allegorised. The supreme reality becomes the active purusa for it is said, "from the purusa virat was born and from virat again purusa. Purusa is thus the begetter as well as the begotten. He is the absolute as well as the self-conscious I.

## 5. CONCEPT OF ATMAN

Atman is a sanskrit word that means 'self'. In Hindu philosophy, especially in the Vedanta school, 'Atman' is the first principle the true self of an individual beyond identification with phonon, the essence of an individual. In order to attain salvation (liberation), a human being must acquire self-knowledge (atma-jnana) which is to realize that one's true self (Atman) is identical with the transcendent self-Brahman (or Parma atman). If Atman is Brahman in a pot (the body) then one need merely break the pot to fully realize the primordial unity of the individual soul with the plenitude of Being that was the absolute.

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT

The earliest use of word 'Atman' in Indian texts is found in the RigVeda. Yaska, commenting on this RigVeda Verse, accepts the following meaning of Atman; the prevailing principle, the organism in which other elements are united and the ultimate sentient principle.

YajnaValkya in the Brihadaranyak upanishad, used the word to indicate that in which everything exists, which is of the highest value, which permeates everything which is the essence of all, bliss and beyond description while older upanishads such as the Brihadaranyaka, mentions several times that the self is described as 'Neti- Neti' or 'not this-not that'. Upanishads post Buddhism, like the Maitri upanishad, define Atman as only the defiled individual self, rather than the universal self.

Taittiriya upanishad defines Atman or the self as consisting of five sheaths (kosha)

- (i) the bodily self consisting the essence of food (Annamaya Kosha)
- (ii) the vital breath (Pranamaya Kosha)

- (iii) the mind or will (manomaya kosha)
- (iv) the intellect or capacity to know (Vijnanmaya kosha)
- (v) and bliss (anandmaya kosha)

Later Advaitic text Pancadasi classifies the degrees of Atman under three heading -

- (i) Gauna or Secondary
- (ii) Mithya or false and
- (iii) Mukhya or primary (the real self.)

Philosophical school such as Advaita see the 'spirit' within living entity as being fully identical with Brahman-the- Principle, whereas other schools such as: DVAITA differentiate b/w the individual atman in living objects and the supreme atma as being at least partially separate beings. Thus atman refers to the individual spirit or the observer being. Samkhy sutra holds blissfulness of Atman as merely figurative. The Yoga departs from the monism of Advaita. The highest attainment, accordingly to yoga, does not reveal the experienced diversity of the world to be an illusion. Further more, self discovered in the supreme experience is not a single universal Atman. It only is one of the many individual selves discovering itself.

### **Atman**

The individual self is the highest thing we know and it is the nearest approach to the absolute, though it is not itself the absolute. In fact the individual self is a not itself the absolute. In fact the individual self is a mixture of the real and the unreal, a knot of the existent and the non-existent a coupling of the true and the false. It is a product of Ignorance. But its essence in the light of the Absolute. Its real nature is pure consciousness self shining and self-proved and always the same. It is called the ultimate witness or the saksi and as such is one with the absolute. The senses, the mind, the intellect feeling and will, the internal organ are all products of **Avidya** and they invariably surrounded the individual self and constitute its 'individuality'. But the self really is above them, being the Absolute.

'Atman' means that which pervades all, which is the subject and which knows, experiences and illuminates the objects and which remains immortal and always the same. The eye, the

body, the mental states, the presentation Continuum, the stream of consciousness - are all mere instruments and objects of the self, the self is the ground of waking, dream and sleep states and yet it transcends them all. The self is universal, immanent as well as transcendent. The whole universe lives and moves and breathes in it. It is immortal, self-luminous, self-proved, and beyond doubts and denials, as they very principle which makes all doubts, denials and thoughts possible. It is the ultimate subject which can never become an object and which is necessarily presupposed by all knowledge.

The self surely, cannot be identified with the body, senses or the internal organ nor can it be regarded as a mere by product of matter. The bodily self identifies itself with its contents - body, senses, mind relations as well. It stretches itself and identifies itself with the objects and feels as if they constitute its being, as if it is incomplete, no more without them. In fact, that which can be known as an object can never itself be the subject. It cannot be a mere bundle of qualities. It can't be the empirical self.

So, Consequently according to Upanisads, the individual self and the supreme self reside in the same heart of the same body like darkness and light.

The first has been called as jiva while the second has been called to be the self. The jiva enjoys the consequences of his action and feels pleasure and pain and the self is beyond all these. Both are without beginning and eternal. The Jiva is ignorant and the pain and bondage are due to ignorance. By the knowledge of the self, this ignorance along with its pain and bondage is destroyed. The self is one. Its knowledge destroys all dualism same upnisads have not distinguished b/w jiva and self; The self has been identified with God or Brahman.

The Upanishads take a wider view of life and study the self under four stages,

(i) Walking (ii) Dreaming (iii) Sleeping (iv) Turiya.

Four stages :

1. Walking or Jagarat : In the walking stage, the jiva is called 'Vaiswaner', which enjoys the worldly objects through external senses.
2. Dreaming or Swapna : In the Dreaming stage, the jiva is known as 'Tajasa', which knows the subtle internal objects and enjoys them through the mind. It is in mind functions.

3. Sleeping or Susupti: In the sleeping stage the Jiva is called 'Prajna' which is one uniform, conscious and bliss and does not perceive internal objects.
4. Turiya : In the Turiya stage the Jiva is known as 'Atman', which is neither conscious nor unconscious, but one non-dual, universal consciousness. The Atman is Brahman.  
The last two stages are supra-mental and are considered with a view to discover the real nature of the soul. Turiya state is not within the experience of ordinary man. It may therefore be regarded as lying outside the strict limits of any empirical investigation. There is in it the same with drawl of normal consciousness the same absence of desires and the manifestation of almost the same bliss.

## 6. CONCEPT OF BRAHMAN

From the objective side the ultimate reality is called 'Brahman'. The word is derived from the root 'Brh' which means to grow or to evolve. Brahman is that which spontaneously bursts forth as nature and soul. It is the ultimate cause of this universe.

In the Taittiriya, Brahman is defined as that from which all these beings are born by which they live and into which they are reabsorbed. The evolution of the elements is given in this order, from Brahman arises ether, water earth. But the real theory of evolution is given in the doctrine of the five sheaths (koshas). Brahman cannot rest content for life, yet there can be no life without matter. The five koshas are :

- (i) annamaya                      (ii) Pranayaya (iii) manomaya  
(iv) vijnanmay and              (v) anandmaya

The fifth and the highest state of evolution is the non-dual bliss (anandmaya). The empirical trinity of knower, known and knowledge has been fused into a transcendental unity. Here philosophy terminates. This Brahman, the supreme reality, transcends all, yet it underlies all as their background. The lower is not lost or annihilated; it is simply transformed in the higher. Brahman pervades them all. It is the immanent inner controller of all and the self of all (sarva-bhutaritaratma). All beings all Gods, all world, all organs are contained in the universal self, the Brahman. This is the Brahman, the self luminous, the immortal, the support of all worlds, the highest and leaving nothing beyond it. Matter is its body, it is its

soul; it individual souls an its body, it is their soul. It holds the self and the not-self together which are equally its own manifestations and yet in its own nature it transcends both.

There are some sentences, interpretes Brahman very emphasizingly. Those are :

- (i) Prajnanam brahma : "Brahman is knowledge".
- (ii) Ayam atma brahma : "The self is Brahman"
- (iii) Aham brahmasmi : "I am Brahman"
- (iv) Tat tvam asi : "Thou art that" (You are Brahman)
- (v) Sarvam **khalvidam** brahman : "All is truly Brahman braman"

## 7. **CONCEPT OF KARMA**

The law of karma is the counter part in the moral world of the physical law of uniformity. It is the law of the conservation of moral energy. The vision of law and order is revealed in the Rta of the Rigveda. According to the principle of karma there is nothing uncertain or capricious in the moral world. We reap what we sow.

Since the sense of individual responsibility is emphasised, there are critics who think that the karma doctrine is inconsistent with social service. It is said there is no emphasis on the bearing of one another's burdens. As a matter of fact, the upnisads hold that we can be free from karma only by social services. So long as we perform in selfish work we are subject to the law of bondage. When we perform disinterested work we reach freedom. While thus we live there is no way by which karma clings to you. What binds us to the chain of birth and death is not action as such but selfish action. In an age when the individual was ever ready to shirk responsibility for what he did by throwing the burden on providence or stars or some other being than his own self of the Brahman priests.

### **LAW OF KARMA**

The connection b/w the ritual and moral dimensions of karma is especially evident in the notion of karma as a causal law, known as the "Law of Karma". Many religious traditions that emerged in the middle east like Judaism, Christianity and Islam place reward and punishment for human actions in the hands of divine law giver. In contrast, the classical traditions of India-Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, much like the Vedic sacrificial theology that preceded them-view 'Karma' as operating according to an autonomous causal law. No

divine will or external agent intervenes in the relationship of the moral act to its inevitable result. The law of karma thus represents a markedly non theistic theodicy, or explanation of why there is evil in the world.

Once a divine judge is taken out of the equation, a question arises : within a causal sequence, "how can an act produce an effect at a future time far removed from the act's performance ?"

Different Indian philosophies provide different answers, but all acknowledge some kind of karmic residue resulting from the initial act. Jainism, for example, regards karma as a fine particulate substance that settles on the soul of one who commits immoral actions or has immoral actions or has immoral thoughts making it impure and heavy and mixing it in the material world of rebirth. The Vedic ritualistic tradition contributed the concept of the apurva, the latent potency created within the soul by ritual and moral actions. Much like a seed, an apurva sprouts into new realities in the distant future. The doctrine of karma urged that a man, "fetteres himself, like a bird by its nest." What looms over us is no dark fate but our own past. Suffering in the wages of sin.

In Indian philosophy, 'Karma' is the universal causal law by which good or bad actions determine the future modes of an individual's existence. 'Karma' represents the ethical dimension of the process of rebirth (samsara), belief in which is generally shared among the religious traditions of India. Indian theories of salvation posit that future births and life situations will be conditioned by actions performed during one's present life-which itself has been conditioned by the accumulated effects of actions performed in previous life. The doctrine of 'karma' thus directs adherents of Indian religions towards their common goal; release (moksha) from the functions within Indian 'moral' philosophy: it provides the major motivation to live a moral life: and it serves as the primary explanation of the existence of evil.

In ancient texts of the Vedic religion, karma referred simply to ritual and sacrificial was articulated by Brahman priests over the following centuries, however, ritual action came to be regarded as effective by itself, independent of the gods.

The earliest evidence of the term's expansion into an ethical domain is provided in the Upanisads, a genre of the Vedas, concerned with ontology, or the philosophical study of being. The Vedic theologian Yajñavalkya expressed a belief that a man turns into something good by good action and into something bad by bad action. This moral aspect of karma increasingly dominated the religious discourse especially in the Buddhist and Jainist. Both of these religions embraced ascetic modes of life and rejected the ritual concerns. Other traditions - eg. Yoga and Buddhism provide psychological explanations in which karmic residue produces dispositional tendencies (Samskaras) and psychological traces (vasanas) that determine the future births and personality traits of a person. The concept of karma provided a bridge between cause and effect separated by time.

The doctrine of Karma implies that one person's karma cannot have an effect on another person's future. Yet, while Karma is in theory specific to each individual, many aspects of Indian religions reflect the widely held belief that Karma may be shared. For example, the doctrine of the transfer of merit, whereby one person can transfer his good karma to another, is found in Buddhism and Hinduism. Ancestral offerings and other rituals for the departed show that acts done by the living are believed to influence the well-being of the dead. Finally, pious activities, including pilgrimages, are often performed for the benefit of living or deceased relatives.

Consequently, to be released from this life the Hindus needed to wipe out the effects of their past actions or Karma. It is the set of beliefs that formed the background of many of Hindu religious movements and beliefs. Karma is the belief according to which a person's future life is determined by past and present actions. Every action, bodily, intellectual or ethical, good or bad, big or small will have its effect. Nothing other than the effects of earlier actions has determined the present state of affairs and nothing other than the present actions will determine the future circumstances. The law of Karma allows no room for chance or divine intervention as everything is inevitably determined by it.

#### **KINDS OF KARMA:**

There are three types of karmas -

- (i) Samchita Karmas (ii) Samchiyaman Karmas (iii) Prarabdha Karma



(i) Samchita Kar mas are those a man acted them in his past and their results are preserved but not yet have been started to determine or effect the future aspects or the one's present at all.

(ii) Samchiyaman Kar mas are those, a man is acting presently and their results are going to preserve somewhere into his accounts.

(iii) Prarabdha Karmas have been started to show their fruits and effecting the man's present, whatever he had done into his past.

The Principle of Karma is not inconsistent with the reality of the absolute Brahman. The moral law of karma is the expression of the nature of the absolute. We can say a divine power controls the process. Rta is the law of Vedas. Varuna is the lord of Rta. Karma refers to the unchanging acts of gods.

There is no doctrine that is so valuable in life and conduct as the Karma theory. Whatever happens to us in life we have to submit in meek resignation, for it is the result of our past doings. Yet the future is in our power, and we can work with hope and confidence. Karma inspires hope for the future and resignation to the past.

### **CONCEPT OF SAMSARA**

'Samsara', literally means, "continuous flow ", that is the repeating cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth (reincarnation) in Indian philosophy.

According to the view of Indian religions our current life is one of many-stretching back before birth into past existences and reaching forward beyond death into future incarnations. During the course of each life the quality of the actions or karma performed determine the future destiny of each person. The Buddha taught that there is no beginning or end to this cycle. The goal of Indian religions is to escape this process, the achievement of which is called Moksha. In popular use, 'Samsara' may refer to the world in the sense of the various worldly activities which occupy ordinary human beings, the various sufferings thereof; or the unsettled and agitated mind through which reality is perceived.

Samsara means, "to flow on", to perpetually wander, to pass through states of existence. The historical origins of a concept of a cycle of repeated reincarnation are obscure but the idea appears frequently in the religions and philosophical texts. All discuss the

transmigration of beings from one life to another. The concept of 'Samsara' is closely associated with the belief that one continues to be born and reborn in various realms in the form of a human, animal or other being (depending on karma). Jainism maintains that one who performs extremely evil karma can also be reborn as a plant or even as a rock. Similar tendencies can be found in puranas, in Manusmriti.

Nonetheless most philosophic traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism maintain that plant and even more obviously rocks cannot be included in Samsara since they lack the possibility of experience (bhoga) and hence of karma.

'Samsara' is a form of the general web, in which the soul finding itself, strives to find release (Moksha) from the bonds of its own past deeds (karma). Buddhism, which does not assume the existence of a permanent soul, accepts a semi permanent personality core that goes through the process of samsara.

The range of samsara stretches from insects to the generative God Brahma. The rank of one's birth in the hierarchy of life depends on the quality of the previous life. A variety of explanations of the workings of the karmic process within Samsara have been proposed. According to several, the soul after death goes to heaven or hell until it has consumed most of its good or bad karma, then it returns to a new work, the remainder of its karma having determined the circumstances of its next life.

### CONCEPT OF MOKSHA

In Hinduism, man was encouraged to follow four aims of life known as the 'Purusarthas'. These four aims are - Dharma, Artha, Kama and the 'Moksha'. A man's ultimate aim or the highest goal is moksha, liberation, if one so wishes. One should pursue this goal when one has retired or when one becomes a sanyassin (renunciate) one who is wholly devoted to attaining liberation.

Moksha, also called as Mukti; In Indian philosophy, liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth (samsara) is Moksha. The term 'Moksha' literally means freedom from Samsara. This concept of liberation or release is shared by a wide spectrum of religious traditions, including Buddhism and Jainism. This view that human life is a state of bondage to a recurring process of rebirth (samsara), is very much promoted in India.

To release from the process many religious traditions offered path of moksha. Some, such as Jainism posited on abiding self that became liberated while others, such as Buddhism, denied the existence of a permanent self.

Some Indian traditions also place greater emphasis within their respective paths to liberation on concrete, ethical action within the world. Devotional religions such as Vaishnavism, present love and service to god as the one sure way to moksha. Others stress the attainment of mystical awareness. Some forms of Buddhism and the monistic theologies of Hinduism - e.g. Advaita Vedanta - consider both the mundane world and human entrapment within it to be a web of illusion whose penetration requires both mental training through meditative techniques and attainment of liberating insight. In this case, the passage from bondage to liberation is not a real transition but an epistemological transformation that permits one to see the truly real behind the fog of ignorance.

Moksha the atonement with the supreme Godhead, is the highest state of religious realisation. The Upanisad view is that there is in the highest condition a disintegration of individuality a giving up of selfish isolation, but it is not a mere nothing or death. The Upanisads do not recognise the ultimate reality of the narrow individual self. Those who pray for personal immortality take their stand on the ultimateness of the individual, and urge its maintenance beyond the world. The real in finite life, what is best in the individual's nature, is the infinite, and the persists beyond the limits of physical existence.

The liberated condition must be looked upon as the fullest expression of the self. All become one in the highest imperishable Brahman.

Since from our human point of view it is not possible to describe the fullness of the absolute reality, the Upanisads do not describe precisely the condition of ultimate freedom. There are two conflicting accounts running throughout : That it is a state of likeness to god and that it is a state of oneness with God.