As stated earlier ancient Indian thinkers developed a few important concepts which form the main stream of their philosophic thought and on which the general conduct of the people was based. They represent important values for the guidance of the individual. The beginnings of the fundamental concepts which guided the ancient Indians and which evolved with time could be traced to the Vedas. A few concepts that are of great significance in moulding the attitude of the ancient Indian and his view of life are discussed in this chapter.

As already pointed out, Indian thinkers considered the life on this earth to be a bondage; their ultimate objective was to gain eternal freedom from the necessity of going through a series of births and thus escape from suffering. Keeping this objective in mind they formulated six components, the four purusharthas which are - dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Accordingly they hold that the pursuit of these purusharthas would enable one to realise one's ultimate goal.

Dharma is a basic and all-pervasive concept of Indian thought and is of paramount importance in directing the life of an individual. It is an ideal and a way of life, which if adhered to, would help one to live a good life here and also to realise his true nature hereafter. It is an extremely

1. Upanishad Sutra 1, 2.
complexed concept and covers a wide range of subjects. On account of this a definition of dharmu bristles with difficulties. Ancient Indian thinkers themselves often faced such difficulties but innumerable attempts were made by them to define dharmu.

In the Vedda period dharmu was identified with sacrifice and it was in the context of sacrifice that it was often referred to. The evolution of the concept seems to have started early, as it came later to signify law during the Vedda period itself. In the Veddas the term yta was used to refer to the principle that pervaded the order in the mundane world and the worlds of gods.

In the Brahmanas and Upaniṣads the concept dharmu is used in a significant way. Bhādarāpana3 explains the origin of dharmu thus: "the brahman who was alone at the beginning of creation created the Ishtatu (pavan), the designd and finally became stronger and created the most excellent dharmu. It is further stated that dharmu is the Ishtatu of the Ishtatu; therefore nothing is higher than dharmu. Thus even a weak man can rule the strong with the help of dharmu such as with the help of a Ishtatu. Thus, dharmu is called the truth; if a man declares what is truth they say that he speaks dharmu; and if he declares dharmu, they say he speaks the truth. They are both one and the same."

1. A.V. xi, 7.17; XII, 5.7
3. I, 4, 11-14; B.B.V, 4.5; T.I. 1.7, 10.
In Indian religion, the concept of truth is recognized at two levels - metaphysical and moral. In the metaphysical discussions it is used as synonymous with the ultimate. The Vedas state that truth is the upholder of the earth. In the Vedas, the absolute is identified with the truth. The term truth also signifies a moral standard alone with the metaphysical meaning. Accordingly, the Upanishad states "this soul (Atman) is obtainable by truth by austerity (tapas), by proper knowledge (jñāna), by the student's life of austerity (yājñavalkya) constantly (practiced) (III.1.8). Thus speaking, truth is considered to be righteous conduct and speaking untruth is said to be unrighteous conduct. In Indian philosophical literature in general it is taken for granted that one who aspires for liberation has already cultivated a number of virtues - the Upanishads assign the foremost place to truthfulness. Indian literature from one end to the other is pervaded by expressions of love and reverence for truth. Pancharatna remarks that to the Indian thinker "truth is simply that which is. The Vedânta states that truth will cause thousand sacrifices. Thus an identification of truth with dharmas will explain the moral connotation of dharmas.

Another view of epistemology brings out the true significance of the concept of dharmas by conceiving a threefold

1. "Truth, high and potent law, the consecrating Rite, Power, 
   and immortality upholds the earth." (A.V.XX.1.1). 
2. "The Veda, the Yajñavalkya, the Taittirīya, the Bhāgavata, the 
   &c. they speak truth in righteousness. There is nothing higher than truth." 
3. "In the world, in the world, &c. "
4. "Veda, in the world, &c. "
5. "Thus what is in truth is, &c. "
6. "On the earth, &c. "
division of duties. The threefold division of dharma is
morality, duty and charity constitute the first; piety
is the second, and asceticism by a brahmin in the house of
a tirtha in the third. The moral content of a virtuous
work is included here. In Buddhism everything
is viewed in terms of the eightfold path in Medititation
and one can attain enlightenment at its climax. Vinay
the Buddhist ruleistic code defines dharma as religious merit and
sinless.

According to Maturiya, harmlessness, truthfulness,
purity, akama from desire, obedience from humility, and
for-giveness constitute important aspects of dharma. Aśoka
is described dharma in the same manner. They very policy of Aśoka
is designated as a policy of dharma. Aśoka's oliete pose the
question - what does dharma include? It is stated in one of
the oliete that dharma includes two other, very virtuous deeds,
contentment, self-control, abstention from unrighteously appropriating
anything (obedience to the rules of) purification, restraint of the
earring, wisdom, knowledge (of the supreme soul), truthfulness,
and abstention from anger (form) the tenfold merit. Later
Vasum simplifies the definition of dharma by including only

1. V. B. K. T. India as known to Buddhists.
2. Artha 2, 49.
3. Miller edlot II.
4. Han VI, 52.
non-violence, truth, non-tqealing, purity, and control of the senses. The social significance of dharma is well brought out in one definition of dharma in the Padabháratam. It is said, "what is harmful to oneself, one should not do to others." This is the quintessence of dharma. Ancient texts themselves are fully aware of the difficulties involved in defining the true nature of dharma. This is clear not only from the innumerable definitions of dharma given in these texts, but also from the enquiries of kings of those periods, who sought the wise to explain the true nature of dharma for them.

Several modern authors of ancient Indian subjects too have made attempts to define dharma. According to Eigersten, dharma is propriety, socially approved conduct in relation to one's fellow men or to other living beings (animals or super human powers), social usage, morality and most of what we ordinarily mean by religion, all fall under this head. In the commutual work, the History of Dharma Sutra, P.V. Rane gives a more broad-based definition of dharma viewing dharma as "a code of life or code of conduct, which regulated a man's work and activities as a member of society and as an individual and was intended to bring about the gradual development of a man and to enable him to reach what was deemed to be the goal of human existence." He analyses the concept of dharma and shows that dharma may represent fourteen referents while

1. Samu X, CS.
All these definitions of dharma, would show that the concept of dharma is applicable to religious and social life. The texts often ordain that one should follow dharma sincerely. Dharma is taken in a very concrete sense as it would enable one to judge between right and wrong, good and evil, and situations that confront every person naturally in his individual life. The need to answer the multiple situations made dharma a complex rather than a simple concept. The texts mention various dharmas such as Kula dharma, Raja dharma, Grihastha dharma, Varpa dharma, Digambara dharma, Dikshita dharma, and the like. They must all be known accurately, if one is to act rightly, that is, according to the dictates of dharma in all the various situations of life. It is maintained that one should have a thorough knowledge of all these aspects of dharma if one aims at securing bliss in this life and in the next.

So adherence to dharma is of the utmost importance. It is in fact central to the very purpose of life. But as we have seen there are so many definitions of dharma and it is hardly possible for one to know the true nature of dharma from these definitions. To root this demand ancient texts mention a few important sources.
The brahminical texts enumerate four important sources of knowledge of dharma. Explaining sources of knowledge of dharma, Manusmrtya thus states "the Veda, the sacred tradition, the customs of virtuous men, and one's own pleasure they declare to be visibly the fourfold means of defining dharma".

According to this view the Veda is one of the sources of knowledge of dharma. These texts suggest in the case of conflict between the Veda and Stryi one should rely upon the former. However, Mann points out that both are held to be valid. The emphasis on the Veda as a source of knowledge of dharma is well supported by the Mimamsakas. It is fundamentally in agreement with their philosophy that the Veda is supreme and its authority unquestionable. Thus some Mimamsa writers hold that any matter enjoined upon humanity by the Veda with a view to attaining any useful purpose is dharm.

Although the Vedas are considered to be sources of knowledge of dharma Stryi is also accepted as a source by some Mimamsa exponents like Kumarila who concede that "Stryi cannot be rejected as absolutely untrustworthy".

Injunctions of the Vedas are not questioned by any orthodox school of thought till the rise of the Upanisads. Upanisads recognize and include the Vedas in the list of sources of knowledge of dharma but they do not assign them a supreme

4. Jainina's Purva Mimamsa: Vinas, Dharma as that which possesses Vedic injunction as authority (I, I, 2).
place; they do not hold that Vedic knowledge is sufficient for the realization of the ultimate truth. Even while describing dharma, the Upanisads do not value the injunctions of the Vedas as the formulae that explain the concept of dharma. However, the main opposition to Vedic teaching was from Ajivikas, Lokayatas, Jainism and Buddhism, which directly questioned Vedic injunctions. The Buddhist society could later use more complex than the Vedic society. Having this, arose a spontaneous social consciousness in developing among the Brahminical thinkers and also among the Buddhists. Vedic injunctions were found to be inadequate to the needs of the evolving society. Especially to meet the demands of problematic social situations and to explain dharma in the context of socio-ethical values, suttis were framed. The authority of suttis was recognized and established so it could explain dharma vividly. Prof. Altekar points that the moral structure of ancient Indian society was not rooted in Vedic injunctions. He holds that the Veda ceased to exercise any important influence on the development of Indian social thought as early as sixth century B.C. He supports his argument stating that from sūrti only once acknowledged the authority of the Veda. This is sufficient to show that sūrti did not turn to the Vedas to explain dharma.

The new trend of thinking prescribes codes of conduct that govern individual behaviour at all levels. Sūrti texts are thus chiefly concerned with the action of man, here is final

2. B.G. I, 12.3.
4. 21, 20.
liberation depends on the individual's action. In the society belonging to the smṛti period human action could not be confined to a few traditional modes of behaviour, as interaction between individuals was becoming more and more complex with the expansion of society. Dharma was held to be the guiding principle of human action as it could decide on what was right and what was wrong action. Smṛti and smṛti alone could not vouch for dharma because dharma which had to direct the action of an individual in all situations could not depend on either of the texts which interpreted dharma only to a limited extent. Thus to meet this situation it is pointed out that 'Śadābhāra' customs of virtuous men also could be regarded as a source of knowledge of dharma. Because virtuous men will naturally adhere to dharma and as such whatever they practise would also become dharma. However, ancient thinkers take sufficient notice of this and explain who these virtuous men are. A varīṣṭa constituted of a definite number of learned men decided matters relating to dharma. ample recognition of the competence of learned men to decide on matters of dharma is explicit in the simple statement of the Mahābhārata where it is pointed out that one who, by his action, mind and speech is continuously engrossed in the welfare of others and always a friend of others knows the meaning of dharma.

1. Upan. XII, 106: "These Brahmans must be considered as Sūdras who, in accordance with the sacred Law, have studied the Vedas together with its appendages, and are able to advance proofs perceptible by the senses from the revealed texts" (cf. Vasi. I, 16).

2. Mbh. XII, 262.
In addition to the above three sources it is said that whatever is pleasing to one's own self is also dharma. By stating whatever is pleasing to one's own self is dharma, it does not mean that whatever pleases an individual is dharma. If such an interpretation is given then the very purpose of the other sources of knowledge of dharma, like the Vedas, sacred traditions and practices of virtuous people is defeated. Because if one dislikes dharma as approved by the other three sources then one can easily avoid it by stating that it does not please him. Then the question what is dharma and what is adharma does not arise because whatever one does can be interpreted as dharma. By the statement whatever is pleasing to one's own self these texts only mean that in deciding dharma from among the above three sources one should follow which ever source he likes the best. This is essential because the above sources are not only complementary but also supplementary to each other in expounding the true nature of dharma. In a situation when these sources are in conflict with one another, it is according to one's own pleasure that one can choose dharma.

The four sources that we have discussed so far are important to decide on what is dharma and what is adharma. The relationship between dharma and adharma is of the nature of the relationship between right and wrong. One has to avoid the latter. It is pointed out in the Gita that when dharma declines and adharma increases, the Lord creates himself to guard the good and destroy the wicked; to establish the
Dharma, finally, he comes into being again and again.  

Ancient Indian thinkers supplement the above sources of knowledge of dharma with a few other sources. Gautama observes that laws of countries, castes and families which are not opposed to the sacred records also have authority. Manu also maintains that the dharma of castes, countries, guilds, and families should be upheld. This clearly shows that issues connected with new aspects of dharma are a common feature. Dharmavati points to a number of such customs and practices as being unrighteous from his point of view. But he concurs that the timehonoured institutions of each country, caste and family should be preserved intact. It is stated in the Lābhārāṭa that dharma of four Yajñas - Yajña, Traya, Brahma and yajña do not correspond with one another. Thus the Lābhārāṭa observes that dharma becomes adharma, and adharma becomes dharma according to place and time (sāstā-sāstā). Such is the power of place and time. Hence the flexible nature of dharma is uncontestably clear. As held by some, dharma is neither a static nor an eternal principle but a dynamic one. This is one of the reasons why dharma could not be defined clearly. If dharma were to be static there would be no difficulty in describing it. The ever-growing and ever-changing nature of dharma makes it complicated needing constant search.

5. Kām. - Lakh. G.  
to know its true meaning. As stated by Śrāvakas, dharma and adharma do not go about and say, 'here we are; nor do Gods, good-harves, or Men say (to man); "this is virtue, that is sin." One has to apply reason and interpret the tradition.

Ideal ideas about social relationships are not absolute, but relative to the needs and conditions of different types of societies. This provision of relativity of dharma facilitates deviation from the prescribed obligations and recognizes self-preservation as the governing principle of life. This self-preservation is achieved not through blind adherence to duties in the established order of a static society but in a living society. As observed by Radhakrishnan "A living society must have both the power of continuity and the power of change."

The relative views of dharma cushions the shocks of change, gives stability to the social order and also takes into its fold the other two paraśārtha-s - artha and kāma. In fact these two aspects of paraśartha gain an accredited place when they are related to dharma. For this reason observe how we say that dharma (virtue) and material gain are good, others that pleasure and material gain are good, but still others dharma alone or pleasure alone is good, but the correct position is that the three should coexist without harming each other. But a note of dissent can be noticed in the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya where it states 'wealth and wealth alone is important in as much as,

2. Rama XIX, 106.
4. Ibid., p.113.
5. Rama. II, 114.
Similar arguments in support of possession of wealth can be noticed even in the other texts.

The term Artha is a comprehensive word denoting several meanings. The term is used in the important senses - polity and wealth. In the former sense it covers a wide field of human activity and resulted in the development of a separate subject called Arthashastra. Kautilya, the earliest authority on this subject visualises the great significance of Artha which covers all material aspects of life. He holds that without an efficient management of Artha even non-material ones could not be pursued. Thus Kautilya observes: "The subsistence of mankind is termed artha; the earth which contains mankind is termed artha; the science which treats of the means of acquiring and maintaining the earth is the arthashastra, science of polity". In a limited sense artha means wealth. In fact, the observation of Kautilya elucidates this meaning of artha also.

According to a modern definition, Artha means thing, object, substance, and comprises the whole range of the tangible objects that can be possessed, enjoyed, and lost, and which we require in daily life for the upkeep of the household, the raising of a family, and the discharge of religious duties i.e., for the virtuous fulfillment of life's obligations.

1. Arth.I
2. "The meaning of commonness...all kinds of materialistic acts flow from the possession of great wealth like a mountain. From wealth arise, all religious acts, all pleasures, and heaven itself, 0 King! Without wealth, a man cannot find the very means of sustaining his life."
3. Arth.IV,1;
4. K. O. Rumford: Philosophy of India, p.35.
It can be observed that from the Vedic period onwards the importance of wealth is well recognized. Most of the prayers in the Vedas were directed towards gaining wealth and worldly pleasures. A typical example in their prayer to the Agni, the god of fire, for the granting of riches. Thus they pray the god Agni, "May the Wealth-giver grant to us riches that shall be far renowned." 

In the Mahabharata, wealth is sought for sacrificial needs more than for worldly needs. But in some Upanishads a close antithesis for wealth is to be witnessed. In Upanishad to see that wealth is virtually renounced. In Bhadrāraṇyaka Upanishad (X.3.5)declines to accept wealth than Yajur Vedas offer her all his wealth before embarking on asceticism.

This tendency towards asceticism, and the outlook that viewed wealth as an obstruction to salvation or for final redemption has led some scholars to state 'the sharp impression made even upon most ascetic practices by the new asceticism was indelible; poverty and penance remained high ideals over afterwards. It is wrong to conclude that the Upanishadic or later thought that valued asceticism, completely rejected acquisition and enjoyment of wealth. The extreme desire for wealth that is witnessed in some trends of Mahayana thought is ridiculous and also disapproved by religions like Buddhism.'

1. A.V. V, 26, 3 21; VII, 30.
2. S.V. I, 1,13,6; I, 76; I, 66,6-7.
3. I, 23.
5. Raman-Surati, etc. et al., "The Civilization of Ancient India", 1.110.
and Jainism that attached importance to asceticism. Though these reactions are radical they are not totally contradictory. And such vigorous asceticism and aperity for wealth are considered essential only to an aspirant of final salvation. The lay men in not prevented from living a normal life. In the Upanishads themselves one will notice that wealth and knowledge are sought equally well and in many of the Upanisadic episodes wealth is offered as a reward for knowledge. On one occasion king Janaka offered Yajñavalkya wealth to secure knowledge of the ultimate reality. The episode shows that Yajñavalkya accepted wealth to impart knowledge to the king. Concluding on this theme, observes, 'it is evident that Yajñavalkya desired both material as well as spiritual good; and inspite of his otherwise supremely idealistic teaching, he possibly wanted to set an example by showing that the consideration of external good cannot be entirely ignored even by idealists as constituting a element in the conception of the highest good.'

Buddhism in practice did not completely neglect wealth. The Buddhist monastery was sustained by grants offered by kings and other rich people. And had it completely neglected acquisition of wealth the big institution of Sangha might not have survived. Dharmapala approves acquisition of wealth and

3. Ibid., p. 1, 17.
states that there is nothing wrong about a preoccupation with the acquisition of wealth, provided, the means used are those that are recognised as righteous. 1. Ajahn who followed Buddhism did not teach or practise the way of rejecting wealth. The later works of Dharma Sāstra and Arthasastra clearly and in no ambiguous terms coincide to the importance of wealth.

Arthasastra 2 advocates that mankind should be devoted to the pursuit of wealth as everything depends on the possession of wealth. The text observes: 'He who has a store of wealth has friends and righteousness and knowledge and merit and power and intelligence...In wealth is rested the world, and there in are all things. A man without wealth is a dead man and churlish. 3

Although such extreme importance is given to wealth, however, it is imposed that pursuit of this value should not go against the principles of dharma 4 . Some of the texts 4 of Dharma Sāstra impose restrictions on the quantity of wealth to be possessed, especially in the case of brahmans who were not directly involved in the economic activity of the society.

Laying down these principles some of these texts clearly state that wealth is not an end but only a means to other important ends. Wealth is desired only for the help it

1. Dharmapada, p.64.
2. vi, 7-12.
3. Ram IV, 176.
4. Ram IV, 7 cf. foot note.
wealth in the discharge of social, economic and religious duties and obligations, Radhakrishnan observes "wealth and enjoyment are not opposed to righteousness and perfection. If pursued for their own sake they are not right; but if adopted as means to spiritual well-being and social good, they are worthy of acceptance".

Wealth however is not desired for its own sake. People desire wealth because with its help happiness or enjoyment can be gained. Indian philosophers conceive happiness here as momentary and happiness hereafter as eternal. S.K. Maitra observes "every particular desire is thus a reflection or made up of the desire for the realization of one's true self which is the highest good and this good, the Brahman is to be distinguished from the empirical pleasure, the Bhoga which arises from external objects". Kama is a Bhoga because it is enjoyment through conscious satisfaction of the natural, biological appetites and impulses of man. It is merely an empirical enjoyment or happiness as against the enjoyment of the eternal bliss of 'Vedanta' or 'Nirvana'. The word kama is a synonym for desire. It specially indicates the desire for the pleasures of love. While a majority of Dharmaical philosophical schools give the utmost importance to Bhoga, carvaka and other such materialistic schools acknowledge only the latter aspect of pleasure, Bhoga alone as desirable.

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Thus the Āryans who see life only here and now, desire nothing, beyond this life, believe that one should enjoy all that one can in this life itself. So they exhort that while life remains let a man live happily, let him feed on glue even though he run into debt; when once the body becomes acrid, how can it ever return again? This view is not appreciated by the other Indian philosophical schools of thought. Even heterodox systems like Buddhism and Jainism regarded these extreme views untenable in relation to their basic assumptions. On the whole however, not only did the Āryan inhabitants fail to evoke any impression but also did it get subjected to prudent criticism. All the other orthodox Indian philosophical schools are aware of the dangers of pleasures of the flesh. While deciding between the Sāyaṇa and Sāyaṇa Upaniṣads suggest, that which leads to eternal happiness alone should be preferred. One of the main fears of Indian thinkers about indigence in pleasures of flesh is that no recreation is possible and it will finally lead to suffering and pain. That is why most of the ancient Indian texts repeatedly warn that one should be very careful in the choice and fulfillment of one’s desires. The Jātaka story recalls the ancient truth, thus ‘Truly, one’s appetite are never satisfied by enjoyment. On the other hand, like sacrificial butter poured into the fire, they disappear with indigence. Even, if one enjoyed the whole Earth with its wealth.

1. Śrīva-Sūtra Series by Madhava Atharva, tr. by C. F. Cowell and A. J. Church, p.10.
discourage and seek, animals and women, and may not yet be
attained. The fear of over-indulgence in pleasure might
have been the main reason for their repeated caution over the
need for a balanced desire. But there is no total denial of
enjoyment in this life. Ignoring all the reasons given
is not useful for the enjoyment of life. In more than one
authoritative text, the householder’s life is considered to
be the most distinguished of the four stages of life. While
the religions of India stress renunciation as the final step
for the attainment of moksha, they do not deny the importance
of active life. Several of these texts consider the strains
and stresses of the householder to be absolutely essential for
the realization of his highest self. There is also a remarka-
ble development in certain branches of knowledge that contribute
to the satisfaction of the physical and biological needs of an
individual. Thus this should show that sufficient importance
is attached to kama, although it is placed below the other two
paradigmats dharma and artha.

These three concepts—dharma, artha, and kama—consti-
tute the basic framework by which human conduct is regulated.
The evolution and systematization of these concepts is of
obvious interest, owing to their significant participation
in moulding the acts of individuals. Human beings are conscious
of the ends of their actions through which their desires are
satisfied. For some the ends are values. For some others means themselves are values. Prof. Ghurye defines values as 'conscious or subconscious concepts with emotional backing of the self as well as the society from where they have partly emerged, the successful attainment of which remains the endeavor of an individual or society.\(^5\)

It is already observed that successful attainment of these values requires the endeavor of the individual and the sanction of society. These three purushārthas - dharma, artha, and kama - are known as 'trivarga'. The other important value that is combined with them is 'moksha', i.e., liberation from the cycle of births and deaths. Only in the case of a ātman-lakṣaṇa, moksha could be treated as a value pertaining to this world but in any other context it is an inexplicable condition to which problems of this world are not directly connected. But on the other hand the other three purushārthas - dharma, artha and kama - pertain to this world and accomplishment of these values depend on human endeavor. By merely following these three values it is held that one would realise the ultimate value 'moksha'. So moksha does not, by itself, constitute a separate value, requiring any special endeavor beyond the pursuit of the first three values, as a whole or independently. It is an offset of the trivarga. If moksha is considered to be an independent value dharmārthaśārtrāna will be instrumental values. Here it is worthwhile to observe the interdependence of these values.

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1. \(\text{\textsuperscript{5}}\) Ghurye: Anthropo-Sociological Essays, p.250.
Artha, wealth, alone is an instrumental value. Wealth is not sought for its own sake. It is used as a means to gain one or the other of the diverse needs of life. But on the other hand kama, conscious satisfaction of desire, according to Hiraya\textsuperscript{1}, is an intrinsic value, since it does not admit of the question 'why?'. Because it is true that artha is a means to kama but kama is not merely an end. It is also a means to an end because one has to pass through the four stages of life including grhasth\text{"ama to realise the ultimate goal. As pointed out earlier the Brahminical religion attaches great importance to grhasth\text{"ama. Only after completing this stage, where the value of kama is fully recognised, one can proceed to the next stage. So kama is not merely an intrinsic value. It is also an instrumental value.

These two values artha and kama are however common to both human beings and sentient creatures. While they are pursued by the former consciously the latter seek them by instinct. That is why human beings are warned to be conscious of their pursuit of these values lest they should go after them without being conscious like animals and thus fail to realise the other two values.

The fundamental objective of dharma is not only to direct but also to restrain man from his excessive pursuit of any of the first two values. The Mah\text{"abharata states 'a wise man has to serve all three, but if all three cannot be attained he

\textsuperscript{1} Hiraya: The Quest after Perfection, pp.103-105.
must try to secure artha and kama. And if he has to choose only one from among the three he must choose artha only. A man of mediocre discipline prefers artha to the other two. Dharma is however the source of both artha and kama. Some tests hold that other values are also important. They assign the highest degree of values to dharma because other values depend on it. Dharma from this point of view survives the only important end of realizaion: moksha.

Dharma is generally understood as redemption from the cycle of births. According to Indian thinkers dharma prescribes a cycle of births, and living a life according to principles of dharma will bring release from this cycle of births. Then what is the cause of this cycle of births? It is generally held that it is the karma of an individual that is responsible for the continuity of the cycle of births or saṃsāra. Man is kept in bondage because of his karma. So if karma binds, dharma liberates him from his cycle of births. Thus incidentally a relation between karma and dharma is established.

The concept of dharma is one of the much discussed and equally misunderstood topics of Indian culture. It is said that the principle of karma possesses the capacity to connect the temporal with the spiritual and hence gives a practical significance. The concept of dharma is variously understood. A modern Indian writer describes the concept as follows: "All the Indian systems agree in believing that whatever action is done by an individual leaves behind it some sort of potency

"Quoted by V. S. Satpathi, On the Teaching of Mahabharata, 1. p. 32-33."
which has the power to ordain for him joy or sorrow in the future according as it is good or bad. Then the fruits of the actions are such that they cannot be enjoyed in the present life or in a human life, the individual has to take another birth as a man or any other being in order to suffer them.

For the first time in Satapatha Brahmana it is told that a man is born only to his obligations. It implies that his failure to fulfill some of his ordained duties results in rebirth. This implies the karma theory, because it assumes that performance of a particular action will arrest rebirth. But a categorical statement that one's good and bad actions are responsible for one's good or bad birth has to be traced to the Upanisads.

The Upanisads attach great importance to action and point out that action and becoming are birth related. It is stated that according as one acts, according as one conducts himself so does he become. The door of good becomes good. The door of evil becomes evil. (no becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action). The good or bad of an individual depends on the type of action he performs. The true significance of this statement would be noticed when it is combined with the belief in rebirth. A belief in a person's renewed existence in another body after death is accepted and it is held that the thoughts and deeds of one earthly life will have their fruition in a subsequent embodiment in the physical world.

2. 1, 7, 8, 11.
3. 3. 8. 5, 4, 5.
Thus it is stated: "Accordingly, those who are of pleasant conduct here—the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a pleasant womb, of brahmiya, or the womb of a vaisya. But those who are of stinking conduct have the prospect indeed that they will enter a stinking womb, either the womb of a dog, or the womb of a swine or the womb of an outcast." Obviously this is the doctrine of karma. It assumes that the prospect of rebirth of an individual in any particular group depends on his conduct. According to the Upanishads this knowledge of karma is not only acquired by a very few persons but also discussed among the learned only in privacy.

The karma theory acts as a background for many philosophies. Some of the orthodox philosophies hold that karma, that is responsible for rebirth is in no way connected to human action. Pandhali Gosala one belonging to such an orthodox school holds that transmigration is controlled by the all-powerful cosmic principle mâyâ (fate) which proceeds in a very rigid pattern. Whereas Ajita another philosopher of the same group denies the existence of karma altogether. But as a general rule other philosophical schools hold that the karma, the essential binding force is proportionately related to actions performed by an individual.

Jainism has a realistic view of karma². According to Jain philosophy the karma is material in nature and it chiefly

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Along through the sense organs. The influx of karma affects the soul, covers it like a sheet and brings about bondage. Thus the inherent capacity of the soul for self-realisation is obstructed by a veil of karma. The nature of karma is determined by the nature of actions of the individual. Jainism advocates vigorous courses of penance and virtuous practice to keep oneself away from penalties. According to Jainism such an attitude is essential to reduce the influx of fresh karma material and also to eliminate the karma that one is already in possession of. Then one is completely relieved of the karma material, then the soul will be relieved of the binding force, and attains liberation from suffering.

The Buddhist Sutta Vada does not recognise any soul and on account of this no where does it teach about transmigration of souls. But still Buddhism postulates a chain of rebirths affected by the play of karma. According to Buddhism it is individual personality that participates in the transmigration. This peculiar force is called by Buddhistic philosophy as the influx of each living being. However, this influx is not an entity that goes from life to life.

According to Buddhism it is the will to exist (upâdāna) that is responsible for the continuity of births. This will to live ultimately holds life together. It is the will that produces the karma. Buddhism equates karma with will and states that 'will alone is karma'\(^2\). The absence of karma or craving

\(^{1}\) A.L.III, p.140.
For life would enable one to achieve nirvana. The will has to be destroyed if one wishes to escape karma. To realize this nobility of action is absolutely essential. The Buddhist concepts of dhamma mūla (the causes of existence) and antar-mārga (the eightfold path) highlight the efficacy of action both in the origination and liberation of an individual.

Thus it can be seen that the doctrine of karma is an essential part of all or nearly all the Indian schools of philosophy. According to these schools of thought karma is an unaccused potency (apūrva) that links action and its result. It is of the nature of adharma because it is constituted of the accumulation of an unaccused total of merits and demerits of an action. Hence it is action that generates karma, a potency on which the future state (condition) of an individual depends. But however all actions are not capable of accumulation into karma. It is only willed action that accumulates karma in an individual. Thus it is pointed out that 'karma' means willed activity i.e., activity which is the result of the will or activity for which the agent is responsible. In view of this relationship between karma and action the individual has to take the right course of action and accumulate only positive merit. Because only on the accumulation of such merit he will be released of the effects of karma, of the force that binds him to the samsara. According to these schools the right course of action is in the path of dharma, and by following this path of dharma an individual will gain merit. As already discussed

1. T.K._jahadevan; Hinduism, p. 54.
nearly all the philosophical schools enumerate various cate-
gories of action as dharma. By adhering to these principles 
of dharma an individual can get released of karma. As noted 
earlier, only thinkers of orthodox schools of philosophy 
held that karma is eternal and unconnected to human action. 
Such a stand on the principle of karma is vehemently criticized. 
For example, the Buddha observes that only a single ājīvika 
who acknowledges the truth of karma and the efficacy of action 
attained the bliss\textsuperscript{1}. Even though the part played by the 
principle of karma was accepted it was never considered as 
determining. Human endeavour was upheld as an important factor. 
This stand is clearly maintained in a statement of Mahādharma-
sūtra. The text reads 'all undertakings in this (world) 
depend both on the ordering of fate and on human exertion; but 
among these two (the ways of) fate are unfashionable in the 
ence of man's work action is possible\textsuperscript{2}. The above statement 
is sufficient to point out that human action was given the 
 utmost importance although the presence of fate was accepted in 
human undertakings in this world.

Thus it has been established that karma alone is respons-
"ible for the continuity of the cycle of births and deaths 
(samsāra), the source of suffering. With the redemption of 
karma there will be cessation of samsāra, and thus relief from 
suffering. As already observed\textsuperscript{3} the absolute relief from

\textsuperscript{1} A.H.III, p.287.  
\textsuperscript{2} Mahā VII, 206. 
\textsuperscript{3} Supra chapter I.
unknown is the ultimate goal of individuals according to all major philosophical schools of India. The condition of such a relief is generally referred to as 'moksha' by Brahmanical religion, while it is called 'nirvana' in Buddhism and Jainism. Although there is agreement among all these philosophies upon such an end, there is considerable difference of opinion over the nature of that end. The upanisadic thinking associates such a condition with a positive state of happiness, while Buddhism and other systems of philosophy like Sāṅgīya-Vāda provide a negative definition of such a condition as freedom from suffering (suffering and bondage are closely related to each other and the presence of one will speak of the other). Complete liberation or moksha, therefore, is usually defined as that where even the possibility of suffering ceases or ceases. The stated earlier Indian philosophy, in general, holds that suffering a sign of bondage, is due to the effect of one's own karma. It is not a restriction or limitation imposed from the outside but something that is of one's own making. By acting according to dharma an individual can gain relief from this condition.

Considering the importance of dharma, law places moksha under the category of dharma, and recognises only three ends of life, dharma, artha, and kāma. Thus one has to act according to the principles of dharma and attain the ultimate goal.

As stated an individual has to act in a society ruled by principles of dharma. Brahminical religion especially of the Upanishadic and later periods contemplates a scheme of life that each individual has to follow for performing his duties. The Upanishad Upanishad declares: "the performance of the duties prescribed for each caste (svamamrtyusvachara sma) according to strict rules of dharma (implied in the term shrutidharma/keshavan) required for the proper comprehension of the sacred knowledge". According to this scheme an individual has to spend his life in four stages (ashramas) which are Brahmacarya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. Each stage is marked by certain characteristics of the individual and duties. Each stage is well planned to equip an individual for the next stage.

The first ashrama, Brahmacarya covers the whole period of studentship. A boy is eligible to learn the Vedas and other subjects after initiation. Initiation is a ceremony that makes an individual a full member of a particular caste. Those who are thus initiated are called 'svijas' (twice born) and they start vigorous study from this period onwards. A boy will have to stay in the house of the teacher and learn the Vedas and other subjects adhering to principles of strict discipline. As learning is by rote, the boys have to live in the house of the teacher for quite a few years. Thus lived down, the teacher and student relationship is like that of a father and child. A teacher has to impart all knowledge without any reservation and prejudice, considering it as a holy task. A student owes his teacher reverence and unquestioned trust.

The next order is Ārama. An individual will pass to the Āramas only after completing the study of the Vedas, either one or two or all without breaking the rules of studentship. While entering Ārama after his studies he must select a suitable girl as his wife. They together will attend to their respective duties as individuals of society. While the man attends to social duties, the woman will manage the house, bringing up children, attending on parents — the couple also have to receive guests and attend to several religious duties as part of their domestic life. This Ārama covers a long period of the individual's life. A major part of the active life of a man is spent during this period, and in this ārama an individual attends to the needs of those who are in the other āramas. For Ārama observes2: 'All the other āramas depend on that of the householders, even as the living beings depend for their life on air. As the sons of three other orders are daily supported by the householder with gifts of knowledge and food, so the order of the householder is superior to all others'. According to Ārama3: 'when a householder sees his (skin) wrinkled, and (his hair) white, and the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest. Thus an householder will enter the third ārama, Vānaprastha. In this stage abandoning all food raised by cultivation, and all his belongings, he may depart into the forest, either committing his wife to his sons or accompanied by her. During this stage

1. Ārama III, 2.
2. VI, 2 ff.
3. III, 77-78.
he has to perform several duties similar to those of a householder. But the chief function of this stage lies in acquiring discipline that is essential for the renunciation of family and social relations. An individual has to acquire this gradually and duties prescribed for the individual in this āśrama prepare him for such a changeover. After completion of the third āśrama of life, an individual can live the fourth āśrama abandoning all attachment to objects of the world. Thus he who after passing from order to order, after offering sacrifices subduing his senses, becomes, tired with (giving) alms and offerings of food, an ascetic, gains bliss after death\(^1\). This is called the Sanyāsī āśrama, the last and final stage of the āśrama scheme.

According to the āśrama scheme an individual passes through different phases of life and performs various functions depending upon his age and psychological development. As a young boy he attends to learning; and as a grown up man he will marry and attend to social and family duties. In old age he retires into the forest and gradually detaches himself from the craving of worldly things. According to the āśrama scheme such a detachment is inevitable. Moreover, detachment from worldly things is only contemplated in the last phase when a man is sufficiently old and waiting for the inevitable end. Detachment at this stage does not cause any harm to society or the individual. This is illustrated as follows in the

\(^{1}\) Upaniṣad VI, 34 ff.
Pudhārakūta. Elder people of Kuru dynasty Durvasāstra, Gauḍārā, Danti and Vidura retired to the forest a few years after the great war. The Pāṇḍavas used to visit them periodically and enquire after their welfare. On one occasion when Pāṇḍavas visited them they were told that Vidura was practising a terrible penance. According to the report he was neither drinking nor eating, and sometimes he was seen wandering in the forest. The description clearly points out that Vidura had renounced the worldly desires completely and accepted the Sanyāsi asrama in its true spirit. For such an individual things of this world are of no value. The renouncer, the Sanyāsi, is deliberately the opposite of the (Vedic) householder. Whereas the latter was a center of manifold relations and communications, that is, a person with all the opulence which this term implies, the renouncer, on the contrary is a detached atom, a self-isolating individual. A sanyāsi is not attached to the family and all values of society are value-neutral to him. In fact he is dead to society. He dramatises this detachment from society by performing his own funeral rites, by distributing all his possessions and keeping away from the performance of any social duty (or adhering to principles of charity). The behaviour of Vidura thus shows that he took up the Sanyāsi asrama in its true spirit.

1. MBh XV, 30.
Thus according to the sravas scheme an individual has to live a life of activity (krātikā) for the major part of his life. One can switch over to the life of renunciation (śrīveti) only in the last stages of one's life. But at times people who wanted to escape from misery of life tried to take up the path of renunciation even before reaching the stage. Māyūrīnical texts do not approve of such an attitude. An anecdote in the Līlācchāwaraṇa expresses the disapproval by māyūrīnical texts of untimely renunciation. After the great war heroousful Yudhiṣṭhira prepares himself to renounce the world. He states thus: "Desirous of obtaining the things of this earth, I have omitted sin, through which, as the brahmās declare, birth and death are brought about... I shall go to the woods, escaping from the ties of the world, freed from grief, and without affection for anything." Arjuna, Āravasi and others point out to Yudhiṣṭhira the futility of such action. Bhūṣaṇa, puts a rejoinder to the king: ‘If, king, anybody were to obtain success from renunciation, then mountains and trees will surely obtain it! These latter always seem to lead lives of renunciation. They do not injure any one. They are, again always aloof from a life of worldliness and are all brahmāchsars'. He concludes stating thus ‘he that is bereft of action can never have success'. Whereas Gītā too holds that ‘no one is able to live without performing

1. Acquisitive, however, is to be obtained by leading a life of domesticity, upon which depends everything. (ībb. XII, 11).
2. Ībb. XII, 7.
action because one is bound by a prakṛti principle. Prakṛti here means the material counter part of life and is full of action. Thus according to Gita one can achieve liberation not through detachment from worldly life but through action. Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly states that of the two ways of attaining mokṣa, detachment and action, the latter is superior to the former. However, these texts do not deviate from the traditional ideal that all actions are the result of bondage. As noticed earlier according to the arāma scheme a life of non-attachment is possible only when one becomes a savyāl i.e., a stage in which one totally renounces craving for things of this world and performs no action. Thus the necessary conditions for mokṣa and the life of action seemed opposed to each other.

There is another theory enunciated in the Gita which apparently circumvents this situation. This is nīśākha krama (desirelessness). According to nīśākha krama an individual can perform allotted actions without any desire whatsoever for their fruits. It is desire for the fruits of action that keeps one attached to things. When action is done without any desire for the fruits, thus, no attachment to things will be present. Thus according to nīśākha krama an individual can perform action and maintain non-attachment, a condition that is essential for relief from suffering. The teaching is applicable to all the nārmas, and therefore to Gṛhasthāsrama also. An individual need not become a sanyāsī to attain mokṣa. One can perform

1. Gita 5.2; CC 5.4;
action without desire for fruits and attain moksha. Without
being bound by limitations of age and the stage of life every
individual could perform action without any concern for the
results thereof. If one performs actions in this sense one
will not be subjected to frustrating situations similar to
that of Yudhishthira, as no desire is attached to fruits of
action; one that the result will not disturb the performer of
action. An individual will be guided by principles of dharma
alone in his action. His actions are determined by his indi-
vidual character. Ancient Indian texts also contemplate a
scheme of organization of society to enable an individual to
perform action that is suited to him i.e., to his character.