Chapter II
The Concept of Value

I

The problem of value is one of the most important problems of human thought because concern for value is a unique feature of humanity that distinguishes man from other beings. Value is a concept, which is related to the behaviours of an individual human being or a group of individuals. A person’s specific value awareness plays a big role in the determinations of his behavior because it is concerned directly with what he desires and his choice of the desirables. Human beings prefer one course of action to another on the assumption that their choice will help them in attaining what they desire. In this way, values are the goals towards which individuals or groups direct their attention and strive to achieve. As a behavioural concept, one of the more widely accepted definitions in the social science literature considers values to be conceptions of the desirable, influencing selective behaviour. According to the social scientists, values serve as criteria for selection in action. When most explicit, values become criteria for judgment, preference and choice. Men do prefer some things to others. They do select one course of action rather than another out of a range of possibilities.

In the history of Western philosophy, however, the importance of the problem of value has been recognized very slowly and very late. The discovery of the problem of value as an independent area of study was made only towards the latter part of the 19th century. However, Plato, as the father of Idealism in the West, has been generally regarded as the first promulgator of value-philosophy in so far as he made his idea of the Good, the unifying idea of the entire universe while considering it as the teleos or purpose of the world of ideas. But the emergence of the problem of value as a distinct problem for modern philosophy was due to Kant. As Herrold Hoffding in his Philosophy of Religion writes: “we are indebted to Kant’s philosophy for the independence of the problem of value as apart from the problem of knowl-
edge. He taught us to distinguish between valuation and explanation”. Kemp Smith also writes in his A Commentary to Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason that “what Kant does – stated in broad outline – is to distinguish between the problems of existence and the problem of value assigning the former to science and the latter to philosophy.”

II

The term “value” is used in various senses. Although it is of very common use in our everyday life, yet it is one of those terms which have been the source of much misunderstanding. Very often it is associated with some “isms” or ideologies. Moreover, differences in outlooks towards life lead to differences in the conceptions of values. However, there are certain values, which are generally accepted as ideals or goals of life in the midst of differences in the cultural background of the people and philosophies of life. Regarding the differences in the value conceptions, it may be pointed out that value from the realistic standpoint will be different from value which either the empirical or the idealist outlook will mean by it. Further, value in the economic sense of utility will be different from value considered either from the realist or the idealist standpoints. In Philosophy we come across such allied terms like “worth”, “good”, “excellence”, “perfection”, etc. But it is difficult to distinguish these terms from value, because the concept of value is a blanket term which covers similar such terms.

The Latin word “valeo” originally meant “strength” or “health”. In French the term “valeur” means “excellence”. In Italian “valore” is a term, which signifies honour, while “valuta” means price. The German “wert” corresponds to the English word “value”. Meinong uses it in the sense of “dignity or nobility”. But the term “value” has acquired different connotations in the uses of different schools of philosophic thought. Sometimes this term is used with reference to the order of beings, and sometimes with reference to consciousness in the subjective sense. This kind of interpretation of the concept of values lead to the question whether values are objective or subjective? This also leads to the “Great divide” between realism and idealism in
Western philosophy. It is used sometimes to mean subjective appreciation without any objective reality of its own, and sometimes to mean the objective reality which makes a thing valuable independently of subjective appreciation, because value is regarded as the very framework of the universe. These different standpoints bring about different philosophical camps. While some maintain that all philosophy is but axiology or value theory, others insist that values do not constitute a novelty, that a new name has merely been discovered to designate old modes of being. The conception of value in the latter sense indicate that values may be reduced to three others of reality, namely, things essences, and psychic phenomena. In the first sense, the attempt value is equivalent to that which pleases us. Further, some others say that value is identical with what is desired. Another group of thinkers say that it is the object of interest. Now, pleasure, desire, interest, are experiences. Value, for these thinkers is personal experience.

III

Generally a distinction is made between fact and value. We may look upon the universe as the realm of things and events as they are, or we may look upon it not simply as it is, but we may find that it has reference to an ideal which is not simply a matter of our choice, but rather that the ideal is embedded in its nature. A fact is what is the case, what exists or happens, whereas value refers to the good or ideal or preferences. Some thinkers explain fact and value by reference to what is and what ought to be. In this sense, facts are what happen. In this sense, they are what have been found in experience. On the other hand, values being what ought to be, happen to be the standards or goals or ideals.

Corresponding to the fact-value dichotomy a distinction is made between two kinds of judgments, namely, factual judgment and value-judgments. Factual judgments merely describe objects, whereas value judgment appraises the worth of objects. The former describe a given environmental situation. The distinction between the two forms of judgments, however, is radical. In a sense, all judgments are factual, in the sense namely that if they are real judgments they deal with facts.
The difference between the two is therefore primarily a difference of emphasis, the value-judgment emphasizing appreciation and the factual judgment emphasizing description. But this difference of emphasis is of great significance and justifies the distinction. Although the distinction between fact and value is commonly accepted, the two are closely related because generally fact is associated with value bias. It will be generally found that value-relation and attitude can never be eradicated from even the merest and most stubborn fact. Nor, conversely, can a recognition of fact be wholly eliminated from knowledge. Pure value exists as little as pure fact.

IV

We must draw a distinction between utility and value. Utility is a term, which is often used in economic. Utility is also known as economic value. Utility in the sense of economic value is either value-in-use or value-in-exchange. Economic value is also known as instrumental values. Instrumental value are contrasted with those which are known as the intrinsic values. The latter are values which are self-justifying, self-sufficient or absolute values, which are end in themselves.

Values are also divided as “intrinsic” values and “extrinsic” values. Some of the values of life are desired for their own sake alone, while others are desired as a means to an end. The beauty of the rainbow, for instance, is valued on its own account. But a plot of land, a bank account or a car, is valued because of what it will enable one to acquire in the way of the satisfaction of further desires. The rainbow’s beauty is an example of “intrinsic” value and the plot of land, etc, are examples of “extrinsic” or instrumental value. By an intrinsic value, then, is meant any value which claims appreciation in its own right—it is an end in itself. Extrinsic values have worth, not in their other values. They are of instrumental worth only, a means to an end. Aesthetic and moral values are considered as intrinsic values.

Value considered in the sense of “anything of interest to a human subject”, that is in the general sense in which R.B. Perry has used it connotes both the intrin-
sic and the extrinsic or instrumental values. In the ordinary sense, anything good or bad is a value.

One of the more widely accepted definitions in the social sciences considers values to be conceptions of the desirable, influencing selective behaviour. According to Stephen C. Pepper, the term “value” may refer to interests, pleasures, likes, preferences, duties, moral obligations, desires, wants, needs, aversions and attractions and many modalities of selective orientation. In this sense, values serve as criteria for selection in action. When most explicit and fully conceptualized, values become criteria for judgments, preferences and choices. When implicit and unreflective, values nevertheless perform as if they constituted grounds for decisions in behaviour. Men do prefer some things to others; they do select one course of action rather than another out of a range of possibilities. They also judge the conduct of other man.

Values may also be classified as “higher” values and “lower” values. The higher values are often spoken of as permanent and the lower ones as transient. That the permanent has a value over and above the transient seems to have come down to us as a relic of Pythagoreanism, and lovers of the natural beauty of the sunset, beauty that must die and all that hastens away too soon, may feel that there is something wrong this classification. Truth may not be a value under all circumstances, however shocking this may sound at a first hearing. There are times when it is our duty not to tell the truth e.g. to avoid giving an unbearable shock to a patient, or to refuse to betray a comrade in time of war. The distinction of values in higher and lower is itself one, which occasions serious reflection. The way of thinking which would place the intellectual values at the top of the scale is witness to a premium on the contemplative way of life and which has come down to us from Plato. The Platonic and Christian world-views lodge value in the supersensible and the eternal. It was not until the latter part of the eighteenth century that the affective life was recognized to have value of its own. In any case it is necessary to recognize that the classification of values into higher and lower is itself the result of a process of valuation.
It still remains for the philosopher to say something about the relation of the various values to each other, since the desire to see a unity among diversity is one of the most stubborn of philosophical desires. The Platonic account of value was especially futile in this respect, and all values (and indeed all manner of beings) were said to 'participate' in the ultimate value, i.e. the Form of the Good. The theme of 'ground' and that of 'participation' was taken up by Christian theology in so far at all values were to be found in the Divine nature. It was not until much later the fount and origin of value was found in something much nearer home, human personality itself. This last way of approaching the problem was followed both by German philosophers like Scheler and Hartman, and Albert in a much more down-to-earth manner, by the pragmatists. All these views we shall consider shortly under the heading of 'value and existence'.

Subjectivity and objectivity of values:

Spinoza, the great Western rationalist remarked that "we do not desire a thing because it is good, it is good because we desire it." The question that we have to ask is: Are values subjective, that is, dependent upon the valuer, the agent, or objective, that is, independent of the agent and exist in the particular thing or act themselves?

While it is not easy to reduce to simple terms the constellation of problems with which axiology is concerned today, the core of the problem may be summed up in the following question: Are things valuable because we desire them, or do we desire them because they are valuable?

The question requires prior clarification of terms in order to prevent us from falling into a 'disputatio de-nominem'. Value is 'objective' if its existence and nature is independent of a subject; conversely, it is 'subjective' if it owes its existence, in a sense, or its validity, to the feeling or attitudes of the subject.
What values would objects have if we passed them by indifferently, if they did not cause us enjoyment or satisfaction, if we did not desire them or were unable to desire them?

We have now to discuss the question whether values should be regarded as subjective or objective? Is it necessary to 'locate' values, either 'in the mind' or 'out there'? Hare has suggested that the pacing of the dichotomy in this way amounts to a wrong use of the Law of Excluded Middle and that there is no prima facie reason why values should be classified either as properties or as subjective relations. It is worth examining, however, why certain philosophers should have regarded values as being subjective at all. The main ground for this view seems to have been a consideration of the nature of the process of valuation. It is men who evaluate and who do so from certain points of view. It is by no means only the utilitarians who have found the mainspring of men's actions in their desire to attain pleasure and to shun pain. Epicurus, for example, in the ancient world, seems to have held this view too, although his formulation of it was by no means as crude as it is usually thought to be. Even if we do not take hedonistic stand point, some would still maintain that values have no meaning apart from human desires. That this is so can be seen, it would be claimed, if we take the example of a good meal. This has no value for us if we do not have the desire to eat; if say, we have already denied elsewhere.

Another consideration, which supports the subjectivist thesis, is the notorious diversity, which dogs our value judgments. In certain societies cunning may be regarded as the greatest of virtues and aesthetic standards may be wildly different from our own. An anthropological approach, such as that to Westermarck, is based on data like these. The epistemologist may look upon the problem from a slightly different angle. He may say that there is no evidence for the existence of values in the world of sense experience and that therefore we must look to the subject if we are to find source of value. But probably the most plausible appeal that the subjectivist can make is to aesthetic experience. There is undeniably an intimate connection between beauty and delight and everyone has heard of the adage ‘Beauty is in the eye
of the beholder’. If we analyze delight or aesthetic enjoyment we find that inextricably bound up with it is a corpus of associated personal meanings, that is to say, meanings which are peculiar to our own private lives. Then again, the amount and quality of an aesthetic enjoyment aroused by any particular aesthetic object varies greatly from man to man and this would encourage the view that the value “beauty” is at least partly subjective.

The above arguments may be examined one by one. Even if valuation be shown to be an inevitably subjective process, this would not necessarily indicate that values themselves were subjective. It is to be doubted, in any case, whether valuation itself can be accounted for merely in terms of feeling. Meinong, a philosopher who has given a very considerable role to feeling in his analysis of valuation, points out that value judgments assume the existence of the values in question. If this were not so we could not speak of ‘judgment’ at all. When we judge, we judge about something, whether or not our judgment be at the same time influenced by certain subjective factors in ourselves. If there be no value ‘judgement’ as such then the question of truth and falsity will not arise, and this, in fact is the view held by certain contemporary philosophers. If we take this view, however, we shall be in fact saying that the man who maintains that Michaelangelo’s David is great work of art is saying something which cannot be spoken of as either true or false, and we shall not able to tell the man who says that cruelty is good that he is mistaken.

The appeal to relativism is not these days considered as damaging as it once was. Anthropologists tell us that if all cultures were completely different from each other than any comparative study of man would, eo ipso, be impossible. Kroeber and Kluckhohn write that ‘there is a generalized framework that underlies the more apparent and striking facts of cultural relativity.’ As far as aesthetic experience is concerned the subjectivist’s analysis is all too simple. Aesthetic experience has its fount and origin in the perception of a sensible object, which is endowed with, a certain form, a “significant” from if we like to call it such. Beauty is judged and not merely
felt. We speak of disagreements on aesthetic matters as differences in taste and we recognize that one man's taste may, whether through initial sensitivity or training, be better than another's. The fact that we make valuations among valuations is perhaps the most telling point that can be made against the subjectivists. To conclude, we can admit that valuation is subjective in that it is a human activity and an activity, moreover, in which feelings, (perhaps in the case of aesthetic experience, feelings of a special kind) have a special part. But valuation is none the less a response made by the subject to certain qualities in the object evaluated. As Alexander puts it in his book, Space, Time and Deity, "We have values or tertiary qualities in respect of the whole situation consisting of knowers and known in their compresence. Strictly and object, which is true or good or beautiful............."

The objectivists, since the time of Plato, has been governed by metaphysical consideration, that is to say, he believes that only by the recognition of the ontological status of value can the nature of value be done justice to. The objectivists, moreover, has shown a special concern for moral values for it is these which seem to suffer most on the subjectivists with in their fold. The rationalist insists that our value judgments claim objectivity, and that the objectivity of values is the objectivity of excellence. Norms are such that all reasonable beings should acknowledge them. The idealist McTaggart writes that 'Goodness is a quality of the thing judged good, and a thing can no more be good for one man and bad for another than twice four can be eight for one man and nine for another.' The most interesting development of the objectivist thesis from the realist standpoint is to be found in the works of G.E. Moore. Moore's main concern, no doubt, was with ethical value, but, in his view, it was necessary to determine the meaning of good in general before one could properly proceed to the determination of what is good in conduct. Moore's refusal to allow that good can be defined is to be understood both as a rejection of naturalism in any form and as a parallel to his refusal to allow that 'knowing' (which he treats of in his epistemological works) can be defined either. Both 'good' and 'knowing' are 'sui generic'. Of intrinsic value we can say that it ought to exist for its own sake, and
that intrinsically good things should be sought for their own sakes. Friendship, justice, courage and generosity are good in themselves.

It is in connection with the explication of the notion of intrinsic value that Moore introduces his conception of ‘organic wholes’. There are things, which have intrinsic value, things, which are positively bad, and a third class of things, which appear to be different as between good and bad. But, as Moore says “…………… A thing belonging to any of these three classes may occur as a part of whole, which includes among its other parts occur things belonging both to the same and to the other two classes; and these wholes, as such may also have intrinsic value”. What Moore has in mind here is a concept of wholes based on the axiom of external relations as against the absolutist conception of organic whole based on the axiom of internal relations and where there is a relation of necessitation between the parts. Moore’s view, therefore is clearly pluralistic. What is of special interest, in view of the theories we loked at earlier, is that Moore should speak of intrinsic goods as complex wholes involving consciousness of an object and an emotional attitude towards this object. He thereby gives to feeling a ‘conditioning’ role no less important than was gives by Meinong. In highlighting the values to personal life, such as personal affection and aesthetic enjoyment, he has, at the same time, much in common with a philosopher like Hartman. His focusing on the general problem of the nature of good points forward on the general problem of the nature of good points forward to Urmson’s work on grading and to Hare’s investigation of commendation. In a way, too, one can see Moore’s work as a wise straddling of the uncomfortable distinction between the subjectivity and ‘objectivity’ of values with which we began.

One point seems clear: we cannot speak of values without considering actual or possible valuation. In fact, what sense would values have if they could completely escape man’s appreciation? How would we know that such values exist, if they existed outside the sphere of human valuation? In this point, subjectivism seems to be on firm ground, value cannot be divorced from valuation. Objectivism creates a basic
distinction here, which prevents us from pursing the already open road of subjectivity. It is true, claims the objectivists, that valuation is subjective, but a distinction should be made between valuation and value. Value is prior to valuation. If there were no values, what would we evaluate? To confuse valuation with value is like confusing perception with the object perceived.

To show weakness of this kind of reasoning, subjectivism appeals to experience. If values were objective, it asserts, then individual would have come to an agreement about values, and value objects. But this is not the case, we find disagreement everywhere.

Prof. R.C. Pradhan maintains, “that the value concepts have an ontological dimension as the value sense is not exhausted by the totality of valuational acts and preferences.” He argues that we have to consider the possibility of a primary value system as the ground of valuation and preference. He is critical about the trend of thinking which has attempted to reduce value patterns into patterns of valuation as well as patterns of preferences.

*How do we apprehend values?*

Values are not self-sustaining, but that they lead a parasitical existence; they always appear to us, resting on some carrier, or value-object. This carrier is a real object-stone, canvas, paper, gesture, movement-and we perceive it through the senses.

Max Scheler maintains that intelligence is blind to values, i.e., it cannot have any sort of direct dealing with them. Values are revealed to us through emotional intuition. Intuition is accurate and has no need to base itself on prior experience, nor no its corresponding vehicle. “We know of cases in the apprehension or values”, he writes, “in which value of a thing is given to us clearly and evidently, even without having the carriers of that value revealed to us”. Jose Ortega Y Gasset, who made known Scheler’s axiological conception to the Spanish-speaking world, wrote in 1923:
“The experience of values is independent of the experience of things. Moreover, it is quite a different sort. Objects, realities, are by nature opaque to own perception..... Our experience of it will continually improve but it will never be perfect. On the other hand, the unreal — a number, a triangle, a concept, a value— is a transparent entity. We see them all at once in their entirety.” (Obras Completas, vol. VI)

The controversy as to whether values are subjective or objective cannot be answered in the straight or categorical manner. As mentioned in the above discussion, the question has to be tackled from alternative philosophical standpoints. In this context, what John Laird had said may find some relevance. He remarked: “we must take account of the possibility that “value” is an equivocal, not a univocal term and that the relative “values” of natural election or of emotional prizing cannot properly be assigned to the domain of excellence. If so ‘value’ in one sense may very well be objective, and value, in some other sense or senses, not be objective. Indeed, if any ‘value’ is relative, they must be ‘subjective’ in one of the relative sense of subjectivity, if the term to which they are relative is a ‘subject’ or ‘ego’. 7

VI

There are various ways in which values may be classified. There seem to be no fixed criteria for distinguishing values. However, there are certain distinctive values. The following are some of them:

1. Hedonic values are related with pleasure, which men generally seek. Pleasure is sometimes regarded as a positive value, whereas pain is regarded as a negative value, which people prefer to avoid.

   Biological or survival values are sometimes related with the hedonic values. But it does not generally follow that what is pleasurable is always good for survival and what is painful detrimental to survival. Sometimes that which is painful may be helpful to the safe-guard for survival. There values indicate what is meant by “kama” in Indian ethics.
II. Utility values or the economic values are a class by themselves. They are essential for maintaining the economic life of the people. They correspond to "artha" in Indian ethics.

III. There are also the cognitive values. Logic recognizes 'truth' and 'falsity' as the values. Truth is positive; error of falsity is negative value.

IV. Aesthetic values are the beautiful, the attractive, the elegant, the sublime and many such attributes, which are pleasing to experience.

V. We have then, the ethical or the moral values. These values are marked by the apposition between the good and the evil, the right and the wrong, the ought and the ought not, in relation to human voluntary actions. Most writes on value given special consideration to moral value, for here is a value, which carries with it a demand for certain courses of action by ourselves. There is a connection, that is to say, between excellence and what we ought to do. Moral philosophers have been at pains to examine the springs of moral action and also to consider the weight of the 'can' which seems to be presupposed by the 'ought'. The theist can say that God's love for us provides the motive and His grace the power.

VI. Religious or spiritual values also are recognized as the values, which men aspire after. Man has deep faith in God and he yearns for attaining the spiritual goal of God-realisation. Religious values are associated with the sense of salvation and he ideas of the sacred and the profane, the holy and the unholy. That which man believes is associated with salvation, the sacred and the holy is value for him in the religious sense.

The Hindu concept of "dharma" covers both the moral and spiritual values. The concept of 'moksa' as a value in Indian thought is associated with religious value.

The problem of value has occupied important place in the Western philosophical thought. As mentioned earlier in this discussion, values have been discussed with some amount of seriousness only in the latter part of the 19th century philosophical discussion of Europe. Axiology as a philosophical discipline has thus been
developed in the west very late. Even to this day, it has not been given due importance in the way in which epistemology, philosophy of mind, etc., have been given importance.

In India the interest of philosophy is in the self of man, “Ātmānāḥ viddhi” (know the Self) sums up the law given by the prophets.

The facts of mind or consciousness were studied by the Indian thinkers with as much care and attention as the facts of the outer world are studied by our modern scientists. The philosophical conclusions of Advaitic monism are based on the data of psychological observation.

The activities of the self are assigned to the three states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. They self, which persists, unchanged and is one throughout all the changes in different from them all. The condition change, not the self. An unconditioned reality where time and space along with all their objects vanish is felt to be real. An unconditioned reality where time and space along with all their objects vanish is felt to be real. It is the self, which is the unaffected spectator of the whole drama of ideas related to the changing mood of walking, dreaming and sleeping. The self “never dies, is never born- unborn, eternal everlasting, this ancient one can never be destroyed with the destruction of body. If the slays thinks he can slay, or if the slain thinks he is slain, they both do not known the truth, for the self neither slays, nor is slang in” (Katha Up. ii. 18-19; B.G.ii, 19-20)

In addition to the ever identical self, we have also the empirical variety of objects. The former is permanent, immutable, the latter impermanent and ever changing. The former is absolute, being independent of all objects, the latter changes with the moods.8

The Self is the inmost and deepest reality, felt by all, since it is the self of all
things known and unknown to, and there is no knower to know it except itself. It is the true and the eternal, and there is nothing beside it. As for the empirical ramifications which also exist, the non-dualist says, well they are there, and there is an end to it. We do not know and cannot know why. It is all a contradiction, and yet is actual. Such is the philosophical position of Advaita or non-dualism taken up by Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara.

“A ‘darshana’ is a spiritual perception, a whole view revealed to the soul sense. This soul sight, which is possible only when and where philosophy is lived, is the distinguish mark of a true philosopher... From this inner source the philosopher revels to us the truth of life a truth which mere intellect is unable to discover. The vision is produced almost as naturally as a fruit from flower out of the mysterious centre where all experience is reconciled.

The seeker after truth must satisfy certain essential conditions before, he sets out on his quest. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the first Śūtra of the Vedanta Śūtra makes out that four conditions are essential for any student of philosophy. The first condition is knowledge of the distinction between the eternal and the non-eternal (Nityanityavas tuviveka). The second condition is the subjugation of the desire for the fruits of action either in the present life or a future one (Ihamutraphalabhogavairagya)... third condition, where the student is enjoined to acquire tranquility, self-restraint, renunciation, patience, peace of mind and faith (Samadadisat sampatti)... The desire for mokṣa or release is the fourth condition. (Mumukṣata). The metaphysically minded man who has given up all his desires and trained his mind has only one divouring desire to achieve the end or reach the eternal.”

The Upanishads are regarded as a revival or rather a realisation of something found already in the Vedic hymns. The Bhāgavad-Gītā professes to sum up the teaching of the Upaniṣads. We have in the Epics the meeting point of the religious concep-
tions of the highest import with the early nature worship. To respect the spirit of reverence in man for the ancient makes for the success of the new… .”

Indian philosophical thought has given great importance to values. In India, philosophy is not treated as an abstract theoretical subject. On the other hand, it is regarded as a discipline which is concerned with solving not only the problems of human life but also one which leads one to the attainment of the highest values of human life. Hence, due importance has been given to values since the Vedic days to the latter schools of Indian philosophy. As professor M. Hiriyana writes: “One of the distinguishing features of Indian philosophy is that, as a consequence of the pragmatic view it takes of knowledge, it has throughout its history given the foremost place to values. Indeed they form its central theme; and questions like those of ‘being’ and of ‘knowing’ come in only as a matter of course. It may, on this account, be described as essentially a philosophy of values.” In Indian philosophy, values come within the purview of the puruṣārthas, the values of human life.

VIII

Four values of life, namely, dharma (virtue), artha (wealth), kāma (pleasure), and mokṣa (self-realization) comprise of the puruṣārthas. These four are generally known as caturvarga. According to Indian thought, though the term ‘value’ is primarily used for the ends that are sought, often the means for their attainment are also regarded as values.

Among the four puruṣārthas, the first three generally go together. Out of these three, again, dharma is given preeminence. The three, viz- dharma, artha and kāma are together known as trivarga. Artha means resources for sustaining oneself, one’s relatives and dependents. It stands for economic value. Artha is an instrumental value for it is helpful in satisfying one or other of the diverse needs of life. Kāma stands for the fulfillment of various sensuous desires, which are associated with man’s biological needs. Artha and kāma take into account man as he is, with all his needs and cravings. Their fulfillment forms a part of the good life.
Dharma in general is moral value. The appeal to dharma is restricted to man
alone. While it is virtually unknown to the lower animals, man may be said to be
innately aware of it. In this consists the uniqueness of dharma as compared to the
other two values of artha and kama. The connotation of dharma, however, is vary
wide. It covers both the moral and the spiritual values. Dharma is “the norm which
sustains the universe, the principles of a thing in virtue of which it is what it is.” 10
Dharma constitutes the principles to be observed in man’s daily life and in his rela-
tionships so as to sustain the social order and the physical environment. These prin-
ciples are, according to Yajñavalka, non-injury, sincerity, honest, cleanliness, con-
trol of senses, charity, self-restraint, love and forbearance.

According to the Dharma Śāstras, the cultivation of the virtues enables man to
pursue the fulfillment of his legitimate function. Dharma is the bridge between artha
and kama and the final end of human aspiration, namely, mokṣa.

Mokṣa means liberation from all bondage. It is thirst for absolute freedom
from the mundane ties, which are the sources of worries and sufferings. In the Hindu
system of values mokṣa is the ultimate value, the parama puruṣārtha. It consists in
self-transcendence on the path to become one with divinity. One of the firm faiths in
Indian thought is that there is divinity in man and if the element of divinity is culti-
vated through knowledge (jñāna), good works (karma) and devotion (bhakti), one
can rise to the status of the Divine wherein there is no dualism and no finitude, be-
cause at that state one will be merged with the Ultimate Reality.

Thus, the puruṣārthas occupy central stage in ancient Indian philosophical
thought. They are the paradigms of the Indian value system. Different kinds of human
values are subsumed under the puruṣārthas. Hence, in the discussion on the Indian
concept of value, it is necessary that we lay great emphasis on the discussion about
the puruṣārthas.


4. S.C. Pepper, *the sources of value*; Berkeley University of California, 1958, p.7


8. (Dr. S. Radhakrishnan I.P. vol-1 pp.32-33)
