



THE NORMALIZATION OF KARMA AND MOKSHA IN HINDUISM

Humanities

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ABSTRACT

Hinduism is the oldest religion in this universe and one of the major religions even in modern world originating from the Indian subcontinent. Hinduism is diverse and rich in culture, tradition and rituals, although marked by a virtuous range of textual sources that discuss the prominent themes of philosophy, Hindu believes which emphasize 'humanity', 'spirituality', 'self- realization' and 'the aim of human life'. The present paper mainly is an attempt to do demystify certain aspects of spirituality of situatedness with the coherent of 'Karma' and 'Moksha' with the core teaching of Lord Krishna in the holy book 'Shrimad Bhagwat Gita'. We will argue that these ideas are not only taught to encourage and motivates virtuous behaviors for the sake of future benefits but also the commitment to spirituality and moral discipline with the teaching of yoga. The research article is an attempt to understand the following questions- Are Karma and Moksha all about the concept of the afterlife? Are they possible without reincarnation? How can we normalize and de-mythify the concept of Karma and Moksha? What does Lord Krishna teach in the holy book 'Shrimad Bhagwat Gita' about Karma, Moksha, Yoga and self- realization? Amid the coronavirus as the science worlds and technology is devoted to saving and making human bodies stronger than ever, this approach of Hindu philosophy means to enhance moral education and spiritual development to the door of self-realization with the practice of Yoga.

KEYWORDS

Hinduism, Karma, Moksha, Yoga, Shrimad Bhagwat Gita, Self- Realization

INTRODUCTION

Hinduism and Hindu philosophy have been appreciated since the very inception of civilization. Accumulation of diverse tradition and has neither specific moment of origin nor specific founder. We could mention Hinduism as a way of life instead of religious ritual and faith. It encompasses marked by the range of philosophies and writing included four Vedas- 'Rigveda', 'Samaveda', 'Yajurveda' and 'Atharvaveda' (each Veda has also subclassed into major texts), notable of Smritis (remembered) are the Hindu Epics and Puranas are- consist of the 'Ramayana', 'Mahabharata' and 'the Shrimad Bhagwat Gita' (part of Mahabharata) sometimes referred as Gitopanishad. Hindu philosophy and culture are internally unique and also parallel with the other eastern religious philosophy but partially different from western traditions, for example Hinduism has a lot of religious books, holy books like Vedas, Bhagwat Gita, Brahmins. On the other hand, Christians only follow Bible. Hinduism and Islam both religions believe in the responsibilities of each individual towards others charity, religiousness, forgiveness, compassion is considered to be important qualities to develop. However, Hinduism and Buddhism have differences but they also partially share similarities like Hinduism is not founded by a single person, on the flip side Buddhism is founded by Gautam Buddha. Although, there is the idea of rebirth or samsara (birth/cycle) that forms part of eastern philosophies (Buddhism and Hinduism) does not sit well with some other religious points of view such as Christianity and Islam. Hinduism has a different approach towards faith, tradition and believe when it comes to its principles. It also has a diverse approach; some recommended the four Purusharthas⁽²⁾ (basic principles)-

- 1) Dharma (righteousness, ethics)
- 2) Karma (sensual pleasure)
- 3) Artha (livelihood, wealth)
- 4) Moksha (enlightenment, liberation, freedom from samsara)

It is considered that all the philosophies of Hindu perspectives are lead to humanism, spirituality, self-realization, enlightenment and moral discipline of life. According to the studies in Hinduism, the study of Karma requires careful shifting of the Indian text (generally studied in terms of specific textual epochs- Vedic, Epic and Puranic). This paper deals with the normalization of the concept of Karma and Moksha in Hinduism with the core teaching of Lord Krishan in Shrimad Bhagwat Gita. This holy book is not only confided and meant to the followers of Hindu religion but also to all the followers of humanity and spirituality; and anyone part of our common human heritage around the world.

The Gita is a collection of the insightful conversations that take place between 'Prince Arjuna' and 'Lord Krishna' in the epic Mahabharata. At this point in the battlefield, Prince Arjuna finds himself in a state of dilemma where he has to fight against his gurus (teachers) and cousins. He turns to Lord Krishna in the process of answering his questions reveals to him the nature of consciousness, the self and the universe and instructs him towards self- realization.

As the concept of Karma yoga and Moksha is discussed in detail in the Bhagwat Gita which historically was an offshoot of the Upanishadic and Vedanta philosophies. In recent years western scholars have taken a keen interest in the concept of karma with some comparing karma and rebirth to Christian idea of evil, while others look for similarities in Western philosophy or discuss the plausibility of karma from a Western viewpoint; yet others disavow rebirth while accepting karma.^{[3][4]}

Naturalized Karma and Moksha can be focused on the idea of spirituality and self- realization or we could say, considered as the knowledge to know the real meaning of life and it will lead the human race towards the path of spirituality and humanity, and it brings our morality into the light from the darkness. Several types of research have been done on karma, yoga and Moksha in Hinduism. So, the objective of the article is to reveal and understand the concept of Karma and Moksha with a normalization point of view instead of various behaviour forsake of future benefits and reincarnation of human. The pieces of literature which have been reviewed and consulted for the accomplishment of the research are the the-original text of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, "The Bhagwat Gita As it is" by A.C Bhakti Vedanta Swami Prabhupala (it is a translation and commentary of BG for each verse, the book includes Devanagari script, word for word Sanskrit English meaning and English translation, first published in 1968 in English by Macmillan and now available in nearly 60 languages) and "Bhagavad Gita: The Song of God" by Swami Mukund Ananda originally published in 2013. "Bhagavad Gita: Sri Krishna's illuminations on the perfection of yoga" with commentary by Swami B.G. Narasingha, published in 2017" Along with this several scholarly articles have also been reviewed hidden consulted.

DISCUSSION

The concept of karma and evolution of the Theory in Hinduism

The very first question that arrived in the mind is what is karma? Does karma have types? What is the law of karma? The word karma has

originated from the Sanskrit word: कर्म which means 'action' or 'work'. It derives from the root verb 'Kri' which means 'to do' or 'to act or react'. According to Swami Maheshwarananda, "Everything that we have ever thought, spoken, done or caused is karma, as is also that which we think, speak or do this every moment".^[1] By the evolution of philosophical term 'Karma' gains a more philosophy weight when the consequences of action are attached to it. Thus, karma gains moral or ethical dimensions. It also considered that sometimes it takes the flavour of faith and destiny. However, Karma is not directly linked to faith and destiny it could be explained with the practice of once individual's methods of creating your own destiny, action by action (goodness, sin). Some said the karma is the 'law of nature' the reactions of our actions come from nature itself. Nature is like a mirror if you smile at it, it smiles right back. The purification of our mind, intentions lead us to the path of spirituality. Sometimes this concept is explained to some different metaphors that we all heard in our daily life for example- "As you sow so shall you reap" these all describes actions of karma and defined 'that is karma'.

The idea of Karma first appears in the oldest Hindu text the Rigveda. Human beings are such to produce karma in four ways: Through thoughts, Through right attitude words, Through actions, we perform ourselves and Through actions, other perform under our instructions^[5] Hindu scriptures have their perspectives several views exists in Hinduism some extended today and some mythological or historically some have views like, 'the creator ishwara (Lord or supreme self in Hinduism) rules the world through the law of karma'.^[6]

The Markandeya Purana (is a Sanskrit text of Hinduism, and one of the eighteen major puranas) states the Shani (Saturn) (is one of nine heavenly objects in Hindu astrology) is the son of the sun god, surya (the sun and the solar deity in Hinduism and by his wife Chhaya shadow). Saturn is cold and dry because it is an internal core structure made of internally, he is pure, it also states that he was entrusted with the role by the 'Lord of karma and justice' by the trimurti^[7] (or trideva is a triple deity of supreme divinity in Hinduism). The subject is 'action' to understand the concept let us turn to teaching of Bhagwat Gita: -

Those in the mode of goodness worship the celestial gods; those in the mode of passion worship the yakshas and rakshasas; those in the mode of ignorance worship ghost and sprites.

Here Krishan instructs arjuna on the karma of three types.

1. First, that is satvika, the one done in the mode of goodness,
2. Second, rajasi, performed in the mode of passion and
3. Third, tamasi, the one done in the mode of ignorance.

Now a common question is how it is possible to do anything without attachment or is detachment possible? It seems probably unlogical, detachment from desires, emotions, family, friends and different situation or stage of life although controlling unusual and wrong desires is worthful. In Gita Lord Krishan instructs yoga to practice to achieve a supreme stage of consciousness.

Yoga in Sanskrit: (योग) is a group of physical, mental and spiritual practices or disciplines that originated in ancient India, aimed at controlling (yoking) and stilling the mind, and recognizing the detached 'witness-consciousness' as untouched by the activities of the mind and mundane suffering (Duhkha). There are a board variety of the schools of yoga, practices and goals in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism^[8] and traditional forms and modern methods of yoga are practiced worldwide.^[9] The term yoga in the western world the term "Yoga" in the western world often denotes a modern form of hatha yoga and a posture based physical fitness, stress-relief and relaxation technique in contrast with traditional yoga, which focuses on meditation and release from worldly attachment.^[10]

The traditional view of yoga is defined as providing willpower, settling the mind, resting in detached awareness.

Be steadfast in the performance of your duty, O Arjuna, abandoning attachment to success and failure. Such equanimity is called Yog.
(English commentary on chapter 2, verse 48)

One who prudently practices the science of work without attachment can get rid of both good and bad reactions in this life itself.

Therefore, strive for Yog, which is the art of working skillfully in proper consciousness.
(English commentary on chapter 2, verse 50)

When it particularly comes to the Hindu perspective, Hinduism emphasis on Four types of yoga: -

1. Karma yoga
2. Bhakti yoga
3. Jnana yoga
4. Raja Yoga

Karma yoga often called karma Marga (path) the classical spiritual path bases on the "action of yoga" to the liberation or enlightenment. According to the Bhagavad Gita, selfless service to the right cause and like-minded others, with the right feeling and right attitude, is a form of worship and spirituality.^[11]

One cannot achieve freedom from karmic reactions by merely abstaining from work, nor can one attain perfection of knowledge by mere physical renunciation.

(English commentary on chapter 3, verse 4)

Bilimoria states, "karma yoga does not mean forfeiture of emotions or desires, rather it means action driven by "equanimity, balance", with dispassion, disinterest", avoiding "one sadness, fear, craving, favouring self or one group or clan, self-pity, self-aggrandizement or any form of extreme reactivity".^[12] The consciousness yoga provide lead to selfless service with the ability to choose the right attitude and behaviour in every situation in the form of worship and spirituality. According to chapter five, of The Bhagwat Gita, both sannyasa (renunciation, monastic life) and karma yoga are means to liberation. Between the two, it recommends karma yoga, stating that anyone who is a dedication karma yogi neither hates nor desires, and therefore such as person is the "eternal renouncer".^[13]

Hence, the various dimensions of karma yoga are: The Duties. A karma yoga acts and perform his or her moral duties whatsoever that be as a teacher, student, mother or banker. Hence, the various dimensions of karma yoga are: the duties oriented, the detachment from the result or absence of desire from reward, do selfless work and calmness and equanimity under distant circumstances of the life event. Lord Krishna gives two tools for achieving this karma yoga- "Vairagya" and "Abhyasa". In Vairagya you 'train your mind' to be steady not once attain then it is very important to maintain your mind in a steady-state, and Abhyasa plays a key role and one can practice this, again and again, one can achieve 'the steady mind' by applying karma yoga. Molla and Krishna, 2006 states that "By applying Karma yoga in a practical work the forces of the companies and dutifulness could be increased and there will stress-free environment in the companies.

Moksha

What is Moksha? Is the Hinduism concept of Moksha possible without reincarnation?

In philosophy, naturalism is a theory which purpose is that everything is apart of the natural world and that everything can indeed be explained within the context of the methodology of the natural science, including ethical theories. Naturalistic ethics, therefore, suppose that 'good' and 'right' can be defined through reference to a natural object. This approach aims to prove that ethical statements are empirical or positive and must be understood in terms of the natural propensities of human beings, without mysterious intuitions or divine help.

Moksha (in Sanskrit: मोक्ष) also called Vimoksha, Vimukti, and Nirvana is a term in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Shikism for various forms of enlightenment, emancipation, liberation and release.^[14] Although, the term 'Nirvana', is the more common in Buddhism while Moksha is more prevalent in Hinduism. As previously mentioned in Hindu traditions, Moksha is one of four concepts of Purusharthas (along with the Dharma, Karma, Artha). Different cultures and religious have different ideas on Moksha, same as different studies have different theories and philosophies. Moksha or enlightenment have been always the concept of discussion or we can say the concept of conflicts sometimes also. Scholars provide various explanations for the meaning of Moksha. Some believe Moksha is a concept associated with samsara (birth-rebirth cycle) like Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism beliefs consider the concept of reincarnation and also consider the samsara as the cycle of suffering. To release from the suffering the idea of Moksha or enlightenment is considered as the state of Mukti in various Indian religious traditions.

The idea of Rebirth (samsara) is ultimately parallel with the ones balance sheet of Karma. The production of 'Punya' (merits, goodness) and 'Pap' (demerits, sin) determined one's birth-rebirth, the conception of the afterlife; where a person stayed in heaven or hell then return to earth where samsara cycle continues or attain Moksha, Mukti and Liberation. The concept of Moksha appears much later in ancient Indian literature also starting in the middle of Upanishad- 'Starting with the middle Upanishad era, moksha-or equivalent terms such as mukti and kaivalya-is a major theme in many Upanishads. For example, Sarasvati Rahasya Upanishads, one of several Upanishads of the bhakti school of Hinduism, starts out with prayers to goddess Sarasvati. She is the Hindu goddess of knowledge, learning and creative arts.^[15]

When it comes to the evolution of the concept. Moksha in Hinduism, Klaus Klostermaier suggested implies a setting- free of hitherto fettered faculties, a removing of obstacles to an unrestricted life, permitting a person to be more truly a person in the full sense; the concept presumes an unused human potential of creativity, compassion and understanding which had been blocked and shut out. Moksha is more than liberation from a life-rebirth cycle of suffering (samsara); the Vedantic school separates this into two: jiyamukti

(liberation in this life) and Videhamukti (liberation after death). Moksha in this life includes psychological liberation from adhyasa (fears besetting one's life) and avidya (ignorance or anything that is not true knowledge).^[17] According to D. Ingalls, it is a state of perfection. The concept was seen as a natural goal beyond dharma. Moksha, in the epics and incident literature of Hinduism, is seen as achievable by the same techniques necessary to practice dharma. Self-discipline is the path to dharma, moksha is self-discipline that is so perfect that it becomes unconscious, second nature. Dharma is thus a means to moksha.^[18]

To the soul who is aspiring for perfection in yoga, work without attachment is said to be the means; to the sage who is already elevated in yoga, tranquility in meditation is said to be the means.

(English commentary on chapter 6, verse 3)

Again, here Lord Krishna describes Yoga, the path of the enlightenment or liberation. As we can or ones can attain the supreme of consciousness an awareness to the concept of yoga and yoga is mentioned as more preferred for the state of enlightenment. Raja yoga-like other forms of yoga it also aims to control and clarification the negative waves of mind the path is considered to be a complete scientific approach of circularization raja yoga is a practice of cycling or retraining the thought waves through systematic control of body and mind culminating in meditation and the super consciousness state. Of ancient origin, the discipline of raja yoga is considered to be some of the most powerful techniques that are available today to combat the tremendous stress and strain of modern living.

In this way, the yogi controls his mind, withdrawing it from material desire. He then achieves supreme peace and liberation from material existence and attains my abode.

(English commentary on chapter 6, verse 15)

Self-realization

Self-realization is an expression used in western philosophy, psychology, spirituality and in dharmic religious or South Asian religions (religions that originated in the Indian subcontinent). Merriam webster's dictionary defines, "self-realization as fulfillment by oneself of the possibilities of one's character or personality".^[21] In Hinduism, self-realization (atma-jnana or at a bodha) is knowledge of witness consciousness, the true self which is separate from delusion and identification with the mental and material phenomenon. In Gita, lord Krishan clarifies to arjuna ultimate science of the universe and reveals knowledge of the self to him lot Krishna best owes him. With the gift of self-realization in chapter six he describes that,

The yogi who is self-satisfied due to his knowledge and realization, fixed in his spiritual nature and in control of his sense, sees dirt, stones and gold equally.

(English commentary on chapter 6, verse 7)

Those who have subdued the mind and are calm, attain realization of Paramatta (super consciousness). For such person heat and cold, happiness and distress and honor and dishonor are all the same.

(English commentary on chapter 6, verse 8)

Jnana is the Sanskrit word for 'knowledge' and 'wisdom'. Jnana yoga is the path of attaining knowledge of true reality through the practice of meditation and self-inquiry. Jnana yoga is well defined as "awareness of absolute consciousness" and picture of self-study. Swami Sivananda described it as "Jnana yoga, or the signs of the self, is not the subject that can be understood study, reasoning, discussion or argument is the most difficult of all the science". It is also considered that it teaches the 'oneness' or 'unity of the self'. Hence, yoga is an expression to attain the path of spirituality and spirituality in direct proportion to self-realization. Karma yoga the yoga of action purifiers are intentions the journal yoga the yoga of knowledge gives us the understanding and realization of self and a commitment to spirituality and moral discipline the moral education and spiritual development on the path of self-realization on the other hand rather yoga the yoga of meditation is all about the knowledge of self-realization.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we can say that the core teaching of the Gita is much more than just philosophy. We have studied, karma and moksha are the commitment of spirituality and moral discipline, purifications of intentions and the knowledge of true reality or self-inquiry, which leads one to the states of awareness or absolute consciousness. As yoga

can provide a calmness to the mind and soul, which is scientifically can be defined as a merit for conscious and healthy mental health. The normalization core teachings of Hinduism could be practiced in modern living to the stress-free state of the tenancy. Different approaches towards faith, traditions, beliefs and principles of culture and religion can also be used in practice filled out considering it more than a supernatural concept. The doctrine point of view of karma evolves as a moral discipline and reincarnation evolve into enlightenment as spirituality for the sake of present life emphasis on the purification of the mind which is the door to self-realization. The philosophy practice towards the justice of karma is directly linked to moral behaviour which could generally be related to the healthy fear of the phrase, "What goes around comes around". With the normalization of moksha, we have learned that many teaching believe moksha is a concept associated with samsara (the cycle of birth-rebirth) but it can also be used as the path of enlightenment; joining with the assistance of yoga it proclaims that there is a common self or common consciousness in all. The ones or unity of the self it could be practiced everywhere whether workplace or home, in all circumstances of life and requires only the changed metal attitude and angle of vision. Both karma and moksha with the help of yoga provide the path of spirituality, consciousness, detached awareness and purification of the inner self which gives the knowledge of self-realization we could say that moksha, karma and self-realization are interrelated. Each one helps u to climb the ladder on the path of self-analysis, the reflection of inner peace and inquiry to our inner self and through this practice we learn of the essential divine and the unity of life.

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