The concept of time in Sanatan Dharm

Sanatan Dharm includes the concept of cyclical time through the doctrine of 'yugs' or cosmic ages. In the successive yugs people gradually descend from an advanced spiritual state in Satyug to a degenerated one in Kaliyug. The yugs are vast time cycles of universal creation (Sarg), preservation and dissolution (Pralay) repeated eternally. This is mirrored in the existence of Bramha, the creator, who lives for one hundred Bramha years. A day of Brahma's life is considered to be made up of one Mahayug, which consists of 4 yugs: Satyug, Tretayug, Dwaparyug and Kaliyug. At the end of a Mahayug (after 4,320,000 years) there is a universal disaster when everything will be destroyed by the Samvartak (cosmic fire). A day of Bramha is followed by a night of equal length, after which a new Satyug emerges. The ratios between the yugs are 4:3:2:1 in terms of duration, kaliyug lasting the least, i.e. 432,000 human years. With the beginning of a new Satyug, the original state of purity of creation is restored, and the cycle restarts.

Yug

Sarg – creation of the universe

Pralay – dissolution of the universe

Preservation – the universe exists for 100 Bramha years

One day of Bramha

Satyug

Satyug is characterised by virtue and wisdom, and there is practically no ignorance or vice. This is why it is also known as the golden age. In this age people lived up to 100,000 years. It was very suitable to attain Moksh because people could perform prolonged meditation. Satyug lasts for 1,728,000 human years.

Treta Yug

In Treta Yug, vices are introduced. It is also known as the silver age and people lived up to 10,000 years. Moksh can be attained by performing yagn--great sacrifices. This yug lasts for 1,296,000 years.

Dwapar Yug

In Dwapar Yug there is the greatest decline in virtue and goodness, evil increases. It is also known as the copper age and people lived up to 1,000 years. In Dwapar Yug, Moksh can be more easily attained by bhakti yog. This yug lasts for 864,000 years.

Kaliyug

In Kaliyug there is an abundance of struggle and strife for people who perform good deeds. Ignorance, vice and corruption are dominant most of the time and true virtue is practically non-existent. It is also known as the Iron Age, and people live up to 100 years. In this age, Moksh can be attained by bhakti yog. In Kaliyug, evil peaks to such a point that in its final years, the whole Earth gets destroyed through *Samvartak,* the cosmic fire*,* annihilating all evil and preparing for another Satyug after a night of Bramha. Kaliyug therefore ends as the whole world is destroyed through fires, floods, wars or other cataclysmic events. Then the process begins again. Kaliyug lasts for 432,000 years. The present Kaliyug started in what corresponds to the year 3102 BCE; 2010 CE therefore corresponds to year 5112 of the present Kaliyug.

The concept of time within Sanatan Dharm is that of an eternal cycle within the illusion (Maya).

Followers of Sanatan Dharm strive to attain Moksh – oneness with Reality.