CHAPTER - V
Ethics of Pūrva Mīmāmsa
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Introduction

‘Mimāmsa’ etymologically means ‘enquiry’ or ‘ascertainment’. Mimamsa as a system of ancient Indian thought stands for ‘determination of the meaning of the Veda’. The object of Mimamsa, as the name suggests, is to interpret and explain the meaning of the Vedic texts.

As we know, Mantras, Brdhmanas and Aranyakas constitute the Veda. Mantra or Samhita part contains the formulae which have to be recited at the time of sacrifices. Brdhmanas are the elaborate rules to be observed and the procedural details to be followed in the sacrifices. Aranyakas, especially their end parts i.e., Upanisads contain the philosophical speculations. The former two are together called Karmakanda or Action-part as they chiefly deal with the ritual activity. Upanisads are called Jñanakanda or Knowledge-part, as they deal with the philosophical understanding of reality and knowledge.

In the post-Vedic period, efforts were made by the orthodox Vedic schools to collect the fragmentary Vedic doctrines and to systematically interpret them for a unified understanding of the Vedas. These efforts gave rise to the Sutra style of literature. The Sutras are aphorisms, cryptical in nature, to facilitate learning them by heart and easy recitation. The foundational works of all Indian philosophical systems are in the Sutra form.

The Sutra period is the most productive period in the ancient Indian literature. Different schools of Indian thought systematically compiled their fundamental views in Sutra form. In the Vedic tradition, elaborate treatises were produced, dealing with various aspects of the Veda. Srauta Sutras, Grhya Sutras and Dharma Sutras were
compiled in different Vedic schools. In this period, Indian science and crafts have taken new dimensions. This was a period of high intellectual activity in the ancient India. Scholars on Indology place this period between 6th and 2nd centuries Before Christ.

To this period belong Mimamsa Sutras of Jaimini and Vendanta Sutras of Badarayana. Jaimini Sutras deal with judicial interpretation of Brdhmanas and Vendanta Sutras or Brahma Sutras of Badarayana deal with interpretation of Upanisads. Both these systems share the name ‘Mimamsa’ for both deal with interpretation of the Veda. They together make the Mimamsa system in full. However, as Jaimini Sutras deal with the karmakhanda, the former part of the Veda, his system is called Karma Mimamsa or Purva Mimamsa or simply Mimamsa. As the Brahma Sutras of Badarayana deal with the later part of the Veda i.e., the Upanisads, his system is known as Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta. Though both these systems claim their fidelity to the basic teaching of the Veda, they differ on certain important metaphysical and epistemological issues. These differences make them independent schools of thought, notwithstanding their adherence to the Veda. This is due to the inherent inconsistency in the philosophical positions presupposed by Brdhmanas and Upanisads on which Mimamsa and Vendanta are based respectively. We would undertake this issue when we deal with the philosophical foundations of Mimamsa in detail.

However, Jaimini and Badarayana refer to each other in their Sutras. This could be taken as evidence for the view that, both the works are redacted simultaneously. But Mimamsa as a science of rituals might have developed much earlier than Vedanta as a philosophical system. However, as Prof. Keith rightly observes, “....it is not impossible that the redaction of the two Sutras was contemporaneous, despite the earlier development of Mimamsa, the probability surely lies in favour of the view that the Mimamsa Sutra was redacted first and served as a model for other schools”.¹

Origin of *Pūrva Mīmāṃsa*

*Mīmāṃsa* discussions regarding the true meaning of the *Vedic* texts were traditionally much prior to the actual redaction of *Jaimini Sūtras*. This fact is evident from the text itself. Jaimini himself refers to many views of opponents concerning different interpretations of the *Vedic* passages. Indeed, the discussions on rituals are germinal in the *Bṛdhmanas* which aim at translation of *hymns* of *Veda* into ritual actions. *Bṛdhmanas* lay down details of sacrifices and explain the ceremonial procedures. In the age of *Bṛdhmanas* sacrifices are developed into a complex system. The *Upaniṣadic* period witnessed a shift of emphasis from sacrifices to speculations. The philosophical spirit found its expression in the *Upaniṣadic* literature pushing sacrifices to background. This might have caused an apparent breakdown in the ritualistic tradition.

In the post-*Upaniṣadic* times, there was a need to enliven the tradition which has already suffered degeneration. The *Sruti* literature is the direct outcome of the situation. The *Srūtis* are digests of old rules and regulations which are scattered in the *Veda*. The compilers of *Srūtis* had to systematically interpret the *Vedic* texts in all aspects. This activity was carried on in the ancient *Vedic* schools. As part of the activity, those *Vedic* passages are collected, studied and discussed which have bearing on *Dharma* or duty. This accounts for the origin of Mīmamsa system the main objective of which is to interpret and understand the *Vedic* maxims with reference to *Dharma*. Jaimini, for the first time, compiled systematically the rules of interpretation in his *Mīmamsa Sūtras*.

Besides, there is another important reason involved in the origin of *Pūrva Mīmāṃsa* as a distinct philosophical system. In the *Upaniṣadic* and post-*Upaniṣadic* ages, different philosophical speculations gained ground. Some of these philosophical views question the very presuppositions underlying the practice of *Vedic* sacrifices. If these challenges are not properly met with, the practice of sacrifices would be severely endangered. So, Mīmamsa had to deal with those challenges and establish fundamental assumptions underlying its
adherence to Vedic sacrifices. This is one of the chief objective Purva Mimamsa set for itself. Jaimini not only advanced philosophical arguments for the purpose but also formulated all his Sutras in the form of arguments. Following Jaimini, later Mimamsakas made significant contribution to the treasure of Indian thought with commendable philosophical sophistication. In the process of theoretically defending the ritual orthodoxy, Mimamsa advanced certain doctrines which are extremely stunning even for a modern mind. Before we go into critical understanding of Mimamsa doctrines, a brief history of Mimamsa literature is in order.

Mimamsa Literature

Jaimini is supposed to be the founder of Mimamsa system, despite the fact that Mimamsa as a tradition was there much before Jaimini. However, Jaimini Sutras is the first systematic compilation of Mimamsa doctrines. Mimamsa Sutra has twelve chapters divided into sixty padas. It contains 894 adhikaranas or discussions and 2621 Sutras. The later literature of Mimamsa is nothing but elaborate commentary on the doctrines propounded by Jaimini in his Sutra. Nothing in certain is known about the author. Sama Veda contains JaiminiyaSamhita and JaiminiyaBrahmana. From this it is supposed that Jaimini is rather name of a clan. Mahabharata recognizes Jaimini not as author of Mimamsa Sutras but as an ancient Vedic sage. It is also probable that Mimamsa Sutras are compiled by a Vedic school the founder of which is Jaimini. However, Vedanta Sutras and later philosophical works recognize Jaimini as a philosopher. Panchatantra describes the death of Jaimini, the founder of Mimamsa as caused by a wild elephant. Though the exact date of Mimamsa Sutra is still doubtful, we can safely suppose that Mimamsa Sutra was redacted in its present form somewhere around second century B.C.

The later literature of Mimamsa mentions a number of commentators on Mimamsa Sutra. The works of those early commentators are not available. The earliest commentary
extant is that of Šabarāswāmin, which is a comprehensive commentary dealing with all the aspects of Mimamsa Sutra in detail. This work stands as the basis for all the later works on Mimamsa. Šabarā refers to an early commentator Upavarsa whose work is known as Vritti. Upavarsa is known in Mimamsa tradition as 'Vrittikāra' while Šabarā is referred to as ‘Bhāsyakāra’. Upavarsa is supposed to have introduced the epistemological discussion of all the means of knowledge in the Mimamsa literature. It is also possible that Vritti of Upavarsa also dealt with metaphysical issues involved in the Sutra. However, his work is not extant in its full form, except in fragmentary references, to support the view. In addition to Upavarsa, Mimamsa literature also refers to a few other commentators. Nydyaratndkara and Kasika mention Bhartrmitra while Slōkavārttika mentions Bhavadesa, Ṣdstradɪpɪka mentions another commentator by name Hari. The works of these commentators of Jaimini are not available. While there is a view that Bhavadesa and Upavarsa are two names of the same person, it is not admitted for Slōkavārttika mentions them as different individuals. Mādhavacharya of 14th century also commented on Mimamsa Sutra. But he comments on each Adhikarana not on each Sūtra while Sabarabhdsya is a full fledged commentary on each Sutra of each Adhikarana or discussion.

After Šabarā, there was a bifurcation in the Mimamsa tradition. Two separate schools were founded by two commentators on Bhāsy, Kumārīla Bhatta and Prabhakara Mis'ra. Kumdrila and Prabhakara slightly differ on certain issues but these differences do not affect the fundamental maxims of Mimamsa. Kumdrila exerts more freedom in his commentary on Bhāsy, differing from the original at many places and substituting the original arguments. He is also known for his complex style of writing. He uses compound

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2 Šabarā is supposed to have lived in the first century B.C. Cf. Jha, ganganath, Prabhākara school of Purva Mimamsa, P. 7.
sentences frequently and sometimes a sentence is as big as a paragraph. He has a remarkable power of argumentation and presentation which makes him, beyond doubt, one of the most outstanding philosophers in Indian History. Kumarila is known, in the tradition, as the preceptor of Prabhakara. Prabhakara might have brought out his work on Bhdsya earlier than Kumarila. We find Kumarila criticizing certain views of Prabhakara whereas Prabhakara is hardly found criticizing any views of Kumarila. Prabhakara's style of writing is lucid and simple compared to that of Kumarila.

The celebrate commentary of Kumarila on Bhdsya is in three parts: S-lokavarttika, Tantravarttika and Tuptika. Kumarila is thus known as the Varttikakara. S-lokavarttika is a voluminous commentary on the first pāda of first chapter. Tantravarttika deals with remaining three pādas of first chapter and two more chapters. Tuptika is a brief commentary on the remaining nine chapters. Kumarila allotted the first two parts of his commentary to deal with the first three chapters for they are the most significant philosophically. In S-lokavarttika and Tantravarttika Kumarila establishes the Mimamsa polemics and attacks heterodox systems of Indian philosophy with outstanding philosophical eminence. Kumarila lived in the 7th century A.D. and a senior contemporary of Sankara and Prabhakara.

Kumarila's S-lokavarttika is commented upon by Parthasarathi Miśra in his Hyayaratnākara and by Sucharita Miśra in his Kasika. Tantravarttika was exposed by Someśwara in his Nyāya Sudha which is otherwise known as Rāṇaka. Mandana Miśra, also a pupil of Kumarila, was the author of Vidhiviveka which emphasizes the significance of Vedic injunctions and he also wrote Mimāmsanukramani, a summary of Bhasya. Venkateswara Diksita commented on Tuptika in his Varttikābharaṇa.

Prabhakara commented on Śābara Bhdsya in his Brhati. Prabhakara in his work

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3 Mandana Misra, in the later literature, is identified with Suresswara who was a disciple of Samkarācharya. He is also known as a pupil of Kumarila though not for certain.
closely follows the Bhāsyakāra in a simple style and provides careful elucidation wherever it is necessary. *Brhati* was commented on by Salikanatha in his *Rjuvimala*. Salikanatha exposes the views of Prabhakara in another work called *Prakaraṇapanchikā* which is a valuable compendium of the foundational views of Prabhakara school.

Other important works of *Mīmāṃsakas* include *Śāstradīpikā* of Parthasārathi Miśra. Samkara Bhatta commented on *Śāstradīpikā* in his *Mimamsa Sāra Sangraha*. Vacaspati Miśra wrote *Nydyakanjika* which is an exposition on *Vidhi Viveka* of Mandana Miśra. Khandadeva is another *Mīmāṃsaka* of 17th century known for his *Bhattadīpika* and *Mīmāṃsa Kaustubha*. *Mīmāṃsanyāyaviveka* of Bhavanatha Miśra, *Subhodinī* of Ramēswara Sūri, *Bhāttacintāmaṇī* of Gaga Bhatta, *Mīmāṃsanyāyaprakāśa* of Apadeva, *Arthasaṅgraha* of Laugakṣi Bhaskara are of considerable importance. It is interesting to see how the concept of God alien to original Mīmāṃsa was brought into the system by Venkatanātha, a Vedāntin, in his work *Śesvara Mīmāṃsa*.

To a western reader it might be surprising to know about these commentaries over commentaries. But this has an important story to tell about the Indian philosophical situation. After the crystalization of Indian thought into major philosophical systems, philosophy is studied in the Brahminical schools of each system. After the study, the students had to elaborate the doctrines of their preceptors or predecessors taking some source books. This resulted in the elaborate commentaries over other commentaries and this limited the scope of freedom for them. At a later stage, there was hardly anything for them to contribute except supplementing the original doctrines with a few innovative arguments and thus continuing the tradition. This is not to say that there was no philosophical development as such. In fact, some of the commentaries tackled the arguments from opponent schools with more vigour than their source books and sometimes the original themes are thoroughly modified to suit the new challenges. The point, however, is that Indian philosophical progress suffered certain limitations though
it was never in a state of suspended animation.

Now, let us understand the foundations of Mīmāṃsā philosophy in general and of its ethics in particular. While doing so, we have to bear in mind the fact that Ethics in Indian thought was always structurally intertwined with Metaphysical and Epistemological issues. It is not possible to locate ethics outside the metaphusical and epistemological commitments of each system. We cannot understand the former without carefully examining the latter.

**Foundations of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā**

The central theme of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is the Vedic sacrifices and right interpretation of the Vedic texts with reference to the sacrifices. On the face of it, it involves only exegetical analysis and as such has not got anything to do with philosophy. It is also important to note that Kautilya in his Arthasastra refers to Mīmāṃsā not as philosophical system but as included in theology (Trayi). He refers to Sāṃkhya, Nyāya (with its old name ‘Yoga’) and Carvaka as systems of philosophy (Anvikṣiki). Further, Kautilya differentiates philosophy, as a logical investigation of the world, from the scriptures which deal with non-worldly objects too. As both systems of Mīmāṃsā are based on scriptures, they don not find place among philosophical systems. Another reason for this discrimination could be the non-secular nature of Mīmāṃsā, and Buddhism is no exception.

Even some of the western scholars also express the same attitude. William M.M., for example, refuses to recognize Pūrva Mīmāṃsā as a philosophical system. "....for it is in real truth not a system of philosophy, but rather of ritualism. It does not concern itself, like other systems, with investigation into the nature of soul, mind or matter, but with the solutions of doubts and discrepancies in regard to the Vedic texts caused by the..."
discordant explanation of opposite schools".\(^5\)

This attitude certainly undermines the valuable contribution of *Pūrva Mīmāṃsa* to the Indian philosophy. Once we look into the significance of Mīmāṃsa doctrines and their place in the Indian thought, we will know why the remarks of William M.M. need not be over-emphasized. Given the peculiar position of Mīmāṃsakas, they cannot be denied to be philosophers. While it is possible to read non-secular motives underlying their doctrines, we should not overlook the fact that *Mīmāṃsakas* are no less interested in philosophical discussions than any other philosopher of any other system. Indeed, *Pūrva Mīmāṃsa* produced some of the greatest minds of high philosophical eminence in the history of Indian thought. Mīmāṃsa deserves the status of philosophy, which is rightly attributed to it in Indian tradition. After all, it is one of the most significant systems of traditional Indian philosophy and philosophy is not extraneous to the structure of Mīmāṃsa system.

Now, let us see what exactly makes Mīmāṃsa a respectable system of philosophy despite its non-philosophical objective of interpreting the *Vedic* texts. Why does Mīmāṃsa undertake interpretation of *Vedic* passages? The purpose behind the exegetical work is 'to know what is *Dharma*'. The very first *Sutra* of Jaimini Sutras explains that the object of Mīmāṃsa is 'enquiry into *Dharma*'.\(^6\) This explicit object of Mīmāṃsa is the nucleus of all its philosophical endeavours. Jaimini defines *Dharma* as 'the object qualified by an injunction'.\(^7\) *Dharma* or duty is what is expressed by an injunction. Further, Jaimini claims the *Veda* to be the only source for knowing *Dharma*. The only authoritative injunctions are the *Vedic* injunctions. This claim presupposes the absolute authority of the *Veda*. Hence, rationalization of the *Vedic* ritual injunctions invariably involves establishing the absolute authority of the *Veda*. This is the position which *Mīmāṃsakas*
vigorously attempt to defend philosophically. In the process of proving the validity of Veda as absolute and self-sufficient, Mīmāṃsakas had to grapple with certain philosophical doctrines of other schools which question such validity.

Jaimini refuses all other modes of apprehension, except Sabda or Authority, as incapable of acquiring knowledge of Dharma or duty. Sources of knowledge like perception and inference can give us the knowledge of sensuous things which come into contact with senses. So, they are capable of exposing only those things that can come into contact with senses. Dharma is, however, a supersensuous thing and as such cannot come into contact with senses. Here, Jaimini makes a difference between 'is' and 'ought'. ‘Ought’ is different in its nature from the external objects. It is an abstract notion which can be known only through the teaching of the Veda. As Perception, Inference etc., can manifest only whatever exists in the sense of ‘is’, but Dharma, in the form of ‘ought’, cannot be known through these sources.

In connection with the above position of Jaimini, Vrittikara indulges in the investigation of sources of knowledge. He is followed by later commentators who take the epistemological discussion to further heights. Their interest in these discussions appears to be negative, in the sense that they are interested in showing how these Pramāṇas cannot be sources for knowing Dharma. However, we come across the positive epistemological polemics of Mīmāṃsa, when the validity of the Veda is argued for. Kumārila and Prabhakara differ as to the number of Pramāṇa. According to Prabhakara, Perception, Inference, Verbal Testimony, Anology and Presumption are the five valid sources of knowledge. Kumārila accepts the five and adds non-cognition as a separate Pramāṇa while Prabhakara includes it in Inference. Both of them reject Possibility and Rumour as Pramāṇas.

Jaimini explains that Sabda is the exclusive source of knowing duty. Only Sabda can

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*Ibid., I. i. 4.*
express an injunction. ‘Sabda’in its wider sense means 'sound' and in a narrower sense used to mean ‘words’. The character of imposing duty belongs only to words. Only words are capable of compelling one to action. Other sources of knowledge are passive, in the sense that they are not capable of expression norms of human conduct. On the other hand, words are endowed with the potency to drive one for action. Sabda as a Pramāṇa or a source of valid knowledge, refers to knowledge derived from words. Mimamsa again distinguishes between human assertions and the assertions of the Veda which are devoid of any author, human or divine. According to Jaimini, it is the assertions of the Veda which are absolutely authoritative, eternal and self-sufficient. Hence, in order to establish the Veda as the exclusive source of Dharma, the eternity, the self-sufficiency and the absolute authority of the Veda should be first established.

**Theory of Eternal Sound**

The Veda is an instance of Sabda Pramāṇa i.e., words as a source of valid knowledge. A word is nothing but a sound used to denote an object of apprehension. The eternity of the Veda thus implies the eternity of words. Mimamsa, as it claims the eternity of the Veda, argues for the eternity of sound in general and of words in particular.

Mimamsa holds that sound is a quality of ākāśa or ther. Sound exists eternally though its apprehension stands in need of some manifesting agency. In the case of word sounds, the manifesting agency is the human utterance. Utterance manifests a word in the consciousness of the listeners. Words have no production or destruction but eternally existing and all pervading. Sound as a quality of ākāśa, subsists in it. As ther is eternal and all-pervading, sound, as its quality, is also eternal and all-pervading. To understand the peculiarity of Mimamsa theory of sound, we may refer to the theories of sound held by other schools, in this connection.

Indian thought offers distinct views on sound and its nature. For Samkhya, sound is a quality of tangible substances and subsists in them like color, smell etc. and liable to
manifestation. Vaiśeṣika takes sound to be a quality of ākāśa and is liable to production and destruction. Thus it is a non-eternal quality of the ether. Buddhists argue that sound does not subsist in anything. It is rather a production of vibrations in the elements and thus subject to production and destruction. Nyāya, following Vaiśeṣika, treats sound to be a quality of the ether and thus subject to production and destruction. So, it is non-eternal as opposed to the Mīmāṃsā view that it is eternal. Though Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā share the view that sound is a quality of the ether, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika differs from Mīmāṃsā regarding its eternal character.

The significant discussion on the nature of sound in Indian philosophy boils down to the debate between Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya. It is interesting to see that the Naiyāyikas, despite their overt veneration for the scriptures, are the ardent opponents of eternity of the Veda. Though they explicitly argue for the authority of the Veda, they do so on quite different grounds. We will later see how the so called arguments in favour of the Vedic authority are nothing but mere lip-service to please the orthodoxy.

Gautama, the founder of Nyāya, objects the eternity of sound on the following grounds: 1) because it has beginning in time, 2) because it is apprehended by sense organ and such apprehension implies series of sounds, and, 3) we use the verb ‘make’ with reference to sound and this implies that sound is a product. The first of these grounds means that sound has a cause. When it is caused, it comes into existence and thus has a beginning in time. At a later moment it ceases to exist and thus has an end too. Whatever has a beginning in time cannot be called eternal. It may be argued that a jar after destroyed would not come into existence again and thus its non-existence after destruction (vidhvamsdbhava) is eternal though has a beginning. Uddhyotakara answers the above argument saying that the absense of jar has a cause i.e., destruction of the jar.

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9Gautama, Nyāya Sutra II. 1. 69.
10Gautama, Nyāya Sutra, II, 2. 14 ff.
It was not there before the jar existed or during its existence. Moreover, non-eternity, as an abstract noun, denotes something positive whereas non-existence prior to the jar and after its destruction is sheer absence. So, when a thing is said to be non-eternal, it means that it does not have absolute existence.

Naiyāyikas explain the apprehension of sound through existence of series of sounds caused by the effort that produces sound. For example, when a piece of wood is being cut, the conjunction and disjunction of the axe with the piece of wood produces sound and this initial sound produces other sounds in all directions. The latter sounds produce further sounds. In this way, sound proceeds in series, each duller than the preceding one. Of those series, the one which reaches the ākāśa in the ear of the hearer alone is apprehended. This is the reason why we hear the sound much after the impact of the axe on the wood has ceased. The hypothesis of sound series impairs the eternalist notion of sound, by showing the limited temporal existence of each series. The fact that sound is heard at a distance after its cause has ceased establishes the view that the impact of the axe has not manifested but produced the sound.

Kumārila argues that utterance manifests a word but does not produce it as a lamp manifests a jar and does not produce it. But Naiyayikas make a point against this argument also, saying that there is a difference between the two instances. It is true that light of the lamp manifested the jar. The lamp is said to have manifested the jar because as soon as the light has ceased, there would be no apprehension of the jar. So, in the case of manifestation, the manifested object ceases to be apprehended as soon as the manifesting agency ceases. However, in the case of sound it is heard even after the effort, which is said to have manifested the sound, ceases. So, it is clear that the effort be the utterance or impact of the axe, has rather produced the sound.

11\textsuperscript{1}Uddhyotakāra, \textit{Nyāya Vārttika}\textsuperscript{I}. II. 14.
Moreover, the Naiyāyikas argue, sound is spoken of as a product. We say sound is loud or soft, as we say pain is acute or dull. Only a product can be spoken of in this fashion. It is argued that the character of loudness or softness belongs the manifesting impact and not to the sound itself. This can be illustrated by the case of colour, which remains the same while its apprehension becomes brighter or duller by the light that manifests it. Vātsayana says that this argument is untenable, for in the case of sound there is the phenomenon of suppression (abhībhāva). The sound of a drum suppresses the sound of lute only when it is loud, and not when it is deadened. If the loudness belongs to the drum and not to the sound of it, the sound of the drum must always suppress the sound of the lute. However, the sound of drum does not always suppress the sound of lute but only when it loud. This shows that loudness belongs to the sound itself and not to the drum. On the other hand, we do not find the colour of one object suppressing the colour of another object. It sound is manifested like the colour of an object, it cannot suppress the sound of another object. So, suppression can be explained only when loudness belongs to sound. When there are two different series of sounds, produced by the drum and the lute, a loud sound can suppress a soft sound if they reach the ear at the same time.

Mīmamsakas argue that in ordinary language, we also speak of eternal akāśa as we speak of non-eternal objects. We speak of ‘part of akāśa’ (pradeśa). Similarly, we are prone to speak of eternal sound as we speak of a product. But mere speaking of eternal akāśa and sound as we speak of products, does not make them non-eternal. Naiyayikas argue that in the case of akāśa, we figuratively impose the word ‘part’ to it though in reality, akāśa is devoid of parts. The basis of this imposition is the similarity of akāśa to things that have real parts, in the sense that its contact does not pervade over the whole of

14Ibid.
it. Even the ākāśa has no parts, the contact is not deprived of its substratum; it subsists in the ākāśa itself. Moreover, sound is a non-pervasive quality of ākāśa. Pervasion means subsistence all over the substratum. When a jar is seen, its colour is seen. So, colour is a pervasive quality. Whenever a few cows are perceived, the universal ‘cowness’ is perceived. So, the universal is pervasive. However, sound is not perceived whenever its substratum i.e., ākāśa is perceived. This proves that sound is a non-pervasive quality.¹⁵

In this connection, Gautama advances a positive argument in favour of non-eternity of sound:

"(Sound is non-eternal) because there is non-apprehension of it before it is uttered and also because there is non-apprehension of obstruction (that could explain the non-apprehension of the sound)"¹⁶.

The first part of above argument recognizes sound as an effect of utterance. Whatever is a product of an effort cannot be eternal. The second part argues that if sound is eternally existing in its substratum, it should be apprehended as there is no viel to cover it from senses. Kumārila objects to the first part of argument saying whatever is apprehended after an effort need not be non-eternal. Even the eternal ākāśa is apprehended.

in particular cases, after an effort:

The ākāśa too, being eternal, — when it happens to be covered up under the earth or water, — is rendered visible only by the removal of these (earth and water) by means of digging and pumping. And thus we see that here we have perception (of ākāśa) only after an effort. Consequently your reasoning — "since it (word) is perceived only after an effort" — becomes doubtful (Slōkavārttika, Eternality of words. 30-32, P. 414).

Against the argument of Kumārila, it may be pointed out that we do not perceive ākāśa everytime after an effort as in the case of a word. Even the above instance does

¹⁵Uddhyōtakāra, Nyāya-VarttikāI. 2. 18.
¹⁶Nyāya Sūtra II. 2. 19
not militate either eternality or pervasiveness of *dkāśa*. All the empirical objects subsist in the eternal and all pervading *dkāśa*. Even earth and water, like other objects, subsists in *ākāśa*. When an object, sāy a jar, is removed from a position, we apprehend *ākāśa* in its previous position as a result of our effort. It does not mean we produced or created space. It only proves its pervasive character. Similarly, when we apprehend *ākāśa* after digging or pumping, we do not produce akase. We do not apprehend *ākāśa* due to our effort but due to the pervasive character of *dkasā*. Whereas, sound is produced by our efforts for there is no other instance of its apprehension, except after on effort.

Regarding the argument of Gautama that if sound is eternal, it must, be apprehended persistently as there is no apprehension of any viel covering it, Miamamsakas raise an objection. They claim that obstruction exists because there is non-apprehension of the non-apprension of the obstruction. Vātsayana says that this is no argument, because non-apprehension is of nature of the negation of apprehension. Non-apprehension is negation of a positive apprehension. So, there cannot be non-apprehension of non-apprehension. The non-apprehension of sound is thus one to its sheer absence.

The important positive arguments of Mimamsa are in connection with instruction and repetition. The sound must be eternal otherwise no instruction would be possible. In the case of instruction, teacher imparts words to his pupil. If a word ceases to exist as soon as it is uttered, how could it explain the fact of teaching? But, Naiyāyikas argue, sound is not persistent as it is not heard in the space between the teacher and the pupil. It is true that word-sounds are taught. The teaching is possible through the imitation by the pupil what he finds in the teacher. As in the case of teaching of dance, pupil just imitates what he finds in the teacher. Dancing as an act ceases but it will be imitated by the student who learns it while so imitating. So, the case of instruction does not prove eternality of sound.

The case of repetition, Mīmāṃsakas argue, certainly proves the eternality of sound.
What one reads for several times must persist all the time. But, according to Naiyāyikas, the repetition involves different acts giving different and thus distinct sound though they are figuratively said to be repetition of one and the same sound. We can take the example of dance enacted twice, though it may be called repetition of the same dance. But they are two different acts as such. We call it a repetition due to their similarity in form though they are distinct acts.

Similarly when the word 'cow' is uttered many times by a person of by many persons at different times, what makes all those utterances of the word refer to the word 'cow' is the generic concept of the word 'cow'. It is due to the similarity of their form, all the utterances are said to be of the word 'cow'. But similar is the case of the universal notion of 'cow' which includes all the instances of individual cows.

Jaimini, in his *Sutras*, observes that “...it (sound) is eternal by the reason of its manifestation being for the sake of others”. Here, Jaimini wants to explain that the purpose of words it to instruct someone (the hearer) about a particular thing. Words are used and also learned through injunctions. When a hearer acts upon a verbal injunction, it shows that he has comprehended its meaning. Such comprehension presupposes the eternity of the work. Unless the work already existed, it cannot be comprehended.

However, Naiyāyikas argue that whatever is for the sake of others need not be eternal as is the case with lamp, cloth etc. Again, whatever eternal may not have any use as is the case with atoms which are devoid of any use. So, being for the sake of others does not prove the eternity of sound. The comprehension of meaning, on the other hand, depends upon recognition of the word as used earlier. Such recognition is due to rememberence of the form of the word, as in the case of jar which is seen in a new light is remembered as the same old jar because of its form.

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17 *Mimāmsa Sutra*, I. i. 18.
The eternalists also argue that sound is non-eternal because we perceive no cause for its destruction where as we see causes for the non-eternal objects like uar. To this Nyāya replies that cause for the destruction of sound is actually perceived. Each sound series is destroyed after giving raise to another sound series. The sound which reaches the ear perishes after producing impact on the sense. Again, we can stop the ringing bell with our hands. So, the obstruction by hand destroys sound.

To recapitulate the whole debate, we may look at the basic differences between the respective positions of Nyāya and Mimāmsa with reference to sound and its nature. Naïyāyikas, do not suppose separate ontological non-sensuous existence of sound over and above its empirical existence as it is apprehended. For them sound is an empirical phenomenon produced by an effort and it ceases to exists when it is not apprehended. For anything to exist, it must be apprehended through some valid source of knowledge. There is no sound apprehended before an effort so it does not exist before such effort and ceases to exist when it is cease to be apprehended.

On the other hand, Mimāmsakas presuppose the existence of sound even when it not apprehended. Utterance or an effort only makes it manifest, while Naïyāyikas say that it is a product of an effort. Though Nyāya and Mimāmsa generally agree as to the process of utterance and its apprehension, they differ as to the mode of sound reaching the sense-organ. Mimāmsakas oppose the hypothesis of sound series, and hold that sound reaches the hearer though the force of the wind. However, the Mimāmsakas oppose Nyāya theory keeping in view its further implications on their fundamental doctrine of Dharma. Refutation of any cause for the existence of sound helps the Mimāmsakas in establishing its self-sufficiency, especially in showing that Vedas as collection of sounds, are uncaused and eternal. This will be clearer when we proceed to understand how Mimamsa looks at Sabda Pramāṇa and its validity.

**Verbal Authority**
As the scriptures are a specific instance of *Sabda Pramāṇa*, the validity of the scriptures **depends upon** the validity of *Sabda Pramāṇa* in general i.e., words as source of knowledge. In other words, recognition of the *Vēdas* as a *Pramāṇa* rests upon recognition of knowledge of words as a *Pramāṇa* in general. Kumārila mentions the Buddhists and the vīsesikas as those who do not recognize words to be a separate *Pramāṇa*.¹⁹ The Buddhists and the vīsesikas include words in Inference.

As they do not accept *Sabda* in general as an independent source of knowledge, they also refuse the *Vēdas* as a separate *Pramāṇa*. Kumārila realizes the adverse effects of including the *Vēda* in Inference and thus insists that separate validity of *Sabda Pramāṇa* in general has to be proved:

“...And further (if verbal authority be accepted to be a form of Inference) then there would be no end to the counter-arguments (proving the invalidity of the *Vēda*). ... For these reasons it is only when verbal authority, in the *Vēda* as well as in human utterances, has its validity apart from the character of Inference (which is sought to be thrust upon it), that the validity of the *Vēda* can be established”.²⁰

The Buddhists as they are committed only to perception and Inference as valid source of knowledge, they view all other *Pramāṇas*, including verbal authority, as either invalid or as included in the two *Pramāṇas* they accepted.²¹ They identify verbal cognition with Inference on the grounds that both involve an identical process and are different from perception. They argue that we arrive at the cognition of the meaning of a word in the same way we arrive at existence of fire after perception of smoke. The apprehension of physical sound lead to the cognition of its meaning as apprehension of smoke leads to the knowledge of fire. This process of cognition is different from that of perception in as much as perception is direct apprehension. So, they conclude, verbal cognition is

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²⁰ *Slokavārttika*, V. 6. 50-51, P. 214.
²¹ Cf. Tattvasangraha of Santa Raksita, XIX. 1488, P. 741. Vol. II.
yet another form of Inference and hence should be included in Inference as a source of knowledge.

Sāmkhyas, who also consider verbal authority as a distinct Pramāṇa, want to distinguish Sabda Pramāṇa fro inference by showing that in the case of the former we have verbal specification while in the case of Inference we do not have verbal specification. The cognition of smoke is different from cognition of sound (word) in the sense that smoke is devoid of utterance.

This argument of Sāmkhyas inadequate and at best serves as a counter-argument. Rumanāıa observes that even among Inferences of such objects as "smoke", "non-eternity", "Horned-ness", etc., there is a difference; but that does not make any difference in their common character of "Inference".22

śabara advances more substantial and adequate grounds for non-identity of Sabda Pramāṇa with Anumāṇa. śabara defines verbal cognition to be "that knowledge of imperceptible things which is derived from words".23 With this definition, śabara distinguishes verbal authority from Inference which has three specific features. Verbal authority is not inference because it is devoid of three characteristic features of Inference. Kumarila, following śabara shows that Sabda as a Pramāṇa is different from Inference for the former does not share the tripartite character of Inference.

The characteristic features of any Inference are its Major Term, Minor Term and the conclusion. For instance, in the case of inferring existence of fire from the cognition of smoke on the mountain, The Major term, Minor term and the conclusion are as follows: (1) Whenever there is smoke, there is fire (2) There is smoke on the mountain (3) Therefore, there is fire on the mountain

The Major premiss expresses the relation between probans and probandum. The

\[22\text{Ślokavārttika, V. 6. 16. P. 209.}\]
\[23\text{Mimāmsa Bhāṣya on I. i. 5.}\]
relation is of invariable concomitance. Smoke invariably coexists with fire. This relation is the basis of the inference. The Minor premiss expresses the cognition of probans as specified with mountain. The conclusion expresses the inference of probandum arrived at. The Major Term asserts a universal relation and when this is applied to a specific cognition of probans lead to the conclusion regarding the existence of probandum.

The Buddhists argue that the process of verbal cognition is similar to that of Inference, because even in the case of verbal cognition, the object of cognition proceeds from the precognition of its relation with the word. The word uttered leads to the cognition of its object because the relation between the word and its object is already known. Here the word uttered is the probans and the cognition of its object is the probandum. The Major term is the invariable relation between the two.

Mimāmsakas argue that verbal cognition is devoid of the above three features of Inference. First of all, the relation between probans and probandum has to be definitely ascertained. However, in the case of the word and its object no such relation can be ascertained. The word and its object are not related in the same way as smoke and fire are related. There is no invariable concomitance between a word, say ‘tree’, and its object, an actual tree cognized. We do not find the existence of tree wherever the word ‘tree’ is uttered. The word is not a property of any such subject as the tree. Until the probans are definitely cognized to be possessed of the probandum, the inference of the probandum cannot proceed from it.

The subject of the inference is the object cognized. If the subject is yet to be cognized how it be said to have any character belonging to it? If the subject is already cognized, what is the need for Inference as such? As the word and its object do not exist at the same place because the word is always found to be wherever the speaker is. Nor the object exist at the same time as in the case of the word ‘Asoka’. Even the eternal existence of words cannot prove their concomitance with their objects. Because if it were...
so, as all words are equally eternal and all pervading, any particular word should make all the objects present whenever it is uttered. In that case, there can be no negative concomitance i.e., the absence of the words whenever there is absence of the objects.\textsuperscript{24}

With the above arguments, Śabara distinguishes verbal cognition from inference by showing that former does not share the tripartite character of the latter.

Kaṇāda, the founder of Vaiśeṣika, also considers verbal authority as a part of inference.\textsuperscript{25} He does this on the grounds that the validity of all personal utterances depend upon the trustworthy character of the speaker. So, verbal cognition is inferred from the trustworthy character of the speaker.

This criticism does not effect Mīmāṁsakas, as we would see later, but it is directed against the Nyāya which holds such relationship between the speaker's character and the word. The Buddhists also subscribe to this argument. Gautama answers the above objection by saying that the validity of verbal cognition depends upon the trustworthy person, but the cognition as such is derived from words whether uttered by a trustworthy person or a mischievous person. As far as cognition of words is concerned, the utterances are sufficient to bring about cognitions irrespective of the speaker's character.\textsuperscript{26} So, the above criticism is irrelevant.

Quite interestingly, Prabhākara uses the above argument of Kaṇāda to show that the Vedas are the exclusive instance of Sabda Pramāṇa. As all human utterances are Inferential in character, the Vedas alone constitute Sabda Pramāṇa as they are devoid of human authorship.\textsuperscript{27}

However, Kumārila rejects the above view of Prabhakara and insists upon independent character of verbal cognition in general. In the both cases of human assertions and

\textsuperscript{24}Śāntarakṣita, Tattvasamgraha, XIX. 1496-97, P. 745.
\textsuperscript{25}Vaiśeṣika Sūtra, I. 1. 3; II. 2. 32; VI - i. 1., etc.
\textsuperscript{26}Cf. Nyāya-Vārttika, II. 1. 49.
\textsuperscript{27}Cf. Gāganaṅth Jha, The Prabhākara School of Pūrva-Mīmāṁsa. P. 65.
Vēdic assertions, the words are common. The Vēdic words, though do not have any personal author, are words in general. Hence, to prove the independence of the Vēda from Inference, the verbal cognition in general has to be accepted apart from Inference.

Even Naiyāyikas refute the Buddhist theory that verbal cognition is just an instance of Inference. Gautama argues that the invariable concomitance between a word and object is absent, as we do not find words like food etc. accompanied by the action of filling etc.28

Though both Naiyayikas and Miniamsakas are equally interested in proving the status of words as a Pramāṇa apart from Inference, they differ as to the definition of Sabda Pramāṇa and its validity. They uphold two extremely opposite views, on the validity of Sabda, which focus on the validity of cognitions in general. Let us first see the difference between their definition of Sabda Pramāṇa.

As we have already noted, Śabara defines verbal authority as that knowledge of imperceptible things which is derived from words. The words are of two types: human (pauruṣeya) and super-human (apauruṣeya). He distinguishes between ordinary human utterances and the eternal super-human scriptures. The scriptures (Vedas) are devoid of human agency.

On the other hand, Gautama defines Sabda Pramāṇa as “communication of āptā”.29 It is of two kinds: that which refers to perceptible objects and that which refers to objects not perceived.

Vatsāyana in his Bhāṣya explains the views Gautama on Sabda Pramāṇa. Word is that by which an object is spoken of or made known. Sabda Pramāṇa is the verbal communication of dpta. An āpta is one who has direct or intuitive knowledge of things, who wishes to make known, and who is capable of speaking about them. In otherwords,

28 Nyāya Sutra Cf. II. 1, 49-54.
29 Ibid. I. 1. 7.
an *dpta* is a trustworthy person who wishes to communicate things as he has seen them. This definition is secular and includes all the persons whether sages, āryas or Mlecchas.30

The definition given by Gautama precludes the *Mimāṃsaka* classification of words into human and super-human. According to Gautama, all words are human utterances and there are no super-human utterances. Further, the validity of words arises from the trustworthy character of the speaker. Even the *Vēdas* are the utterances of sages and thus depend on the trustworthy character of sages for their validity.

Gautama’s definition proves dangerous for the self-sufficient character of the *Vēda*. On the one hand it does not distinguish the scriptures from ordinary human utterances. If the distinction is not there, the scriptures would be devoid of sanctity attached to them. On the other hand the validity of the *Vēdas* are made to be known from the trustworthy character of their authors, while the major plank employed by Mīmāṃsakas to prove the self-sufficiency of the *Vēda* is the argument that the scriptures are devoid of authorship, human or divine. Hence the Nyāya definition of *Sabda Pramāṇa* goes against the validity of the scriptures in general and their self-sufficiency in particular. Mīmāṃsakas vehemently oppose Gautama’s definition as far as it considers verbal cognition as communication of a trustworthy person. They want to ascertain verbal authority as a 'trustworthy assertion' rather than 'assertion of a trustworthy person'. They argue that words owe their existence not to any individual. They are rather eternal and thus independent from human production. Human utterances only manifest eternal words and do not produce them. Words denote objects naturally due to their own nature and connection between them is eternal. So, the definition must be devoid of human interference.

On the other hand, Naiyayikas consider words as products of human efforts. Hence, they owe their existence to the human usage. Again, words denote their objects due to

30 *Nyāya Bhāṣya*, I. 1. 7.
Knowing words is nothing but knowing the conventional usage of words. We come to know what a word means only when we know that a particular word is used to denote a particular object. If words and objects are naturally connected, we should know the corresponding object whenever we hear a word and the corresponding word whenever we see the object.

Mimamsakas argue that the world of objects is eternal and the words also eternal. So, there is no beginning to their connection and it is also eternal. Mimamsakas also see language being learnt by the young people by observing their elders and understanding the conversation. This process, Mimamsakas argue, is not possible unless the words are eternal. Naiyayikas, however, say that the process shows how children learn the conventions regarding usage of words. Again, if words are independent of human beings, what is the ground for knowing the validity and invalidity of the cognitions brought about by words?

Here they enter the important question — whether validity of cognitions depend on any extraneous factors or is it inherent to the cognition itself? The answer to this question has decisive bearing upon the self-sufficiency of the scriptures.

The Naiyayikas and the Mimamsakas arrive at two opposing views on this issue. The Naiyayikas argue that the authoritativeness of cognitions depends on extraneous factors. A cognition gives merely the knowledge of things and by itself cannot express its validity. Validity of the cognition is in need of another cognition which can ascertain the excellences of the previous cognition. This theory is known as paratah prarnanyavada.

Mimamsakas, on the other hand, view every cognition as self-evident and is prima facie valid. Only its invalidity can be shown by other factors. A cognition, by the virtue of its being a cognition, is valid in itself. This theory is known as svatah prmanyavada.

The debate between Mimamsakas and Naiyayikas concerning the validity of cognitions in general, including that of verbal cognitions, has acquired a lot of significance...
in Indian Epistemology. Keeping in view the influence of this debate on the divergent epistemological commitments of the rival schools, we try to understand it in detail in the following section.

**Svatah Prāmaṇya Vāda**

Nyāya and Mimamsa accept the distinction between valid and invalid cognitions. But they differ as to the ground on which such distinction can be made. For the Naiyāyikas, the validity of cognitions depends on the excellences of the cause of the apprehension. So, the criteria for the validity of a cognition is external to the cognition. A cognition is, hence, unauthoritative in itself unless it is supplemented with validity by another cognition of excellences of the cause of previous cognition.

Kumārila apposes the Nyāya view in detail. A cognition cannot be validated by factors extraneous to it, because those that are by themselves false cannot be proved to be true by any means. Again, validity and invalidity cannot be both inherent to the cognition itself, because they are contradictory in character. Nor can both of them be extraneous to cognition, because in that case there would be no definiteness in the cognition.

The Naiyāyikas argue that invalidity, being a negative factor, cannot be due to extraneous causes i.e., discrepancies in the origin. On the other hand, validity, being a positive entity, is always based upon the excellences of the cause. So, cognition by nature are invalid and their validity is inferred from cognition of the excellence of the cause of its apprehension. This theory explains how dream cognitions are inherently invalid and they cannot be validated by further cognitions because the dream cognitions are devoid of perfection in their cause.

However, Kumarila argues, a cognition in itself cannot be invalid because if it were so, it can never proved to be valid. Though every cognition has some originating cause,
it does not depend on such cause for its efficacy to illumine the object. Again, if the validity of a cognition is ascertained by another cognition, we need another cognition to validate the cognition which is supposed to validate the first cognition. This way we will end up in infinite regression to know the validity of a single cognition. So, a cognition can never be valid.

On the other hand, cognition is valid in itself, by the virtue of its being a cognition. Its invalidity is due to extraneous causes such as discrepancies or lack of excellences in the originating cause. The invalidity of a cognition does not need infinite regression of cognitions. Whenever the validity of a cognition is doubted for any reason, we can seek other cognitions. If there is any cognition which sublates the former cognition, then the former cognition stands unauthoritative. The later cognition is valid in itself and, for that reason, can vouch for the invalidity of the former cognition. If there appears another cognition which invalidates the later cognition, then the first cognition would be valid. Hence, with a few cognitions we can ascertain the validity of a cognition, unlike the Naiyayikas.

With Svatah Prāmdnya Vāda, the invalidity of dream cognitions can also be explained. Dream cognitions as cognitions are valid. But their invalidity is showed by the later waking cognitions which sublate the dream cognition. However, there are no further cognitions to invalidate the waking cognitions. So, the invalidity of dream cognitions is ascertained by the unsublated waking cognitions. Prabhakara explains the erroneous nature of dreams that the objects present in the dreams, though they seem to be directly apprehended, are objects remembered. Memory as such is not valid. So, dreams are invalid.\footnote{32}{For the detailed explanation of doubtful and wrong cognitions by Prabhakara, Cf. The Prabhākara School of Pūrva Mīmāṃsa P. 28 ff.}

The theory of Svatah Prāmāṇya Vāda proves the self-sufficiency of the Vēda, so far
as it takes all cognitions as intrinsically valid. Kumārila, however, makes the difference between human assertions and the Vedic assertions. Both are valid prima facie according to svatah pramanya vada. However, in the case human utterances, there is a possibility of invalidity due to the character of the speaker. In the case of the Veda, there is no possibility of doubt because there is no author for the Vedas. So, their self-sufficient authority is proved by their intrinsic validity and further impossibility of sublat ing cognitions.

While the theory of eternality of sound and independent nature of words to denote objects help to establish the eternality of the Veda, the theory of self-evident character of cognitions and freedom from human authorship help to prove the self-sufficient character of the Veda. These two theories i.e., of eternal sound and Svatah Pramanya Vada, are cardinal doctrines of Mīmāṃsa as far as absolute authority of the Veda is concerned.

The rejection of conventional theory of meaning estranges language of its human origin. This view of Mīmāṃsa, as Keith rightly observes, “...can hardly be regarded as anything else than an attempt to bring the doctrine of verbal testimony into harmony with their traditional beliefs in the nature in the Veda, which doubtless long preceded their speculations on the nature of the relation of word and meaning”. 33 This further leads to a peculiar position that only Sanskrit words are naturally capable of denoting objects. All other languages are degenerated forms of Sanskrit. They signify objects due to their origin from sanskrit. 34

The Svatah Pramanya Vada, recognizes truth as simple and natural to cognitions. But Paratah Pramanya Vada understands Truth as belonging to a system in which each element depends on other. These two theories of Truth are extremely relevant even for the present day discussions on theories of scientific discourse.

To sum up, the whole epistemological endeavours of Mīmāṃsa have two interests.

33Keith, A. B., The Karma Mīmāṃsa, P. 36.
34Mīmāṃsa Sūtra, I. 3. 24-29.
negative and positive in character. The negative interest in the discussion of other means of knowledge, apart from the scriptures, is to show that they are not amenable to the knowledge of Dharma. Their positive epistemological discussions are directed to prove the eternality and self-evident character of the scriptures through the theory of sound and theory of validity.

Once the absolute character of the Veda is established, Mimamsa proceeds to show Dharma as laid down in its exclusive source, the Veda. Mimamsa undertakes the exegesis of the Veda for the above objective. In the words of Kumārila, "Even when the Veda has been proved to be the only means of knowing Duty, — with regard to the ascertainment of the Vedic passages, there is no agreement among learned people, on account of various doubts .... and it is also for the settlement of these differences of opinion with regard to the meaning of Vedic passages that the treatise (Mimamsa Sutra) ...has been composed. Just as the Vedic sentence is the means of right notion of Duty, so is also Jaimini’s assertion our means of ascertaining the meaning of the Veda”.

Before we proceed to analyse the Mimamsa view of Dharma as laid down in the scriptures, let us look at the way in which Nyāya establishes the authority of the Veda. Despite its rigorous arguments against eternality and intrinsic validity of the Veda, Nyāya also endorses the validity of the Veda as indispensable. It does so in an interesting way.

Nyāya is treated as one of the astika schools of Indian philosophy, where astika means not theistic but one which has veneration for the Veda. Manu defines, as we have seen in the last chapter, only those philosophies as astika which accept the indispensable authority of the Veda. This definition has undoubted influence on Indian philosophical activity. The law-books expressly ban the nastika systems and their books. To avoid the legal censorship, rationalistic schools adopted the technique of expressing surfacial veneration for the Veda, though their doctrines go against the spirit of the Veda. This

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"technique of avoiding inquisition", is well illustrated in the case of Nyāya.

Gautama makes explicit attempts to show off his acceptance of Vedic authority, though such acceptance or its contrary cannot have any influence on his system. Hence, this commitment of Gautama is superfluous in the sense that it is not internal to his system and does not serve them any philosophical purpose. As we have already noticed, Gautama’s theory of sound and theory of validity deprive the Veda of its eternality and self-sufficiency. After causing such an irrevocable damage, surprisingly Gautama takes up defending the Vedic authority, on different grounds.

As to the grounds for the authority of the Veda, Gautama observes as following:

"Like the reliability of mantras and Ayur-Veda, the reliability of the Veda is based upon the reliability of the ap/əs".\(^{36}\)

This explanation has two features: First, it equates the Vedic assertions with magic spells and medical treatises. Hence, it does not attach any peculiar sanctity to the Vedas over and above the latter. Secondly, the validity of the Veda is derived from the reliable character of its authors. So, Gautama considers the Veda to be a work of human authors and, for that reason, no absolutely infallible.

The magic spells and the medical treatises yield definite results as declared by their composers when the instructions are carefully followed. When the spells are used for averting evils like poison, ghosts, thunderbolts etc., they are found effective. When medical treatises are followed to obtain a desirable thing or avoid an undesirable thing, they are found to be valid. The validity of the spells and medical scriptures is guaranteed by the reliable character of their authors and their capacity to yield the desired results. Similarly in the case of the Vedic injunctions, their authority is derived from the reliable character of the seers who composed them and by actual observation of their yielding results.

\(^{36}\) Nyāya Sutra II. 1, 68.
In connection with sacrifices yielding the attached results, the *Veda* is charged of untruth. The sacrifice is not always followed by the intended consequences proves that the *Vedic* injunctions are false. Gautama meets this objection by saying that the results not falling in order could be due to the deficiencies in the act, the agent and the means.\(^{37}\)

Vatsayana further explains that when *Putrakamesti* sacrifice is performed by a couple, they should give birth to a son. Here, the couple being the agents, the sacrifice being the means, their connection with the sacrifice is the act. The results may not accrue due to the deficiency in any of the factors. The agent might be immoral or the materials offered might not be properly consecrated or the *mantra* might not be properly recited or any other deficiency might be pertaining to the whole sacrificial act. The results would not come along even if the act of procreation itself is defective. In the case of defective method of sexual intercourse or defective semen or uterine deceases the child may not be conceived. If everything is allright, the result is accomplished. If the result does not appear, it is due to various defects.\(^{38}\)

The above defence of sacrifices is suprious. What is Vatsayana's point in telling that if all the physical conditions for procreation i.e., male sterility, lack of uterine deseases and proper method of intercourse are there, there would be the birth of child? It is nothing but conceding indirectly that the performance of sacrifice has got nothing to do with bearing a child.

In fact, Vacaspati, in his *Nyaya Vdrttika Tdparya Tika*, makes the point clearer:\(^{39}\)

"When the sacrifice is said to bring about the son's birth, it does not mean that there is any such positive and negative concomitance between the son's birth and the sacrifice as 'whenever the sacrifice is performed the son is born' or 'whenever the sacrifice is not performed the son is not born'. What is meant is that the scripture lays down that the

\(^{37}\)Cf. *Nyāya Sūtra* II. 1. 59.


\(^{39}\)Nyāya Vārttika Tdparya Tika, II 1. 59.
sacrifice only assists in the son's birth. If the son is born without performing sacrifice, it can be assumed that the son is born as a result of sacrifice performed in the previous birth. If the son is not born even after the performance of the sacrifice, it must be assumed that the potency raised by the sacrifice is neutralized by some unseen obstruction."

Now it is clear that Nyaya's attitude towards the Veda and the sacrifices is only superficial veneration. Despite their desperate attempts to please the Vedic orthodoxy, Naiyáyikas take up serious fight against the Mimamsa theory of eternal I Wa. Vatsayana concludes that the eternality of the Veda means nothing more than the continuity of tradition, practice and use; these are though all ages past and future. So, Mimámsakas use the word 'eternity' in a figurative sense to mean 'continuity of tradition'.

Coming back to the main discussion, we may proceed to see how Mimamsakas analyse Dharma or Duty, with their epistemological commitments on hand.

**Vidhivdkya and Arthavada**

Given the absolute authority of the Veda as the exclusive source of Duty, Mimámsa takes to the investigation into Dharma. Jaimini defines Dharma as 'an object sanctioned by the Vedic injunction'. It is known through the scriptural imperatives which inculcate certain acts as Duty. But the whole Veda is not a collection of mere injunctions. There are several kinds of passages in the Veda which are not imperative. Hence the Veda has to be classified into systematic heads so as to decipher which part of the extensive literature directly deals with Dharma.

The Vedic passages are devided into two broad heads: Mantra and Brahmana. Mantras are the hymns which have to be recited in the sacrifice. Brahmana are the injunctive passages or Vidhivdkya which enjoin the sacrificial acts and rules thereof. They include both prescriptive and prohibitive injunctions. Besides, Arthavada and Ndmadhéya passages are also part of Brahmana. Arthavada passages are those which do not contain injunctions but describe the merits of undertaking a sacrifice or avoiding
prohibitions. They are descriptive and directly or indirectly influence one to undertake the sacrificial acts. So, they have the function of instigating one for action and for that reason, are closely connected with vidhi or injunctions. *Ndmadheya* are the names in a *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* passage which neither serves as an injunction nor can be taken as *Arthavdda*.

While the whole *Veda* is described as the source of *Dharma*, it is the *Vidhivākya* and the *Arthavdda* passages which are of paramount importance, because they directly deal with the Duty. *Mantras* are, though not formally defined, rather considered as instruments of offering. They too are important due to their connection with the sacrifice.

*Mantras* are divided into three parts *Rk*, *Yajus* and *Saman*. *Rks* are the hymns which have specific metre and divided into well defined parts (*pāda*). *Rks* contain definite number of syllables in each *pāda*. *Sāman* are nothing but *Rks* set to music. When *Rks* are sung, they are supposed to be more efficient in bringing about the results. *Yajus* are the hymns which are neither *Rks* nor *Saman*. *Yajus* are devoid of metrical feet and are not set to music.

The *Mantras* being marginally important as instruments of the sacrifice, the essence of the *Veda* lies in the injunctive passages, for the Mimamsakas. Prabhakara emphasizes the *Vidhivākya* as the nucleus of the scriptures. Not only in the case of the *Veda*, but even in the case of ordinary speech, it is the injunctive sentences that play a vital role. Prabhakara advances the theory that meaning of words are lārant only through injunctions. He says, we come to know the denotation of words only as and when they occur in imperative sentences. Words by themselves are not, expressive unless they are connected with a verb which incites for an action. In the sentence *Gamdnaya* i.e., 'bring the cow', the word 'gam' can be understood only through its connection with *anaya* i.e., 'bring'. This theory of Prabhakara is known as *Anvitābhidhānavada*, according to which words express meaning only as parts of sentence, to be specific, an injunctive sentence.

Kumārila differs from Prabhakara in this connection. For Kumārila, on the other
hand, words denote their object individually and when these individual words are combined into a sentence, it expresses a unitary idea. So, words do not owe their meaning to a sentence in which they are parts. This theory of Kumarila is called Abhihitānvyavāda. Nevertheless, both Prabhākara and Kumārila agree upon the view that the primary teaching of the Vēda lies in its Vidhivakya par excellence. All other passages are subsidiary to the Vidhivakya. This position of Mīmāṃsakas is controverted by the Vedantins. For them, the more direct teaching of the Veda does not lie in enjoining something to be done i.e., Vidhivakya but in pointing out to the established fact i.e., existence of Brahman. This divergence between Mīmāṃsakas and the Vedantins can be understood when we see that the passages on which they lay emphasis are different. For the former it is the Brahmanas which constitute the most important passages of the Veda, while for the latter, it is the Upaniṣads. From the above observation, it follows that both of them do not mean the same texts by the word ‘Veda’.

The divergence also effects their views as to what texts constitute Arthavāda. For Mīmāṃsakas, all descriptive passages are subsidiary to the injunctive passages and thus constitute Arthavāda. The descriptive passages of Upaniṣads, for them, are Arthavāda and thus directly or indirectly connected with sacrifices. On the contrary, for the Vedantins, while the descriptive passages of Upaniṣads directly deal with the reality as Brahman, the injunctive passages are supposed to be Arthavāda which indirectly purport the existence of supreme spirit.

This divergence culminates in an unbridgable gulf between them, in connection with the reality of the material world. They come out with mutually untenable metaphysical views concerning the ontological status of the physical world. We will realize the importance of this issue when we actually analyse the materialistic outlook of Mīmāṃsakas in the forthcoming section.

Coming to the present discussion, the Mīmāṃsakas consider the Vidhivakya to be the
direct preaching of the Vēda. The Vidhivākyā are divided into five classes with reference to the aspects of the sacrifice: (1) The Karmōtpattivākyās one which enjoins a specific act — e.g. 'one should perform the Agnihōtra'; (2) The Guṇavākyā enjoins certain necessary details in connection with the prescribed act — e.g. 'one should perform the hōma with curds'; (3) The Phalavākyā refers to the result which follows from the performance of an enjoined act — e.g. 'one desirous of attaining heaven should perform the Agnihōtra'; (4) The Phalayaguṇavādyā mentions both the result and necessary details — e.g. 'one desirous of having efficient sense-organs should perform the hōma with curds'. This injunction is a combination of Phala and Guṇa Vākyas; (5) the Saṅgūnakarmōtpattivākyā enjoins an act with an accessory detail — e.g. 'one should perform the sacrifice with Sōma'. This kind of injunction is a combination of Karmotpatti and Guṇa Vākyas.

While the first three kinds of injunctions enjoin an act, its accessory and its result respectively, the other two kinds of injunctions are mere combinations of the second and the third, again the second and the first respectively. There is another classification of Vidhivākyā pertaining to the nature of activity they enjoin i.e., positive or negative or preclusive character of the injunction.

According to this classification, injunctions are divided into (1) the Apūrvavidhī or original injunctions known — e.g. 'the grains should be washed'; (2) the Niyamavidhī or Restrictive Injunction enjoins one method of doing something among various possible modes of doing the same thing — e.g. 'the corn should be thumped' while it is also possible to remove the chaff pealing off with hands; (3) the Parisānkhyavidhī precludes some among other possible alternatives — e.g. precluding the use of a particular mantra in a particular act. While both Niyamavidhī and Pansānkhyavidhī are restrictive in a sense, the former enjoins a positive restriction i.e., prescribes a particular method, the latter enjoins a negative restriction in the sense that it prescribes a method which should not be adopted.
Arthavāda passages gain importance only through their reference to Vidhīvākyas, as we have already noted. They can be divided into two broad heads: Eulogistic and Deprecatory. The Eulogistic passages praise the enjoined act or the result or the agent who performs the act. The Deprecatory passages condemn some act as undesirable or the adverse effects which follow the act or the agent who does the act. As a matter of fact the Arthavada passages freely use quite fanciful hyperbolae. What is surprising about Mimamsa view of the Arthavada is that there is no hesitation to consider even those passages which are totally irrelevant to the performance of sacrifices as Arthavada. For example, the descriptive Upaniṣadic passages are generally the speculative assertions about the ultimate reality. Mimamsa, as a rule, assumes some connection between those passages and Vidhīvākyam, not always successfully. The important, negative function of this view is to explain away the irrelevant and sometimes contrary passages as Arthavada. Kumarila adopts the same technique in explaining away the theistic references and the theory of creation, which are found in the Veda. These passages, though go against the philosophical spirit of Mimamsa, are supposed to be supporting Vidhīvākyam in a disguised form.

Given the importance of Vidhīvākyam and Arthavada as the sources of knowing what to be done, Dharma has to be understood as what is enjoined by them. Now, there arises a doubt as to what exactly corresponds to Dharma. Is it the action enjoined or the result thereof? Again, if the action i.e., sacrifice is supposed to bring about, the corresponding results, how does it do so? How are the action and its results are connected? What way is the agent related to the act? Once, Mimamsakas establish the acts enjoined by the Veda as Dharma, they have to advance a comprehensive theory of action to clear off all the doubts pertaining to it. In the following section we shall deal with the Mimamsa theory of action and its relation with Dharma.

Dharma and Apūrva

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In order to substantiate their theory of Dharma in connection with the Vedic sacrifices, the Mimamsakas have to explain how the agent, the act and the result are connected and how do the Vedic mandates have a bearing upon the three factors. In other words, they have to advance a systematic theory of action in the light of their theory of Dharma. For this purpose, the Mimamsakas deal with the process in which the Vedic injunction is carried out into a Vedic sacrifice and how the enjoined act, brings about the desired consequences. The Mimamsakas’ explanation of action is relevant not only to the Vedic sacrifices but also to the moral actions as such.

Actions in general are classified into worldly (laukika) and the Vedic (vaidika). The Vedic actions are distinct from the ordinary worldly actions in as much as they are not necessarily this worldly. They are mostly devoid of worldly purport. The Vedic actions have their source in the Veda whereas worldly actions are devoid of this feature and, for this reason, worldly actions do not accrue spiritual merit. As far as spiritual merit is concerned, the worldly activities, if not irrelevant, are of not much importance.

The Vedic actions are again divided into Nitya (unconditional duties), Naimittika (occasional duties) and Kamyaka karmas (desired actions for a particular result). Performance of everyday sandhya is an unconditional Nitya karma: sacrifice on lunar or solar eclipse is an instance of occasional Naimittika karma; sacrifice for attaining son or village or cattle is an instance of Kamyaka karma. In the case of the former two, there is no specific desire as a motive. They are rather part of one’s adherence to one’s Duty. There is no option regarding these actions. There is an option in the case of Kamyaka karmas as they are binding only when the agent has a desire to be accomplished.

However, the three kinds of actions are supposed to be virtuous because they are equally prescribed by the Veda. The Vedic injunctions give rise to an impulse in the mind of the agent to perform the enjoined act. The impulse or impact is known as ‘Bhavana’. The Bhavana prompts one to action. Bhavana stands for the psychological
process intervening the cognition of duty and actually discharging it. It is of two kinds — Ārthī and Sabdi. Ārthī Bhāvana is referred by the injunctive affix of the word ‘yajēta’ which urges the agent to put forth his efforts towards a definite act. Sabdi Bhāvana is what accompanies i.e., the verbal propting from the injunction.

Prabhākara explains that the Vedic injunctions leave the impression of what to be done (Kartavyatājñāna). Such impression leads to mental determination (cikīrṣa). The determination proceeds to know the possibility of action (Krīsādhyā). Then volition (pravṛtti) arises. Pravṛtti leads to overt action (cēṣṭa). Overt action finally accomplishes the performance of enjoined act.

However, what is important in explaining the Vedic sacrifices is to explain the process in which the action accrues the result. The act itself being transitory, how can it lead to the results which are supposed to come at a later time? When a sacrifice is performed to attain heaven, the agent is not led to heaven as soon as he completes the sacrifice. So, the sacrifice and its result are temporally separated. Now, the question is — how does the ephemeral action, which perishes as soon as accomplished, gives rise to a result at a later time? The action which does not exist in the intervening period between the sacrifice and its result cannot, for that reason, immediately precede the result. If it does not do so, it cannot be called the cause of the result.

The Mīmāṃsakas resolve the problem by postulating an unseen energy brought out by the sacrificial act. The unseen potency is called ‘Apūrva’. Though the act perishes, it gives rise to a new potency which endures the time intervening the act and its result. Apūrva culminates in the result of the act. This energy called Apūrva is presumed not only to explain the temporal separation between the act and its result, but also to avoid other incongruous explanations of the same. Prabhakara, by postulating Apūrva, avoids the explanations that (1) the action is everlasting (2) the action incites certain faculty in the agent (3) the results are accomplished by the favours of the deities. Prabhakara
summarily rejects these assumptions. It is against all evidence to consider the action as everlasting. The self, itself being inactive, cannot be supposed to bring the result through any faculty. Nor can the deities or their favours do it. The sacrifices are not to appease the deities. Even the offerings cannot reach them because the deities are neither eternal nor omnipresent. There is no possibility of their receiving the offerings and showering favours. Hence, results are not due to the favours of the deities. The issue, thus, can be sufficiently explained by postulating *Apūrva.*

It is interesting to note the observation made by Prabhakara regarding the Vedic deities. It gives us an important clue as to the anti-theistic commitment of Purva Mīmāṃsa. The early Vedic hymns, where the deities are eulogised, give us the impression that the whole sacrificial practice is directed to propitiate the Vedic deities. But in the *Brāhmaṇas* the place of the deities is occupied by the sacrifice itself, where they are treated as mere datives in the injunction and as subsidiary to be the sacrifice. This development leads to the Mīmāṃsa view which reduces the stature of Vedic gods to mere manes which form accessories for the sacrifice. Prabhakara thus conceives the sacrificial results as independent of the favours of the deities. It is only peculiar force or potency of the act itself that can accomplish its results.

Kumarila understands *Apūrva* to be a new force or faculty arising out of the performed action which brings along the result attached to it. But it is not identical with the sacrifice or its results. It is rather a latent potency pertaining to these. It resides as a faculty in the agent till it realizes itself as the result. Prabhakara opposes this view and claims that it cannot be a faculty in the agent because if the results are accomplished by the faculty of the agent, then they are not produced by the action. If action is said to be the cause of the results, the potency must belong to the action, not to the agent.

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40 Cf. Gangānāth Jha, *The Prabhakara School of Purva Mīmāṃsa* P. 160.
42 Cf. The Prabhakara school of *Purva Mīmāṃsa*. P. 165.
However, there is an objection to the view held by Prabhakara. *Apūrva* being a product of the action, is transient. If it is transient, it cannot continue till the appearance of the result. The transient potency cannot be treated as causing the results, unless it subsides in the agent who continues to exist from the time of sacrifice till the appearance of the result.

*Apūrva* is employed not only in the case of Kamya karma which are connected with certain results, but also in the case of unconditional duties where no specific results are attached. Even those unditional duties accrue spiritual merit through *Apurva*. *Apūrva*, in general, connects the results and the agent by the virtue of his connection with the act.

*Apūrva* also accounts for discrimination among various actions enjoined by the *Veda*. There are primary and subsidiary acts enjoined by the *Veda*. The primary action is one which directly results in an independent *Apurva*. The subsidiary acts are those which are undertaken to complete the primary act. They do not produce independent *Apurva* but only as part of the primary act of which they are subsidiary acts. *Apurva* is thus corresponds to the injunctive verb in the *Vidhivakya* which prescribes a primary act.

Now, what exactly corresponds to *Dharma*? Is it the act, the result or the unseen potency that corresponds to Duty? Prabhakara considering *Apurva* to be what is mentioned by the injunctive verb, *Dharma* must be corresponding to the *Apurva*. Kumārila, however, takes *Dharma* as belonging to the sacrificial act itself. Performance of Duty brings sreyas or bliss. It is achieved through the act, the materials and the auxilliaries. So, 'Duty' must correspond to these only. *Dharma* as an object cannot be identified with a faculty. *Apurva* being a faculty cannot be signified by the word *Dharma*.43

Kumarila, while asserting that the prescribed acts themselves constitute *Dharma*, rejects other theories of *Dharma*. He rejects the *Sāmkhya* doctrine according to which

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43 Slōkavārttika, 2. 200. P. 51.


Sharma, R. S. 1985. How Feudal was Indian Feudalism’ in Journal of Peasant Studies, (Special issue on Feudalism and Non-European Societies), 2 and 3: 19-43.


Srinivasa Raghavan, S. Memorandum of the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the Last Forty Years of British Administration. Madras Government Press, 1893.


Given the objectivity of Duty, now a doubt arises as to its nature. Is it merely scriptural Duty or does it have any moral dimension? In other words, how is the ritualistic duty relevant to morality as a social practice? The answer is not as complicated as the question. In India, spirituality is never seen as disconnected with morality. Spiritual discussions rather presuppose the moral problems of life. Mimamsa, especially, does not undermine the ethical aspect of human activity. It is unfortunate that some of the modern scholars view Mimamsa as a bundle of formal ritualism, seeking sanction from the scriptures. This view fails to understand the real implications of Mimamsa world-view.

Mīmāṃsā definition of Duty is comprehensive and includes social conduct. For the Mīmāṃsakas, all that is prescribed by the Veda is Dharma. The Vedic prescription is not limited to ritual injunctions but includes certain norms of social conduct which are later codified in the law-books. Mimamsa seeks to establish the authority of the Veda for both ritual practices and other social, legal and political maxims supported by the scriptures. Hence, as far as social organization is concerned, Mimamsa presupposes the Varnāṣrama Dharma as laid down by the law-givers. The social codes derive their authority from the Veda and Mimamsa, by theoretically establishing the Veda, endorses the codes as authoritative.

Mīmāṃsā, as part of its exegetical work, also interprets the Vedic maxims in connection with legal concepts like — property Rights, Inheritence, Adoption etc. The influence of Mimamsa on Indian legal literature will be discussed in a forthcoming section devoted for the purpose.

Meanwhile, it is important to see that the Mīmāṃsā view of Dharma is comprehensive. ‘Dharma’ does not stand only for the rituals but all those actions, both spiritual and moral, prescribed by the Veda.

The Mīmāṃsā World-view

The Mīmāṃsā concept of Dharma will remain vague unless we elucidate it in the
light of its world-view. Mīmāṃsa advances a thoroughly rationalistic view of the world which is quiet unexpected from such an ancient orthodox system. The misapprehensions caused by the orthodox character of Mīmāṃsa will be dispelled at once when we look at its Realistic world-view.

The nucleus of the world-view is its conception of the world as real, eternal and dynamic. This is further strengthened by rejecting the pessimistic view of life as a bondage from which some systems seek an ideal escape. Mīmāṃsa emphasizes the reality of the world and the place of human action in it. What is more surprising is its denial of theism in all its forms. Mīmāṃsa truly reflects and overwhelming positive spirit, of life evident in the Samhitas and the Brāhmaṇas. It also attempts to bring the Upaniṣadic rendering of soul in line with the ritualistic understanding of the Brāhmaṇas, of course not with much success.

Reality of the External world is a prerequisite for the practice of morality. All the axiological efforts would be fruitless if there are no real objects which correspond to our ideas. No relation between actions and their consequences can be established if the world is devoid of objective reality. The teaching of the Veda would be groundless.45 The concrete existence of the physical world is, thus, emphasized by the Mīmāṃsakas. Here, they had to grapple with the Idealists who go to the extreme of denying the reality of physical objects. While the Vijñānāvādins conclude that there are no objects corresponding to our ideas and that ideas alone are real, the Vedantins describe the world as an indefinable superimposition which is ultimately unreal. The Śūnyāvādins preach that both physical and mental worlds are void (sūnya) in the final analysis. Despite of their minor differences, the above three schools equally demolish the reality of the physical world.

The vital argument of the Idealists is the analogy of deram cognitions which are

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45 Slōkavārttikā, Nirālambanavāda, 1-3, P. 119.
devoid of corresponding real objects. Similarly, they argue, the waking cognitions are also devoid of real objects because both dream experience and waking experience share the common character of 'congnition'. So, all the cognitions do not have objective basis. The above position makes the performance of Duty meaningless. Kumārila says, "It cannot be for the mere pleasures of a dream that people engage in the performance of Duty. Dream coming to a man spontaneously, during sleep, the learned would only lie down quietly, instead of performing sacrifices etc, when desirous of obtaining real results. For these reasons, we must try our best, by arguments, to establish (the truth of) the conception of external objects (as realities)".46

Śabara argues that the falsity of dream cognitions does not arise from their being cognitions, but from the fact that they are sublated by the waking cognitions.47 As we do not find cognitions which sublate the waking cognitions, they are valid. This is true of not only dream cognitions, but also of all the doubtful and invalid cognitions.

Kumārila further shows that the Idealist analogy of dream cognition goes against their own position:

"If a cognition be false, would it not be liable to rejection? If it were to be false even without being rejected, then there would be no restriction as to the reality and unreality of a cognition. For us, dream cognition would certainly be falsified by the perception of a waking cognition contradicting it; while for you, what would constitute the difference between the reality of waking — cognition and that of dream consciousness, both of which are held by you to be equally false? of waking cognition as such, there is no proper correct contradictory cognition, — the perception of which would establish the falsity of such waking cognitions as those of the post and the like. The fact of waking cognitions being the contradictory of dream-cognition is known to all persons and as such they differ

46 Slōkavārttika, Nirālambanavāda, 12-13, P. 120.
47 SabaraBhāṣya, on I. 1. 5. P. 12.
from dream cognition (known only to particular individuals) just like the cognition, which
serves to reject a particular dream-cognition”.

If it is objected that even waking cognition are sublated by some yogic-cognitions
which serve as evidence for the falsity of waking cognitions, then we have our own yogin
who vouch for the contrary to your position.

Prabhākara goes further and ascertains that even dream cognitions are not devoid of
objective basis. The dream-cognitions are not altogether false, because they illuminate
objects as external and these dream objects have their basis in the external objects. The
dream objects are nevertheless objects, which are devoid of proper determination of time
and space. In the case of waking cognitions, the objects are well-determined in terms of
space and time.

Kumārila argues that it is the well-determined character of waking-cognitions on the
strength of which they sublate the dream cognitions. The concrete existence of the
objects is proved by the objective coercion they exercise on our cognitions. Even in the
case of illusory cognitions, this coercion is evident. We can see an illusory snake only in
a rope. The unreal objects can be seen as real only in those things which share some
characteristic feature with the former. The snake has its substratum only in a real rope
which shares the common character of length and shape with the snake.

Again, form belongs to objects alone and cognition has no form. Neither a cognition
can be an object of another cognition. Hence the Buddhist argument that form belongs
to cognition and the form of cognition is known through another cognition is untenable.
The basis of all cognitions is the world of objects having form and other qualities. The
objects are not creation of our ideas. They exist independently of ideas. They exist
whether cognized or not. Hence the world is real, objective and independent of cognitions.

\[ ^{48} \text{Sloka\varittika}, \text{Niralambanavāda, 87-91, P. 133.} \]
\[ ^{49} \text{Ibid., 94-95.} \]
Kumārila thus explicitly attacks the Buddhistic schools. However, he also criticizes the *Vēdānta* view of the world implicitly. The *Vedantins* consider the world as an indescribable superimposition of ignorance. The physical world is a combination of the real and unreal. It is not real nor is it totally unreal. Viewed from the practical point of view it is real but from the transcendental point of view it is unreal. The self alone is real and all the worldly objects are conjured up by beginning — less ignorance or avidya. Kumārila does not accept the theory of two truths — i.e., practical and transcendental. Nor does he accept any third category of truth other than real and unreal: "there can be no reality in *samvṛti* (Falsity); and as such how can it be a form of reality, how can it be *samvṛti*? If it is false, how can it be real? Nor can 'reality' belong, in common, to objects, false as well as real; because the two are contradictory; for certainly the character of the "tree" cannot belong in common to a *tree* as well as to a *lion". The words like *samvṛti* or *mithya* are used only to deceive people.

Rumor's rejection of idealism establishes the positive reality of the world on which all the differences between virtue and vice, *Dharma* and *A Dhanna*, teacher and pupil etc., depend. Though Mīmāmsa accepts the reality of soul and ideas, it does not ascribe them exclusive reality. The world cannot be said to have assumed or conditional reality but is positively real.

The world is not only real but also eternal and dynamic. Though the particular objects of the world undergo change and destruction, the world as a whole is uncaused and eternal. It consists of objects which come into existence and pass away and thus dynamic in nature. The eternity of words will be groundless if the world is not eternal. Hence, according to the Mīmāmsakas, there was no time when the world was not there nor does it pass away as a whole.

This view of the world faces a challenge from the theists. Theism in India is invariably...
connected with theories of creation. The god is viewed as material or efficient cause or both of the world. The Mimāmsakas refute all the theories of creation along with their theistic presuppositions. Acceptance of any theory of creation leads to the position that the world has a beginning. Hence, Mimamsa vehemently opposes such theories.

Manu advances a theory of creation, as we noticed in the last chapter, in which the Prajāpati is the both material and efficient cause of the world. Vaiśeṣikas and the later Naiyāyikas also assume God to be the efficient cause of the world, the material cause being the atoms. The Vaiśeṣikas are in a peculiar fix, The world is made up of atomic conjunctions. All the gross objects are nothing but atoms conjoined together. They face a question as to how the atoms first come together. The motion is viewed as external to the atoms. Then they themselves cannot come together. In search of an answer to this question, they end in assuming a theological entity which makes such conjunction possible. They further assume periodic creation and dissolution at which world comes to a state of suspended animation. The theological being serves another purpose for them. The God is help responsible for fixing names and their meanings. This position effects the eternality of the Vedas.

Kumarila undertakes a detailed refutation of the theistic and creation theories. He argues as follows:

"At a time when all this earth, water etc. did not exist, what could have been the condition of the Universe? As for Prajāpati himself, what could be his position? and what his form? If it be held that the world is by desire on the part of Prajāpati, then since Prajāpati is held to be without a material body, etc., how could he have any desire towards creation? And if he has a body, this body could not have been created by himself; thus then we would have to postulate another creator for his body, and soon, ad infinitum. If Prajāpati’s body be held to be eternal, of what material would that body be composed? Then again, in the first place, how it that he should have a desire to
create a world which is fraught with all sorts of troubles to living beings? For at the
time of the beginning of creation he has not got any guiding agencies, in the shape of
the virtue or sin etc., of the living beings themselves. Nor can creator create any thing,
in the absence of means and instruments.... And if he were to depend upon Laws and
Agencies, then this fact would deprive him of his boasted independence.....what is that
end which he desires, and which could not be gained without 'creating the world'?....If
the activity of the creator were due to a desire for mere amusement, then that would go
against his ever-contendedness....And above all such a creator could never be known by
anybody".51

Prabhakara equally objects to the theory of creation and the concept of an omniscient
God. He argues that we actually observe the bodies of men and animals are produced by
the functioning of parents. This fact will enable us to infer that the bodies of men and
animals were so produced even in the past and this process will be there in the future
also. There is no need to assume a supervening agency. Even Dharma and A Dharma
do not need any supra-mundane supervisor. God cannot supervise individual merit and
demerit for he cannot come into contact with them as they belong to individual souls.
The contact can possibly be in two ways only — either conjunction or inherence. The
individual Dharma or A Dharma cannot have conjunction with God because they are
qualities. They can neither inhere in God because they can inhere only in individual
souls, So, god can have no knowledge of individual merit or demerit.52 The only instance
of supervision is that of an individual soul on its body.

Mimamsa does not accept any theistic assumptions in its world-view. However.
Mimamsa has to explain the theistic trends which are found in the Veda. Manu rests his
theory of creation on such theistic evidences found in the Veda. The celebrated Purusa

52 Cf. Prakarana Panchika, P. 137 ff.
sukta explicitly refers to a creator. Though it is a real difficulty to explain away those passages, Mīmāṃsakas do it easily. They ignore those passages as simply Arthavāda.

Kumārila observes that if the eternal Veda existed before the objects created, then there can be no connection between the Veda and the created objects. Therefore the passages occurring in the Veda which appear to describe the process of creation must be interpreted as praising up some injunctions of sacrifices etc.\(^{53}\) Neither the deities connected with sacrifices are considered to be substantial theological entities. The deities are neither eternal nor omnipresent. They are mere names having a subsidiary dative functioning in the sacrifice.

With these anti-theistic arguments, Mimamsa establishes the eternal and uncaused character of the world. As to the nature of constituents of world, Prabhakara and Kumārila differ widely. Prabhakara admits eight categories of the constituents of the world i.e., substance, quality, Action, generality, Inheritance, Potency or Force, similarity and number. Prabhakara thus admits the first five categories from the list of Vaiśeṣikas but rejects the sixth Vaiśeṣika category of particularity.\(^{54}\), P. 110-111. Kumarila, on the other hand, rejects the addition of three categories made by Prabhakara i.e., potency (śakti), similarity and number. He also rejects Inheritance as a separate category. Thus he admits the four categories admitted by Śabara i.e., Substance, Quality, Action and Generality and adds Negation (Abhava) as a distinct category.

While enumerating substance, Prabhakara admits nine substances — Earth, Water, Air, Fire, Ether, the Self or Soul, Mind, Time and Space. Kumārila accepts the nine substances of Prabhakara and adds Darkness and Sound among substances.

Prabhakara enumerates the following qualities which inhere in the substances — colour, taste, smell, touch, dimension, individuality, conjunction, disjunction, priority,

\(^{53}\) Sūkṣma-śāstra, Sambandhākṣepa-pariharavāda, 62, P. 358.

\(^{54}\) Prakaraṇapañchika
posteriority, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion and effort.\textsuperscript{55} P. 151. Kumarila following Pra\ṣastapāda admits twenty four qualities — colour, smell, taste, touch, number, individuality, dimension, conjunction, disjunction, priority, posteriority, gravity, fluidity, viscidity, cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, effort, impression, tone, manifestation and potency.

Though the Mīmāṃsakas agree that the tangible objects are made up of atoms, they do not think this position as binding on them. It is enough for them to prove the world as real, irrespective of proof for the existence of Atoms. Prabhakara and Kumarila offer interesting arguments in support of their enumeration of their substances and qualities. They owe much to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika in this connection.

However, what interests us is their rational materialistic explanation of the world. They entertain no theistic explanation of creation. Their rejection of Idealism is impeccable. Their world-view cannot be viewed as Mechanistic Materialism for they also render a moral-world in which Man has an important function.

Man is viewed as a part of the world and his essence consists in actions and reaping the fruits thereof. Prabhakara defines self as the doer and enjoyer. Though their view of physical world is thoroughly rational, they do not accept reason in the moral world. The morality has its source not in the internal source of reason but in the external source of the scriptures.\textsuperscript{56}

The object of all actions is considered to be heaven. It is interesting to note that Heaven is not necessarily otherworldly. "The word ‘Svarga’ or ‘Heaven’ is applied to that happiness which is totally free from all touch of pain, and which, as such, is desired by all men".\textsuperscript{57} Pleasure is not just negation of pain but a positive quality which is sought after.

\textsuperscript{55}Prakaraṇa Pañcikā
\textsuperscript{56}Cf. Slokavārttika, I. 2. 243-249.
\textsuperscript{57}Prakaraṇa Pañcikā, P. 102-3.
Though Mimamsa originally admits 'Heaven' as the highest ideal, the later it Mimamsakas feel pressure to explain the Vedanta ideal of Moksa or deliverance. Moksa as an ideal demands cessation of worldly activities and exhibits a negative interest in the ritual actions. The Mimamsakas, though accept the reality of the soul, they do not afford to entertain the ideal of Moksa at the cost of absolute reality of the world. If world is real, then the bondage of soul in the world is real. If the bondage is real, it can never be removed. Removal of the bondage eternally can be attained only if the bondage is illusory as Advaitins hold. Once, the reality of the world and thus reality of the bondage is established, there cannot be any deliverence due to knowledge. Rumania makes this point very clear: "Barring its negative character, there is no other ground for the eternity of Deliverence. And no negation can ever be the effect of any action, therefore Deliverence cannot be held to be the effect of knowledge". However, Rumania attempts to bring the concept of deliverance in line with his theory of action. What Rumania understands by Moksa is that it is negation of future births. It is not a state of bliss as Heaven. Heaven again, unlike Moksa, is perishable. Hence, he contends that Moksa can be attained by fructification of actions, by not undertaking Karya Karmas, by discharging Nitya and Naimittika duties and by avoiding sin through prohibited actions.

Now, it is clear that Mimamsa world-view is no less rational than any other philosophical system. It is important to see that Mimamsa does not appeal to the scriptures to defend its rational world. It takes the challenge on the level of profound logical argumentation. Except in as much as Mimamsa looks at the scriptures for explaining Dharma, Mimamsa in no other aspect can be discredited as a philosophical system. Neither its veneration for the scriptures can be made a reason to include it in theology (Trayi), as did Rautilya, because no other so called rational systems denied the scriptures (save

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59 Cf. Ibid. 110. P. 367.
Carvaka), whatever the reasons may be. Mimamsa is not a mere system of exposition but a systematic rational philosophy, discussions of which are relevant even today.