Chapter VIII

ĀTMAN in the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā System

The Pūrva Mīmāṃsā System is the most prominent orthodox system among others and it is peculiarly known for its adherance to, and the absolute belief in, the infallibility of the Vedas. This system tries to understand properly the thoughts embodied in the words of the Vedas. It gave so much importance to sound and the words which are formed from it that it denied even the existence of God as the creator of the world. The Vedas are eternal according to the Mīmāṃsā. The Vedas are self-created and hence, their origin and authority need not be challenged. The Mīmāṃsā regards that the Vedic texts are eternal and hence, God is not necessary. It denies the existence of God and so, it is called an atheistic system. It has laid special emphasis on the ritualistic aspect of the Brāhmaṇas from which it has been derived. The Brāhmaṇas are mostly ritualistic. The Mīmāṃsā includes more philosophical elements than the Brāhmaṇas which also had not admitted the fourth puruṣārtha (mokṣa) as the end to be attained. The Brāhmaṇas were religious in character and hence, they emphasized mostly the ritualistic part of
the Vedas. The Mīmāṁsā also has not omitted it, but it has given to it a more scientific form and has replaced dharma by mokṣa or liberation as the end to be attained. It has given special emphasis on the pre-Upaniṣadic ritualism of the Vedas and have interpreted them afresh so as to make acceptable to the people. The origin of the Mīmāṁsā Sūtras can be traced to Jaimini who is recognised as the earliest Mīmāṁsā-philosopher. His Sūtras or aphorisms were then interpreted by other scholars like Sabarāswāmī, Prabhākara, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and the works of these commentators were further critically presented by scholars like Pārthasārathī Miśra, Maṇḍana Miśra etc.... This system is called 'The Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā system' simply for the reason that it deals with the former works of the Sruti which was existing before the philosophical Upaniṣadic works came into existence. As M. Hiriyanna states -- "... the Mīmāṁsā attaches greater importance to the Brāhmaṇas than to the Mantras, which means that it looks upon the Veda as essentially a book of ritual. It not only subordinates the earlier Mantras, but also the later Upaniṣads. Its designation as Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā has reference to this latter phase, viz. its being concerned with the teaching of those portions of the Veda that come before the Upaniṣads, the darśana dealing with the latter being
termed Uttara-mīmāṃsā. Moreover, this system holds, in common with the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika system, some ideas about the soul.

The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system holds that there is some such entity as soul that is different from the body, the sense organs, the manas and the cognitions, and it goes to the heaven by the performance of the rituals prescribed. The soul is the agent of actions and the reaper of their rewards. It is eternal and without any change. Though it is an agent, it does the actions without moving itself. It is responsible for actions, for it is the ultimate cause of energy which it supplies for the performance of acts. It may undergo a slight change in itself but that does not affect its immutability. It is not atomic or of any intermediate size (madhyama parimāna) but it is all-pervasive (Vibhu). Knowledge is not its essential nature but it is a mode of it. It is immaterial and omnipresent. The soul is the enjoyer of all experiences but it enjoys with the aid of the mind and uses the sense organs as the instruments; the internal and external things and their qualities are the objects of its enjoyment. The soul is

1. Hiriyanna M. -- Outlines of Indian Philosophy. p.299.
the abode (āśraya) of knowledge, intelligence and experiences like pleasure, pain etc. which cannot be the dharmas or characteristics of the body. Some Mīmāṁsakas like the Prābhākaras hold that the soul is not separately perceptible but it reveals itself in all the acts of cognition; it is not self-illumined but it is illumined by the act of knowledge simultaneously with the objects of knowledge. Prabhākara holds that knowledge has the power of revealing both the soul (the subject) and the objects of knowledge; but some others like Kumārila hold that the soul is separately perceptible as the object of direct perception by the mind (Kānasa pratyakṣa) as the substratum of the "I" element in knowledge. But Sabarasaṃśīi believes that the soul is Sva-samvedya or directly perceived as one's own Self in the sense that it cannot be directly cognised in the same way by other persons. The souls of others can be cognised by the activities similar to those of ours. The soul is eternal and it transmigrates in accordance with the adṛṣṭa. The souls are many in number so that each person possesses his own soul separately to maintain his independence. Kumārila and Prabhākara agree in holding that the soul is not self-illuminating (svayam prakāśa).

The Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā system is driven to the inference
of the existence of the soul from the sacrifices which are performed. The sacrifices that are performed are not without purpose. They are supposed ultimately to enable the performer to go to the heaven; but the body of the performer being material and hence perishable, cannot rise to the heaven; hence the necessity of some entity which is the performer of action and is immaterial so that it may rise to the heaven and that is the soul. The word "Esha" in the II aphorism of the Ślokavārtika indicates the existence of the soul.\(^1\) As Kumārila Bhaṭṭa says -- "The Vedas have declared that the results of sacrifices pertain to the performer in some birth or other; and if the Soul were nothing more than mere Idea, then it could not have the character of the performer (of actions) and enjoyer of results."\(^2\) Similarly Śabarśvāmī and Kumārila both hold that the reference made to that which is "equipped with the implements" is clearly meant to indicate the soul and not the physical body. The physical body by itself cannot relate the means to the consequences hence, the need of admitting an entity like the soul arises. The soul ensouls the body and is the ultimate doer of the action, the body functioning under its superintendence. Moreover 

\(^1\) Kumārila Bhaṭṭa -- Ślokavārtika, Section 18.p.382. 
\(^2\) Ibid. Aphorism 4. p.382.  
Tr. Ganganāth Jha.
Kumarila Bhaṭṭa says -- "Therefore it is with a view to establish the authority of the Veda, that the existence of the soul is sought to be proved here."¹

Śabara infers the existence of the soul from such activities as of breathing, winking of the eyes and the like, which cannot belong to the body, as they are not found in the dead body though the body is otherwise the same. As the relation between these functions and the physical body is not invariable, they cannot be said to belong to the physical body. Hence, they are attributed to the soul that runs the physical body by supplying energy to it.

The soul dwells in the body and uses it for different functions but it never means that the soul and the body are identical. The soul is clearly an independent entity which is eternal and above the physical body, the sense organs and the cognitions. Kumarila Bhaṭṭa says -- "We hold that the Soul is something different from the body, the sense organs and ideas, and that it is eternal; while all the rest, the body etc. are perishable."² The soul and the body cannot be identified because the body

². Ibid. p.383. Tr. Ganganāṭh Jha.
is perishable while the soul is imperishable or eternal. The simple proposition "My body is weak" clearly indicates that there is a difference between the body and that to which it belongs. The body and the possessor of the body are not one and the same. The possessive case denoting 'my' or 'mine' leads to the inference of that which owns the body as his; and that is the 'soul'. Another important reason to distinguish the body from the soul is that the body does not possess those properties which the soul is supposed to possess. The body possesses some properties like the colour, height etc. which are perceptible by others and therefore, they can be known by others; but some properties like knowledge, pleasure, pain etc. are known only by the individual who experiences them. They cannot be known by others in the same objective way like the physical properties like colour etc. of body. One can only indirectly understand the pleasure or pain of others from the similarity of his own experience of pleasure and pain. Such experiences are exclusive to each individual and they cannot be attributed to the physical body. Though they invariably depend upon the physical existence they cannot be called as the guṇas or properties of the body. Had they been the properties of the body they would have existed in dead bodies. but it is contrary to facts.
Dead bodies are devoid of any cognition and experiences like pleasure and pain. Moreover, the body is constituted of the particles of earth which are unintelligent or unconscious. It is therefore concluded by Ganganāth Jha -- "Such phenomena as the feelings of pleasure, pain and the like are cognised by the person himself only, while the qualities of colour and the rest which belong to the physical body are cognised and perceived by others also. This shows that there are certain qualities in the person which are directly cognisable by himself only."¹ Moreover, another fallacious conclusion will follow from identifying the soul with the body. If they were identical, and the body being perishable, the phenomenon of rebirth cannot be consistently explained. The doctrine of Karma requires for explaining the continuity of successive births something that endures in two successive births; that which does some deeds in the preceding life must proceed to the succeeding birth to reap the rewards of its deeds done formerly. If the body were the soul, who would transmigrate after the body is destroyed at death? Therefore, the admission of soul is inescapable. Similarly if the two were identical, the soul would change with

¹ Jha Ganganāth -- Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, Ch.II.p.27.
every change in the body and would undergo deformities which occur usually in the body. Moreover, if the body were the substratum of cognition, pleasure and pain it would always remain full of them; but we find that these experiences are transient. They cannot be, therefore, the essential properties of the body. Hence, the existence of a separate entity which can serve as the substratum of such properties becomes necessary and hence the soul exists. Both Prabhākara and Kumārila also hold that the soul is entirely different from the body.¹

The soul, according to this system, is again different from the sense organs. Prāthasārathi Miśra says that even though the organs cease to function, the memory of the objects previously seen does not vanish. A blind person quite vividly remembers the colours of objects seen by him before turning blind. It shows that knowledge does not reside in the sense organs but it resides in something beyond them. The damage done to the sense organs does not harm the knowledge. If the sense organs were the soul, all knowledge would come to an end with their cessation; but it is contrary to reality. Another argument that can be forwarded against the supposition is that we often

¹. Miśra Prāthasārathi -- Śāstradīpikā -- 1.1.5 pp.121-22. Also see -- Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, pp.29,34.
perceive a single object by more than one sense organ, which shows that the factor that perceives is different from the two sense organs concerned. As A.B. Keith says -- "... thus the fact that I feel with my hand and that I see with my eyes shows that there is something beyond the sense organs." Moreover, the senses cannot relate two different cognitions taking place in two different periods of time, one in the past and one in the present. The fact of memory of past observations cannot be explained if the sense organs are regarded as the soul. Keith also is right in pointing out the fact that we usually say 'I see' or 'I touch' or 'I smell' and not 'the eyes see', 'the skin touches' and 'the nose smells', the various actions of perceptions thus belong to something, the 'I' which is beyond the sense organs and, it uses the senses to obtain these various experiences as instruments or Karaṇas. That which uses therefore the indriyas or sense organs as its instruments for acquiring knowledge is the soul. The soul integrates the multitude of sense perceptions and, provides us unitary experience, and it also maintains the continuity of the experiencer.

2. Miśra Parthasarathi -- Śāstradīpikā -- 1.1.5. p.123.
The Mīmāṃsā further considers the nature of the mind which is a necessary link in the mechanism of knowledge. Mind is a distinct entity separate from the soul and it shares some of the qualities of the soul. These qualities are Intellection, cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, and effort. The mind is one organ along with the other five sense organs. It acts as an intermediary between the objects and the soul. It discharges the most important function of remembrance or memory. It synthesizes the various sense organs together and links the various sense perceptions at different times. It also acts as an instrument of the soul for acquiring knowledge of the external world. It not only observes the external objects but it also observes the various internal states of a man. Gangānāth Jha describes it further as "The Mind is a substance and not a composite body. It cannot be omnipresent like the soul because then their contact would be everlasting. It is of atomic dimension. As it has no cause, it is eternal. It is extremely mobile. It has simultaneous and continuous various perceptions. Without it the soul cannot perceive the external world. The contact of the Mind with the conscious soul is due to endless series of Merit and Demerit accumulated in previous births."¹

¹ Jha Gangānāth -- Pūrva Mīmāṃsā. p.31.
Thus, the mind acts as an indispensable instrument of the soul for the acquisition of knowledge. It is extremely mobile, so, by constantly moving from object to object, it fetches the impressions of the external world to the soul. The soul is immobile or immutable as it is all-pervasive. The distinctions of particular individuals are maintained by means of the different minds. If the mind were to fill the whole of the body it would be conversant with the various sense perceptions at once and there would arise confusion. It is atomic, and so, it can be extremely active and prompt in attending to perceptions separately. It is that which registers the sense perceptions and conveys them to the soul. Without mind there would not be attention to the various experiences. According to Kumārila the mind is capable to knowing the soul also in the form of one's Ego: the knowledge of the soul is given by the mind by making it its object.

The soul is also different from buddhi or intellect. Intellect takes the form of objects and ultimately the soul acts as the knower who receives knowledge. Knowledge is tripartite. It implies the existence of the three elements of knowledge. The knower, the known and the knowledge or cognition. Cognition and soul are not identical.
Cognition is an act and every act presupposes the doer or agent of it. The doer or agent must be different from the act itself. The soul is the agent of the act of cognising, desiring and the like. There are varying interpretations about the process of knowledge, especially about the knowability of the soul. Šabarāswāmī for example holds that the soul is 'self-cognisable' or knowable to oneself, in so far no other soul can ever know it directly. The soul of other persons can be known by means of inference or indirectly from the similar activities that the person does. The knowledge of the soul is exclusive for an individual. Gangānāth Jha explains the standpoint of Šabara in the following lines — "This Soul, the Agent of the acts of cognising, Desiring, Feeling and the like can be directly cognised by each man for himself; it is in this sense that the 'Soul' is regarded as 'Sva-saṁvedya', self-cognised, and no Soul can be directly cognised by another."¹ Thus Šabarāswāmī holds that the soul can be clearly known by oneself as the substratum of his "I-consciousness" as distinguished from the idam-consciousness. This knowledge is not transferrable and cannot be shared with others. The objective knowledge or the knowledge of

¹ Jha Gangānāth — Pūrva Mīmāṁsā. (Šabara Bhāṣya). p.28.
objects can be uniformly had by all but this peculiar knowledge, -- the subjective cognition remains only with the knower himself and, it is exclusive. The soul is neither the body, nor the sense organs, nor the mind, nor the desires, nor the feelings which it experiences, but itself transcends them all as it acts as the doer or agent itself. The subject and the object of experience must be kept separate.

Prabhākara denies the possibility of the soul's being cognised separately. He holds that the soul manifests itself in all the acts of cognition as the substratum of cognition. According to him, the soul necessarily accompanies all the acts of cognition so that cognition becomes impossible in the absence of it. Prabhākara finds it illogical to make the soul an object of knowledge when in fact it acts as the subject of those objects. He cannot accept the possibility of making a subject an object of knowledge." Soul is not self-illumined \(^1\) (svayam prakāśa); had it been so we would have had knowledge then even in deep sleep; but in deep sleep we have no knowledge though the soul exists even then. According to him cognition

\(^1\) Somanātha -- Sastrādīpikā. (Com. by Somanātha). p.123. Svapraukāśatē cātmā -- suṣuptavapi prakāśeta; na ca prakāśatē.
of the soul is inseparable from the object-cognition; the
object and the soul are simultaneously illummed by know­
ledge which he believes is self-illumined. Both Prabhākara
and Kumārila agree in holding that the soul is not self­
illuminating and that the man lies only in an unconscious
state during deep sleep. He has no awareness of any object
during sleep; nay, he confesses after being awake that
'he was asleep for such a considerable time even forgetting
himself', nor did he experience any kind of pain.\footnote{Somanātha -- Sāstrādīpikā (Com. by Somanātha).p.124.
Tasmātsuṣuptāvaprakāśānātmanāḥ svaprakāśatvam.
Prabuddhāhi suṣptāvagatām kincidapi duḥkhahasmāmsmarataḥ
smaraṇānutpattyaiwa.}
Kumārila further denies that the soul is accompanied by
bliss during deep sleep (suṣupti). He cites the illus­
tration of a person given to sensual enjoyment after being
awake from deep sleep; the person expresses grief for
being deprived of the pleasure of being in union with his
beloved due to deep sleep in which he had fallen. It
clearly indicates that in deep sleep there is no experience
of pleasure or bliss as there is no also pain. From the
absence of consciousness in deep sleep the soul is imagined
to be like a firefly (khadyota) which is partly shining
and partly not-shining; the soul also is partly conscious
and partly unconscious as in the case of deep sleep. Any
kind of experience whether pleasurable or painful is possible only when one is awake. Therefore, though the soul endures during deep sleep, we are never conscious of it in that state. Prabhākara however denies the possibility of knowing the soul independently of any other object of knowledge. Kumārila on the other hand, holds that our soul can be known by the mind as the substratum of our I-consciousness. Prabhākara thinks that the soul is necessarily present in all the acts of cognition as the substrate of cognition. Cognitions cannot exist apart from the substratum which holds it. But Kumārila thinks that the I-consciousness or the self-consciousness is not present in all acts of cognition. For example in the cognition of a jar which is known as the object-consciousness "This is a jar" nowhere does the soul appear. "This is a jar" does not mean "I know this jar". Prabhākara holds that in every act of the consciousness of the not-self the soul is necessarily involved but it is not explicitly manifested. But Radhakrishnan admitting the truth of both Kumārila and Prabhākar remarks -- "Between the presence of the self and the consciousness of the presence, there is a difference and it is not necessary for us to be aware of the self whenever we apprehend an object. The self is manifested only in self-consciousness, which cannot be identified
with object consciousness."¹ Though the soul is implied in all acts of consciousness as it acts as the necessary presupposition of knowledge in the form of the substrate of knowledge as the latter cannot exist without the former it does not follow that one is aware of its presence in every act of knowing the external objects. It is a fact of experience that one knows many things of the world quite precisely but one is the least aware of one's own soul. One does not usually know the nature of his own soul simply for the reason that the soul does not manifest itself explicitly to a knower in the ordinary acts of cognition. It is clearly stated in the Šastradīpikā "although the soul manifests itself in the acts of cognition of objects, it does not manifest because of the cognition of the objects; but manifests because of the self-consciousness (ahaṁpratyaya) perceived by the mind..."² If Prabhākar's view is admitted, it follows from it that the self-consciousness would never appear if one never has object-consciousness; the not-self becomes a pre-condition or an indispensable prerequisite of the self-consciousness. The consciousness of the soul is thus conditioned by the consciousness of the not-self. It leads to the other

². Somanātha -- Šastradīpikā. p.123.
extreme that the self is dependent upon the not-self, and not that the not-self is dependent upon the self. It lays more stress on the primacy of the matter than of the mind. It appears to be a refutation of the idealistic theory of knowledge.

Another implication of Prabhākara's theory along with that of Kumārila is that knowledge is necessarily dependent upon the functioning of the sense organs. Knowledge is possible only when one is awake. Prabhākara uses the word saṁvit to denote either cognition or the soul. Prabhākara considers the soul to be jāda-inconscient and knowledge occurs to it when it comes in to contact with the not-self. He does not give primacy to the soul as the pramātrā or knower that illuminates the objects of knowledge. In order to tie inseparably the soul with the objects he ascribes the 'self-luminosity' not to the soul but to the act of cognition which finally illumines both the knower and the known. All the difficulties arise logically from the original stand that Prabhākara and Kumārila have taken and, it is this -- that they do not hold that the soul has consciousness as its essential or constituent characteristic. According to both, knowledge or consciousness is a separable mode or property of the soul. Sometimes,
as in deep sleep, the soul lies even without its own consciousness or self-consciousness. Their position is similar to that of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas who also hold that consciousness is an adventitious characteristic of the soul, it being separable from it. Like the Nyāya Vaiśeṣikas the Mīmāṁsakas hold that the mind is absolutely necessary to cause consciousness in the soul which acts only as the substratum of it. Kumārila like the Naiyāyikas holds that the soul is an object of direct perception by the mind but Prabhākara like the Vaiśeṣikas holds that the soul is not known directly but by inference, on different grounds. Kumārila and Prabhākara both agree in holding that the soul acts as the substratum of all cognitions and experiences of different kinds. Śabara did not go into so much of details but he seems to hold that the soul is self-illumined in a definite way, in so far as it is known only to the person concerned and not to other persons. A.B.Keith points out a little discrepancy in the writings of Kumārila. He says -- "Kumārila, however, adopts in the Tantravārtika the doctrine that the soul is pure consciousness, though he distinguishes it from cognition, but this characteristic is hardly more than a verbal derivation from the view of Prabhākara, as far as practical results go."

Kumārila himself gives his interpretation of the 'incognisability of the soul' which is not far from that of Śabara. He says -- "By saying that it is "incognisable", in general --, the meaning would seem to be that it is so (incognisable) by all persons (including even the Ego himself). But the assertion of "self-luminosity" distinctly indicates its incognisability by others."\(^1\)

The Mīmāṃsā system further believes that there are many souls and not only one. It holds that for every person there is a separate soul. The main reason that is given for the plurality of the souls is that there would be confusion of works and their rewards if they are not separately associated with different persons. If the souls were not many, and as the soul is the doer of actions, how can we arrange systematically the connections of works and their rewards? If the doer of action does not remain the same as a separate person to experience the fruits of his actions, one would do good actions, and instead of him, others may enjoy the good fruits of his actions. Every person must get his rightful reward whether good or bad, accruing from his actions, and hence, the need of separate souls. Kumārila and Prabhākara both admit the plurality of souls.

\(^1\) Bhaṭṭa Kumārila -- Ślokavārtika. 143/p.407.
Were there only one soul for all persons, all would have been happy with the happiness of one and all would have suffered with the sufferings of one person. All would have been liberated with the liberation of one. On the contrary, we find in actuality that every person has his own separate experience of pleasure and pain, love and aversion, knowledge and ignorance. It definitely follows from the diversity of such experiences that there are many separate souls, one for each body. The doctrine of Karma which bases the cycle of rebirth, on the nature of the deeds of the previous birth, cannot be maintained consistently without the plurality of souls. The Pūrva Mīmāṃsā system believes in the doctrine of Karma or (Adṛṣṭa); it is therefore logically driven to accept the plurality of souls.\(^1\)

A.B. Keith writes with regards the multiplicity of souls -- "Prabhākara and Kumārila are agreed as to the fact of there existing a multitude of separate souls, as it is the necessary supposition of the Sūtra and the theme of the Bhāṣya. The perception of another soul is obviously impossible, but one sees the activities of other bodies and infers thence that they must be ensouled, just as one's own body is ensouled. Thus, if a pupil has learned

\(^1\) Misra Parthasarathi -- Śāstrādīpika -- 1.1.5. p.125.
half his task in one day, the fact that he continues to learn the next half the next day is a good ground for assuming that he possesses a soul. The same result can be arrived at from the fact that merit and demerit are infinitely various, and not one, as they must be if there were one soul only. The objection that pain is felt as localised though there is but one soul in the body is met by insisting that in reality the feeling is in the soul, and it is only the cause of the pain which can be said to be localised."¹ Thus the plurality of soul is justified on various grounds. The main argument is that the differences of experience and those of actions and their rewards cannot work consistently in the absence of the separate existences of the souls. The souls are not perceptible like other objects because the soul can be known by oneself in a peculiar way i.e. in the form of his I-consciousness. The existence of the souls of others, therefore, has to be known by inference from their activities similar to those of us. As Kumārila says -- "We become cognisant of other people's Souls, by observing their methods and actions, such are not possible without the Soul; -- and also of such cognition of other people's Souls as has been shown by inferences."² From similar experiences of pleasure,  

¹ Keith A.B. -- The Karma Mīmāṃsā. p.71.  
² Bhaṭṭa Kumārila -- Śloka Vārtika. 145/p.408.
pain, love, aversion and cognitions and from the willed actions of others it becomes clear that they must have a soul as we do similar actions because we have soul. The differences of merit and demerit because of which different persons experience different experiences, and are involved in the cycle of rebirths, also become explicable by the assumption of separate souls that act as the doers of actions and reapers of rewards of their actions, but they cannot be directly perceived by others like other perceptible objects; hence they can be known only by means of inference. To oneself the soul is self-luminous; others have to understand it by inference. Prabhākar and Kumārila are unanimous on this point.

The souls are, according to the Mīmāṃsā, Vibhu or pervasive. Sabarawāmī discusses the immateriality and the possible size of the soul and is driven to the conclusion that the soul can neither be atomic, nor of any middle size but it is all-pervasive and omnipresent. He points out that the soul itself being immaterial, it can never be mixed up with material elements. As it is free from physical magnitudes and limitations, it cannot be taken from one place to another. As it itself is immaterial and is different from the body, also does not have any
contact with the body, it is likely to be left behind when the body moves from one place to another. In that case the soul will be separated from the body and the body will remain devoid of animation and experiences, which belong to the soul. To avoid this difficulty and also the other difficulties of the size, the soul needs to be all-pervasive and omnipresent. When the soul will be all-pervasive there will not be any difficulty of experiences and cognition even when the body moves to any distances. When the soul is Vibhu or all-pervasive, there will be no difficulty for the body to have experiences inspite of its movements. The connection of the soul with the body is determined by the nature of the Karma of the past life of a person. The soul, being omnipresent, can ensoul the body wherever it may be. The relation between the two appears somewhat like that of the body and space and time which also are omnipresent and encircle all bodies. The soul, being omnipresent, cannot move because it has filled all the space, it has no space to move in. It is immobile or unmoving and still it is active.

An objection is raised against the pervasiveness

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1. Jha Ganganath (Tr.) -- Tantravartika (Sabarabhashya -- on Jaimini's Purva Mimamsa.) p.518.
or omnipresence of the soul. If it were omnipresent and as it is the case of the doer of actions and the enjoyer of experiences, all persons will be doing the same actions and enjoying the same experiences when they have been done so in one place. But, for this very purpose of avoiding confusion, the Mīmāṃsa believes in the plurality of souls. In his summary of Kumārila's philosophy Gganānāth Jha says -- "Even though omnipresent, one soul cannot serve the purpose for all personalities, as that would mean that one and the same Soul undergoes the experiences of all persons. The Soul, therefore, must be regarded as many and existing simultaneously. Being immaterial they would not come in each other's way." Thus, the soul is immaterial and indivisible. It being immaterial there is no fear of its coming into conflict with other pervasive souls. Every person has a separate soul; therefore, though all are all-pervading, there is no overlapping, and though all are simultaneous, there is no fear of having the same experiences for all. Because of the separate soul that each person has, every person can separately have his own experiences for himself. Thus, omnipresence is reconciled with the plurality of souls. The Advaita Vedāntins, on the

contrary, maintain one Self for all and explain the differences of experiences of separate persons on the ground of the plurality of the egos and minds of persons.

All the Mīmāṃsā-philosophers -- Śabara, Prabhākara, Kumārila, Pārthasārathi etc. again discuss the possible size of the soul in the same manner. They argue if the soul were not omnipresent, it would be either atomic in size or of the size of the body.¹ If the soul is extremely small in size like the atom then it would be possible to have experiences of pleasure and pain only in the part of the body, where the soul would be located; and hence it would not be possible to experience the pain in head and in the foot simultaneously. If the soul would be moving constantly, it is difficult to get any sensation in a particular part of the body as the soul is nowhere stable.² If, on the contrary, the soul is supposed to possess the same size as of the body it occupies, it would involve many fallacious consequences. The soul then would possess parts and would be eternal even with pasts. The soul would then be formed by the conjunction of so many parts and would be liable to destruction by the damage of some of

¹ See Tantravārtika (Śabara bhāṣya). p.519.
² See Tantravārtika (Śabara bhāṣya). p.519.
of the body which it fills. The Jains believe that the soul is of the size of the body, and hence, they are led to the absurd conclusion that the same soul is capable of expansion and contraction to the sizes of the elephant and the ant and it involves contradiction.¹ But the soul is immaterial, how can it then be subject to expansion and contraction? The soul being of the size of the body, would be suffering frequent changes and damages due to changes and damages that take place in the body. Moreover, as Šabarasaṁī points out, that the various limbs of the body are strengthened, and do not wither away, simply because of their being pervaded over by the soul; because at death we find that they wither away quickly.²

The soul is the real doer of actions. The soul is the doer of actions and the enjoyer of their rewards. In order to maintain the consistency of the doctrine of Karma, the doer of the action must remain the same to experience the consequences of the actions done by him. They cannot be two different persons.³ The soul is omnipresent and hence it is immutable. It is active and also

¹. Miśra Pārthasārathi -- Śastradīpika -- See 1.1.5. p.125.
². Tantravārtika -- (Śabara bhāṣya) (English Tr.) p.519.
³. Ślokavārtika -- Section 18/84. p.397. (English Tr.)
the agent of actions, still, it does not move. How can its activity be reconciled with its immobility? How can it act unless it itself moves? It appears contradictory; however, Kumārila and the other Mīmāṃsakas trace the soul to be the ultimate agent and also the enjoyer. The soul has to be the performer of the sacrifices because it has to go the heaven. It cannot rise to the heaven as the old Mīmāṃsakas say unless it performs the necessary sacrifices prescribed. According to the new Mīmāṃsakas, the end of performing sacrifices is attainment of mokṣa and not reaching the heaven. But the person who attains the mokṣa must be that persons who undertakes the efforts for it. The doer and the doer alone can be the enjoyer. The agent is generally supposed to be involved in movement due to his activity. But Kumārila Bhāṭṭa denies any movement in the agent himself. He says — "Therefore, even though the soul may not itself move, yet it may be the performer (of actions); just as even though Devadatta is not cut (or pierced by the sword), yet he is held to be the performer (of the cutting)."¹ Kumārila proves with the aid of the illustration given above, that though the soul moves others, it need not itself move or be involved in any kind of

¹. Ślokavārtika. Section 18/87. p.397. (English Tr.)
Gangānāth Jha.
movement. Just as Devadatta, though he cuts many other things with his sword, it does not follow that he himself is cut by it, similarly the soul may act as an agent to other things by applying movement, but from that it does not follow that it itself undergoes any change. The soul is therefore, the unmoved mover of things. S.Dasgupta explains the above point in the following way and says that though the soul is the agent, it is only indirectly

"The objection is sometimes raised that if the soul is omnipresent how can it be called an agent or a mover? But Mīmāṃsā does not admit that movement means atomic motion, for, the principle of movement is the energy which moves the atoms, and this is possessed by the omnipresent soul. It is by the energy imparted by it to the body that the latter moves. So it is that though the soul does not move it is called an agent on account of the fact that it causes the movement of the body."¹ S.Dasgupta thus interprets the activity of the soul and states that the soul supplies the necessary energy for the activities which are actually carried out by the mind, and the body through the sense and motor organs. The soul is not the immediate or direct agent of the actions but it is the proximate agent

that supplies the necessary energy for the various activities; and, the activities will be impossible if the energy is not supplied. Hence though proximate, the soul is the agent. A.B. Keith says that motion is not the only form of action and hence interprets the activity of the soul in terms of superintendence. He says -- "The Soul, then, is essentially active, for unlike the Vaiśeṣika school, the Mīmāṃsā does not, according to Kumārila, deem that motion is the only form of action, and it is through its superintending activity that the motions of the body are achieved. We must therefore, conceive the Soul engaged from the time immemorial in the work of directing a body...."¹

The soul is thus, the ultimate enjoyer and agent of the actions. It acts and enjoys various experiences with the help of the mind; the sense organs act as the instruments. The soul enjoys through the sense organs the external objects of the world. The sense organs and the mind have the body as their abode and all of them serve as instruments to the soul. Due to the good and evil deeds, the soul acquires merit (puṇya) and demerit (pāpa) which ultimately bear their corresponding results to experience.

¹ Keith A.B. -- The Karma Mīmāṃsā. p.66.
which the soul takes birth in the successive lives and when the total stock of the accumulated Karma is completely exhausted and when the soul acquires no new Karma by deeds, the soul becomes liberated from the bond of sāṁsāra. It thus becomes mukta or liberated and then enjoys for ever its natural state.

Mokṣa

The old Mīmāṁsakas like Jaimini and Śabara did not concern themselves with the problem of release or mokṣa. They were more concerned with finding the real meaning of the mantras of the sacrifices. They showed the way to the heaven but thought little over the necessity of and way to release from sāṁsāra which is predominantly painful in nature. As Radhakrishnan points out, the later Mīmāṁsakas like Prabhākara and Kumārila dwelt over the problem of mokṣa as the thinkers of the other systems were thinking over it seriously. The theories of liberation, therefore, are the contributions especially of Prābhākara and Kumārila. Gangānāth Jha writes in this connection: -- "We do not find any thing in regard to the details of Liberation in the Bhāṣya, and it has been explained by
Prabhākara that Šabara was dealing with the subject of Karma, Action; hence he confined himself to what benefits the man addicted to Action, not the man who has washed off his impurities and renounced all Desire and Action; hence he has not gone forward to deal with the subject of renunciation and Liberation.\(^1\) It is obvious from the above passage that Šabara's attention was not drawn towards the problem of liberation, and hence, he did not occupy himself with it. It is therefore, necessary to pass on to the other major authorities of the Mīmāṃsā system to get their ideas on Mokṣa or Apavarga.

Even among the later authorities it is found that Prabhākara did not concern himself with the problem of mokṣa or liberation since he too like Šabara did not deal with the people who had transcended Karma or action. He occupied himself mainly with those who were interested in the ritualistic aspect of the system. We cannot directly know the views of Prabhākara on Mokṣa. For that purpose we have to turn to the views expressed by his followers known as the Prabhākaras. According to them, liberation or mokṣa is attained by the removal of all merit and demerit, which in their turn, result from actions. When

\(^1\) Jha Gangānāth -- Pūrva Mīmāṃsā. Ch.III.p.36.
the dharma and dharma cease to exist, the cessation of their existence leads to the cessation of rebirth. Therefore, liberation comes to be described as "the absolute cessation of the body, caused by the disappearance of all dharma and adharma."¹ The Mīmāṃsakas hold the general belief that a new birth is obtained by the results of some past actions. The goodness or badness of the birth is determined from the nature of the Karma which arises from the past deeds. The soul continues to revolve on the wheel of birth and death by being born in new physical bodies so long as the desert is operative and it is not exhausted. The emergence of the physical bodies along with its sense organs again connects the soul with the external world from which actions take place, which leave behind them their impressions that turn into the desert. The Prabhākaras thus hold that once the total accumulated stock of the desert is exhausted either by enjoying or is destroyed by knowledge, the soul does not take fresh birth and thus one gets permanent freedom from the sāmāra. Pārthasārathi Miśra also defines mokṣa as "the withdrawal from the sāmāra."² Thus, in liberation the

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1. Śālikanātha Prakaraṇapāñcika. p.156.
2. Miśra Pārthasārathi -- Śāstrādīpikā -- 1.1.5. p.130.

Nivṛttireva sāmśāradapavarga itīryatē.
soul ceases to have any connection with bodies and sense organs. The process by which men attain liberation is described in the following manner. The worldly life is supposed to be full of pain and suffering. Man frequently has to undergo tremendous suffering in the worldly life. Even the pleasure that one enjoys is found to be mixed up with pain. No pure or unmixed pleasure can ever be experienced in the worldly life. As even the pleasures of the worldly life are found to be invariably accompanied by pain, one gradually becomes desperate and begins to lose interest in and longing for such adulterated pleasures. Man seeks always an agreeable experience. One has the psychological tendency to flee away from all kinds of pain. He moves in search of such a place where either the pleasure is not accompanied by pain or at least pain has come to an end. He finds such a hope of terminating his miseries or sorrows in mokṣa or liberation. When he properly grasps the nature of mokṣa or liberation, he stops the performance of the prohibited acts; not even that but he goes ahead and stops performing even those acts which lead not to trouble and misery but to pleasures of different sorts, either here or hereafter. Before he becomes able to reach the final state, he has to exhaust the old accumulated stock of merit and demerit by experiencing them.
As he comes to exhaust the previously accumulated stock of merit and demerit, he prevents the further accumulation of merit and demerit by means of the right knowledge of the soul and reality. He also cultivates, side by side, qualities like contentment and self-control as have been prescribed by the scriptures. By means of these practices, by knowledge and mainly by arresting the further influx of Karma by denying any kind of experience of pleasure and pain, one can ensure no further return of the soul into this world. When the soul is withdrawn perpetually from the world, the soul rests quietly in its own natural state. Liberation is thus, according to them, a state of utter painlessness as one of pleasurelessness. It consists in the freedom from any kind of experience. As Pārthasārathi describes it appropriately, "in such a state the liberated soul rests in its own natural state (svastha) as he is free from pleasure as well as pain."¹

Ganganāth Jha mentions a note from Śaṁkara Miśra from his Vādi Vinoda (p.40) in which it is stated that according to Prabhākara, Liberation consists in the Prāgabhāva -- absence before appearance -- of pain along with the total absence of pain; that is a state in which

¹ Pārthasārathi Miśra -- Śastraṇīpika -- 1.1.5. p.130.

Sukhaduḥkhaaviṁno ato muktaḥ svasthoavatīṣṭhatē.
there is no Pain and no likelihood of (appearance) of Pain.\(^1\) All future possibilities of the appearance of pain are eliminated for ever.

According to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa also, liberation consists in the destruction of the Karma and the prevention of the production of a future body. Unlike Prabhākara, Kumārila has explicitly stated his idea of mokṣa in Śloka Vārtika in the following passage -- "For those who have understood the real nature of the Soul, all their past Karma having become exhausted through experience, and there being no Karmic residuum left to wipe off, there comes no future body; as it is only for the experiencing of the reactions of past Karma that the soul is burdened with the Body; therefore, the seeker for liberation should not do any such act as has been forbidden or even what has been enjoined for certain purposes; (as both of these would bring about Karmic reaction which would have to be expiated by experience); but he should continue to perform the compulsory acts; as the omission of these would involve sin, which would have to be expiated by painful experience through a physical body."\(^2\) Kumārila agrees with the

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2. Śloka Vārtika -- (Sambandhakṣepa Parihāra) 108-110.
Prābhākaras in holding that, the experience is the root cause of bondage and dharma and adharma which for being exhausted by being experienced by the doer lead to future birth. Therefore, in order to attain a painless condition one has to exhaust the previous stock of accumulated Karma by experiencing it and to prevent the influx of new Karma so that it may not bind him even in the future. Kumārila therefore holds that in the state of liberation the soul exists in its natural condition which is characterised by the potency of knowledge and energy. Its forms of consciousness like cognition or intellect, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, effort, the impressions, merit and demerit are destroyed. The soul lies in its natural condition (Svastha).¹

The Vedānta holds that knowledge can burn the old stock of Karma (the saṃcita karma) but Kumārila does not seem to agree with it in this respect; however, he holds like it that knowledge helps the prevention of the accumulation of new Karma and leads to the stoppage of further embodiment of the Soul. Knowledge plays, according to Kumārila, only a negative role of preventing the accumulation of new Karma, but he also holds that knowledge

¹ Sastradīpika — See Muktisvarūpākathānām. 11.1.5. p.130.
cannot lead to the expiation of past Karma, which can be brought about only by experiencing it. He finds thus the necessity of knowledge to be employed for the arrest of future Karma (sañcāyamāna). He does not neglect the importance of knowledge for the attainment of release though he lays greater stress on duties.

Pārthasārathi mentions one view, that according to some Mīmāṃsakas, although the external organs cease to exist, the mind persists in the state of liberation and the soul rests experiencing the supreme happiness by means of the mind (mānasapratyakṣeṇa). The Bhaṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas hold that in the state of liberation no happiness can be enjoyed since the soul loses its contact with the sense organs including mind which, according to them, are absolutely necessary for enjoying happiness. There cannot be happiness because there are no sense organs with which happiness is enjoyed, and there cannot be sense organs since there is no body in which the sense organs

1. Miśra Pārthasārathi -- Śastradīpikā -- 1.1.5 pp.126,127.

Bāhyendriyāṇi eva muktasya nivartantē manastu
tasyāmavasthāyāmanuvartatē.
Tasyām muktyavasthāyāṁ mānasapratyakṣeṇa
paramānandamanubhhannātmāvatisthatē.

2. Ibid.p.127. Na ca muktasyendriyāṇi sambhavantīti
kathamānandānubhavaḥ syāt.
Nahi muktasyānandānubhavaḥ sambhavatī karaṇābhāvāt.

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reside, and there cannot be the body because there is no cause for the birth of the body as the Karma which causes rebirth is totally annihilated. Perhaps the soul may be possessing tranquillity and peace in liberation; it is also known as the bliss which may be regarded as the highest happiness; but of the supersensuous nature. Kumārila and Pārthasārathi seem to restrict the term 'sukha' only to sensuous happiness which can be experienced only by means of the sense organs. They are perfectly justified in holding that the liberated soul cannot enjoy the sensuous happiness. There seems to be some confusion between the meaning of the two words 'sukha' and 'ānanda'. Sukha — pleasure may be essentially an agreeable experience enjoyed by means of the sense organs while ānanda of the Vedānta may possess a kind of different connotation which may be better understood as the 'supersensuous happiness' which is characterised mainly by peace, tranquillity and illumination. On the contrary, sukha or pleasure may be mainly characterised by stimulation, excitation, physical disturbance and evanescence. Sukha or pleasure depends for being evoked upon external objects of stimulation and it lasts only for a few moments and, after it reaches its point of satiation, it no more interests the enjoyer. After the point of satiation is reached, it no more remains
inviting; on the contrary beyond its proper proportion it begins to become disagreeable, as it is limited by the physical capacities of the individual. It is not so with bliss or ānanda. It does not depend upon any external object for its generation and it has no restrictions. One is never tired of enjoying the peace and bliss. It can be eternal as the point of its satiation is never reached. It is beyond all physical limitations. We do not know whether the soul enjoys the bliss or ānanda of the supersensuous nature, although it is true that the liberated soul cannot enjoy the sensuous pleasures as there is no physical body and its sense organs. Moreover, such pleasures, even like the enjoyment of heaven, cannot mean the real liberation. If liberation consists in achieving such heavenly pleasures, then such a liberation cannot be lasting since it is caused, and all effects which are produced are evanescent. But liberation will be an everlasting attainment without a fear of relapse to the samsāra. And even besides its everlasting nature, it can be said that its everlasting character is negative because from that there is no further return to the samsāra or phenomenal life. The Mīmāṃsā idea of mokṣa is similar to that of the Nyāya Vaiṣeṣika Vedānta in so far as it seeks a state of painlessness and pleasurelessness and not of ānanda like the Vedānta.
Kumarila does not dogmatically oppose knowledge as required for the attainment of liberation. He does admit it as a necessity for attaining liberation. But he admits it on a different footing. The Nyāya Ratnākara explains that there are two kinds of self-knowledge according to the Mīmāṃsakas, and it is supported by Kumarila also.

The two forms of self-knowledge are -- (1) knowledge of soul as an entity distinct from the body and (2) that knowledge which takes the form of worship and meditation. Kumarila says that the knowledge of the soul of the former type has not been prescribed as a necessary prerequisite of liberation. It is not absolutely necessary to have the direct perception of the soul or the self-realization of the former type, to reach the final end of life. But the latter variety of self-knowledge has been prescribed as a necessary prerequisite of liberation by the scriptures. The knowledge that takes the form of worship and meditation leads to liberation. The Pūrva Mīmāṃsā stresses therefore, the need of learning the methods of right worship and meditation which are taught by it into details. The Pūrva Mīmāṃsā gives instructions into details as regards the methods of sacrifices, worship and meditation. It gives also supreme importance to the potency possessed by the words of the mantras. Kumarila Bhaṭṭa says -- "As for
the knowledge of the Soul, it is both Kratvartha -- helpful to the sacrifice and Purusārtha -- helpful to man; in as much as, unless one knows the Soul, he cannot undertake the performance of a sacrifice which is laid down as leading to results after death; and we find such Vedic texts as -- 'The Soul free from evil, is to be after etc....' which lay down the knowing of the Soul as to be acquired through reflection, etc.... and as leading to both kinds of results -- Happiness and Liberation. Then again, there is the text -- "He obtains all desires and passes beyond all sorrows"; which speaks of all the eight mystic Perfections (of Yoga) accruing to the person knowing the Soul; and then lastly there is the text "Passing his life thus, he reaches the regions of Brahman and from there never returns" which directly speaks of liberation (as resulting from Soul-knowledge).¹

In general, it can be said that the Mīmāṃsakas from Jaimini to Kumārila and their followers did not believe in God as the ultimate creator of the world or as the controller and supervisor of the world. Śabaraswāmī did not accept the existence of God for it was not necessary

¹. Tantravārtika. p.321. under Sūtra 1.3. Adhikaraṇa 9. (English Tr.)
and it would have challenged the supremacy of the words of the Vedic mantras. The Mīmāṁsakas were very eager to maintain the supremacy of the Vedic hymns over all other things. They did not find it logically necessary to believe in such ultimate agency as God; Śabara maintained that belief in God is only through tradition and convention; there is no philosophical ground to it. Even Prabhākara believes like Śabara that God is unnecessary and words of the Vedic hymns are self-sufficient. They can exist by themselves; they do not require any originator nor any support. He also believes that the words possess enough power to enable an individual to reach the heaven when he performs the prescribed sacrifices with genuine faith in them. The Mīmāṁsā system is not in favour of believing in God as the ultimate originator or creator of the world. The Naiyāyikas believe in God as the ultramundane supervisor of the workings of the dharma and adharma. The problem is how God is connected with his control over the dharma and adharma. The control cannot be combined with God by means of conjunction (śamyoga) because conjunction becomes possible only between two independent substances and dharma and adharma are not substances, but only qualities. Nor can it be related to God by means of samavāya or inherence as dharma and
adharma inhere in other souls and hence they cannot inhere in God.

It is however true that the capacity of guidance and supervision cannot exist in the atoms or particles as they are unintelligent. Guidance or supervision necessarily implies some kind of intellectual manipulation of relations of the things of the world. Similarly, individual souls are powerless to guide and supervise the working of the whole world. Prabhakara does not find any necessity of there being any originator of the world, since he looks upon the universe as a continuous process which has incessant internal change in it but which has no beginning and no end. Everything is causally related in an orderly fashion and the universe works systematically with the agelong laws of nature. He does not think that there is any necessity of the interference of an ultra-mundane agency to run the universe. The orderliness of the world is due to the mechanical rigidity of the operation of the principle of adṛṣṭa, which is supposed to be the ultimate determiner and regulator of the world-affairs. Therefore, the necessity of the existence of God does not arise. It is difficult to conceive that the atoms act by God's will since we find that the movements of the atoms are
controlled by the individual souls. Kumārila also critically examines the problem of God and sees no reason of admitting the existence of God. He examines the various grounds on which God's existence is proved and finds that none of them is conclusive and convincing.