

I. Karma-mimamsa -- Elevation through the performance of duty

A. Karma refers to any action that results in a reaction, whether it be good or bad

1. Mimamsa means to analyze and understand thoroughly
2. Karma-mimamsa and vedanta are closely related to each other and are in some ways complimentary
3. Karma-mimamsa may be understood as a stepping stone to vedanta
4. The karma-mimamsa system is called purva-mimamsa, which means earlier study of the Veda

B. Main goal of Mimamsa:

1. Provide methodology to utilize Vedic religion (dharma) to satisfy urges for wealth (artha) & sense pleasure (kama)
2. Provides materialistic explanation of Vedic rituals
3. Also discusses science of sound and science of mantra
4. It presents Vedic religion as science of mechanistic principles, not adoration of divinities for benedictions

C. The Concept of Duty

1. Dharma translated as "virtue," "duty," "morality," or "religion," but no English word conveys meaning
2. Mimamsa: dharma is intrinsic nature of rta, breath of cosmic life
3. There is always a hierarchy in one's duties
 - a. One's scripturally authorized role in life provides key to knowing one's primary duty
 - b. Highest duty of teacher is to teach, student is to study, doctor is to take care of his patients
 - c. Mimamsa proclaims that Vedic rituals are highest duties a brahmana has to perform

II. Ritual Duty

A. Most people lack positive attitude of inspiration toward daily duties, performing them only to earn money or status

1. Ritualism illumined by philosophy gives one awareness of deep significance of even small duties of life
2. Everyone has morning routine composed of steps - toilet, brushes teeth, wash face, shave, take shower, dress
 - a. Today rituals only done to simply reach office at exactly 9:00
 - b. As result he does not experience any fulfillment from activities he performs
3. In short, a ritual is a meditation-- When a brahmana makes breakfast as oblation to fire of digestion

B. Rituals are performed not to worship or please deity but because Veda commands one to perform them

1. Rituals are practiced for sake of duty
2. Food cooked & thru use of mantras, Cosmic Deity (mahapurusa) invited to partake of food, grant blessings in return
3. Offering not made as act of devotion but mahapurusa obliged by ritual to accept offering and give benedictions
4. Mastery of ritual is mastery over powers of universe

III. The Science of Mantra

A. Generic term for all Vedic verses and sentences is mantra

1. Veda is embodiment of knowledge expressed in form of sound and symbolically represented in script
2. Karma-mimamsa accepts sound (sabda) as eternal
3. Places great emphasis on mantras than it does on gods and goddesses - only believes in validity of science of sound

B. Karma-mimamsa not study sound only at its articulated level

1. It explores subtle levels of sound by delving into its origin and realizing its various vibrational patterns
2. Sound is called vak in Sanskrit, but this word cannot be translated merely as "sound", or "speech."
3. Vak refers to both thought and expression, while speech is communication of thoughts & feelings thru spoken words
4. Vak shakti, power of speech -- categorizes vak shakti at 4 levels:
 - a. Para, (transcendent)
 - b. Pasyanti (concentrated thought pattern)
 - c. Madhyama (formulated through thought patterns ready for expression)
 - d. Vaikhari (expression with the help of words)

C. Sabda (sound) and artha (object denoted by that sound) are universally intertwined factors

1. One signifies name, and other signifies form
2. They are inseparably associated -- can be no sabda without artha, no artha without sabda
3. Together, they are self-existent reality not subject to change, death, decay
4. As they manifest, a double line of creation -- words and objects -- is formed

D. 1st and finest state of sound, called para vak, is perfect

1. Mimamsa holds eternal para vak to be cause of all causes
2. Any vibration that can be perceived by physical instruments such as ears is only gross manifestation
3. Physical sound is inadequate for attainment of ultimate state of consciousness signified by para vak

E. 2nd phase of sound called pasyanti vak

1. There is only slight difference between state of para and that of pasyanti
2. Both transcendental, but in pasyanti, subtle form of universe "seen" in sound as primeval artha (object of desire)
 - a. Prior to creation, Lord Brahma sees subtle universal form after meditating upon divine sound "tapa tapa"
 - b. In this state power of desire remains dormant but is nonetheless direct cause of universe
3. This language of silence is universal language and is source of all language and speech

F. 3rd state is called madhyama and is state of speech is neither transcendent (pasyanti), nor manifest (vaikhari)

2. It is between these two stages

G. Finally, 4th state of speech is completely manifest and audible

1. At this stage, a sound that belongs to a specific language can be perceived through sense of hearing
2. This state of sound always accompanied by geographical, cultural and social distinctions
3. Origin of speech transcendent and eternal

H. All speech that passes through human mind becomes contaminated with limitations of time, space, and causation

1. Ultimate truth is veiled in everyday speech, but this is not case with mantras
2. Mantras not mere words but specific sound vibrations experienced by sages in deepest state of meditation
3. They are said to be sound-bodies of certain aspects of cosmic forces

IV. The Karma-mimamsa Concept of Gods and Goddesses

A. Deities or gods are personified forms of principles that correspond to vibrating sound patterns of mantras

1. $E=MC^2$: This formula can help to comprehend nature and dynamics of universe
2. The karma-mimamsakas have a similar conception of Vedic mantras as do physicists of their formulas.

B. Critics of Mimamsa accuse system of promoting polytheism, but there is an underlying unity

1. Mimamsakas believe in all-pervading consciousness that manifests itself in different stages
2. Each has different form (deity) and sound vibration (mantra)
 - a. A deity is a gross physical form of a mantra, and a mantra is a subtle form of a deity
 - b. When sequence of vibration of mantra is materialized into particular form or shape, that is called a deity
 - c. Likewise, materialized form can be dematerialized & reduced to frequencies of vibration heard as mantra

C. There are certain rules by which mantra converts into a deity and a deity converts into mantra

1. Both deities & mantras operate on principle similar to conversion of energy to matter & matter to energy in physics
2. Wherever particular ritual performed with proper utilization of mantras, deity related to those mantras is present
3. The vision of deity does not depend on grace of that deity
 - a. The deity/form, manifested wherever mantra related to it is pronounced in prescribed manner
 - b. Then has to yield desired objects believed to be provided by it

D. There is prescribed way for gathering these items for ritual and handling and using them during ceremony

1. Ex: Before blade of grass uprooted one is to recite specific mantra to revere divinity within grass
2. Then one must ask permission to uproot grass and use it in ceremony
3. When grass uprooted one recites another mantra

E. The Concept of Soul

1. Karma-mimamsa not pursue metaphysics but instead emphasizes practical approach of karma-yoga
 - a. Main doctrine of karma-yoga is: "As you sow, so shall you reap."
 - b. Accordingly, one is master of his own destiny and is free to enjoy his karma as either master or slave
2. Rituals have 3 components: the performer, the object of action, and process of performing it
3. Karma-mimamsa considers soul to be an eternal, infinite substance with capacity for consciousness
4. Implicit in karma-mimamsa is belief that soul is meant to enjoy matter