

Definition of Dharma According To Purva Mimamsa

Gede Arisudana Dharmakarma

Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar

Email: gedearis16@gmail.com

Abstract: *The concept of Dharma has a central position in the teachings of Purva Mimamsa, an ancient school of Hindu philosophy and religion. Dharma, in the context of Purva Mimamsa, is a moral and spiritual foundation that regulates human behavior, as well as providing guidelines regarding obligations and actions that must be followed in accordance with Vedic teachings. However, a deep understanding of the definition of Dharma according to Purva Mimamsa is still an important research subject in understanding the values and principles in Hindu philosophy. This research uses a text analysis and criticism approach to the classical Purva Mimamsa texts which discuss the concept of Dharma. Primary texts such as the Jaimini Sutras and other works are analyzed in depth to identify and understand the definition of Dharma according to Purva Mimamsa. A philosophical research approach is also applied to explore aspects of metaphysics, epistemology and ethics contained in the Dharma concept. The research results show that according to Purva Mimamsa, Dharma is an obligation or action stated in the Vedic teachings. It includes a set of ritual rules, morality, and social obligations that individuals must live by to maintain cosmic balance and social order. Dharma in Purva Mimamsa is not only a moral obligation, but also a spiritual foundation that forms the basis for justice, truth and harmony in society. The emphasis is on carrying out tasks with selfless devotion and deep understanding of sacred teachings, in order to achieve higher spiritual goals.*

Keywords: Dharma, Purva Mimamsa, Definition, Obligation, Ritual, Morality, Spirituality

I. Introduction

Dharma is a Sanskrit word from the root word 'dhr' which means to hold, hold, or support. Furthermore, 'dharma' has a basic meaning, namely obligation, rules and truth. This term dharma is used based on Vedic teachings such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism. Dharma in Hinduism itself is any behavior or action that allows individuals to achieve happiness and satisfaction in their lives. However, universally the word dharma means eternal law, protector, guardian or truth. Hindus themselves believe in the teachings of religious dharma and state dharma in carrying out their daily lives, and all Hindus have an obligation to be responsible and obliged to be able to carry out their *swadharma* towards the state and religion at the same time. State dharma and religious dharma are usually used as a benchmark for how a human being succeeds in living his life. The following will be discussed in more depth about Dharma Negara and Dharma Agama (Koller, 1972).

Dharma Agama itself means that we as Hindus are obliged to be able to strengthen our *sraddha* and devotion to Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa and carry out religious teachings in a complete and balanced manner in accordance with the teachings of Hinduism. Dharma Agama is a duty and obligation that must be carried out by all people in order to achieve the goals of the religion they adhere to, where religion is a guide for a person to live life and achieve happiness. Or it could also be said that religious dharma is a law, duty, right and obligation for every person to be able to submit and obey in carrying out religious teachings and various aspects contained in their religious teachings. Religious dharma contains very high moral teachings which are worth living by motivating ourselves so that we have a more convincing driving force so that we will not be afraid to act because what we do is based on the teachings of dharma or truth. We can apply this religious dharma by living and practicing all the teachings taught by Hinduism in order to achieve a peaceful life, and we can do this by getting closer to God or Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa and applying the teachings of Tri Hita Karana (Donald, 2006).

The teaching of Dharma in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is an investigation of dharma and for the sake of dharma. Investigation of the desire to know the dharma that will lead humans to the highest goal. Although dharma is presented in an unbroken state through the Vedic tradition, it is not the object itself handed over from one generation to another by the scriptures, but must be acquired through each human consciousness within a tradition. Continuous acquisition is a constituent of tradition that appears to be the act of passing on, or continuing, an existing one. True knowledge of dharma is in fact only achieved when a person's views and performance (his own life) are formed so that what must be understood will become clear in real life, because humans are part of his understanding. The Dharma in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā only discusses the teachings of rituals or ceremonies in accordance with Vedic instructions. By understanding knowledge about dharma teachings, especially in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, it can be used as guidance, guidance and motivation in carrying out Hindu religious ritual activities.

Pūrva Mīmāṃsā specifically studies parts of the Veda, namely the Brahmana books and Kalpasutra, while other parts (Arāṇyaka and Upaniṣad) are discussed by Uttara Mīmāṃsā which is also known by the popular name, namely Vedānta. Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is also called Karma Mīmāṃsā. The founder of this teaching is Maha Rsi Jaimini. The main source is the belief in the truth and absoluteness of ceremonies in the Vedic scriptures (Brahmin Kalpasutra). Mīmāṃsā teaches that the ultimate goal of humanity is *moksa*, and the way to achieve it is by carrying out religious ceremonies as mentioned in the Vedic scriptures (Bartley 2013).

The implementation of rituals in Mīmāṃsā is always based on ethics. When making an offering, you must have an empty heart and full awareness as a form of worship, without being tainted by any sense of selfishness. The analogy is, like taking water with a container, the tool or container used must be empty, so that there is space for the water to be taken. The author also compares the same thing with local dialectics in learning activities, that before studying, a student must be able to reduce or free up a little space in the mind, to be able to absorb the knowledge explained by the teacher. Likewise, the concept of offerings or rituals emphasizes the aspect of obligation as a human being, making an offering to God, with an empty or sincere heart, without any pretensions or excesses. These empty offerings or rituals will be rewarded for the sake of continuity or harmony of the three aspects of Tri Hita Karana. Mutual synergy and interconnectedness between God, nature and humans.

Potter (2014) views that the ritual in Mīmāṃsā, is an obligation or duty as a human being living on earth, to give offerings to God without any request, but with an empty heart, because in the offering or ritual, there is already a purpose or meaning that later, these offerings will be rewarded according to human needs and come at the right time. That is the concept of offering in Mīmāṃsā, which is an obligation that must be carried out, commanded by the sacred Vedic literature. An obligation that is carried out without any taint of selflessness attached to its implementation.

Method

There are several methods used in this research: First, Text Analysis and Criticism: This method involves in-depth analysis of the classical Purva Mimamsa texts which discuss the concept of Dharma. This involves identification, understanding, and interpretation of original texts as well as criticism of emerging views. Second, Philosophical Research: This method considers the philosophical aspects of the Dharma concept in Purva Mimamsa. This includes exploring aspects of metaphysics, epistemology and ethics contained in Purva Mimamsa's teachings about Dharma.

Third, Historical and Contextual Studies: This involves tracing the historical development of Purva Mimamsa, as well as the social, cultural and political contexts in which the teachings emerged. This can help in understanding how the concept of Dharma in the Purva Mimamsa developed over time and how it was influenced by external factors. Fourth, Comparative Research: This method involves comparing the concept of Dharma in the Purva Mimamsa with similar concepts in other philosophical or religious traditions. This can provide greater insight into the significance and uniqueness of the concept of Dharma in the context of Purva Mimamsa.

Fifth, Interviews and Observations: To gain a deeper understanding of how the Dharma concept in Purva Mimamsa is applied in daily life practices, interviews can be conducted with Purva Mimamsa practitioners or experts, as well as direct observations of related ritual activities or religious practices. The combination of various research methods can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of Dharma in Purva Mimamsa and its implications in social, cultural and spiritual contexts.

II. Discussion

Pūrva Mīmāṃsā has a primary focus on the ritual and legal aspects contained in the Vedas, and therefore, its ontology is more related to the understanding of existence and reality related to the performance of ritual actions. Although the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā does not explicitly discuss the concept of ontology as some other schools of philosophy do, some of the principles and views in the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā can be considered to have ontological implications. Some aspects of ontology in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā involve:

1. *Ātman* (Individual): Pūrva Mīmāṃsā accepts the concept of *Ātman*, which is the immortal soul of the individual and is not linked to the physical body. However, the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā does not emphasize in-depth research into the ontological nature of the *Ātman* as is the case in other philosophical schools such as Vedānta.
2. *Satyam* (Reality): The concept of reality (*satyam*) in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is more related to the truth of the Vedic teachings and the performance of appropriate ritual actions. Righteousness is measured by the degree to which the action conforms to Vedic instructions, and broader ontological truths may not be explicitly in focus.
3. Brahman and Devas: Although Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is more concentrated on the ritual and legal aspects of the Vedas, the concepts of Brahman (ultimate reality) and devas are also present in the Vedic teachings. However, its interpretation and emphasis may differ from other schools of philosophy such as Vedānta.
4. *Yajña* (Sacrificial Ceremonies): *Yajña* is one of the central aspects in the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, and through the performance of these ceremonies, it is thought that certain ontological aspects of reality can be manifested or connected.

Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is more prominent in its legal and ritualistic aspects, and therefore, its ontology tends to be more related to concepts related to the performance of the Vedic Karma Kanda (the ritual part of the Veda). A deeper and more detailed ontological view may be found in other schools of Hindu philosophy, such as Vedānta, which deepens the understanding of existence, ultimate reality, and the relationship between *Ātman* and Brahman.

Simply put, Dharma is about doing the right thing. This includes the principles of good living, such as following rules, caring for family and society, and being kind to others. We can get knowledge about Dharma from religious teachings, traditions, and logical thinking. In everyday life, Dharma means carrying out one's duties well, being fair to everyone, and sacrificing oneself for the common good. This is important because it helps maintain balance in the world and makes us live happily and feel free.

Most Indian philosophical and religious systems treat Dharma differently. Concentration on the concept of Dharma discussed in Hinduism is from the word Dharma which etymologically comes from the Sanskrit root "*dhṛ-dharati*", which means to hold,

maintain, uphold, bear, etc. In totality, Dharma means that which keeps the universe in order. In the current context, Dharma means ethics, virtue, morality, truth, good behavior and so on (Verpoorten, 1987).

The discussion of the definition of dharma in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā uses deontological theory. This theory can provide interesting insights in discussing the definition of dharma in Purva Mimamsa. In this context, deontology highlights the importance of permanent moral obligations, strictness towards the rules confirmed in the teachings and ritual actions contained in the Vedas. Dharma In Purva Mimamsa has a deep meaning which includes the obligations and duties stipulated by Vedic teachings. In the context of Purva Mimamsa, Dharma often focuses on the ritual and moral obligations enforced by Vedic teachings, especially in the passages called Karma-kanda. This dharma-kanda details various ritual ceremonies and worldly obligations that must be carried out by individuals according to their position and role in society.

Purva Mimamsa emphasizes the importance of understanding and properly carrying out these duties, as it is believed that fulfilling the Dharma in worldly life is an important part of one's spiritual journey. According to Purva Mimamsa, adherence to Vedic teachings and the performance of these Dharma duties is the key to achieving higher spiritual goals.

In the context of Purva Mimamsa, Dharma is also closely related to the concept of karma, where the actions taken by individuals will influence their fate in the next life. Therefore, it is important for one to understand and carry out Dharma duties with full dedication and fidelity. Overall, in the Purva Mimamsa, Dharma refers to the ritual and moral obligations laid down by the teachings of the Vedas, which must be adhered to by the individual in order to attain spiritual liberation. Here are some definitions of Dharma in the Purva Mimamsa text:

Chodana implementing arthah dharmah
(adhikarana II sutra 2 Purva Mimamsa of Jaimini)

"Actions instructed or commanded by the Vedas constitute Dharma."

"*Chodanalaksanah arthah dharmah*" is a principle related to the concept of Dharma in Hinduism, including in Purva Mimamsa. This principle states that actions or actions that are based on appropriate guidance or instructions constitute Dharma. In the context of Purva Mimamsa, "*Chodana*" refers to instructions or actions commanded by the Veda, while "*laksanah*" means indication or sign, and "*arthah*" means purpose or meaning. So, literally, the expression can be translated as "The action commanded is Dharma."

This shows that in the teachings of Purva Mimamsa, Dharma is closely related to the understanding and implementation of the teachings contained in the Veda. Actions in accordance with the instructions contained in the Vedas are considered Dharma, because it is believed that the Vedas are the highest authority in religious and moral life. The concept of "*Chodanalaksanah arthah dharmah*" emphasizes the importance of following the instructions contained in the sacred teachings and taking actions in accordance with the values taught by the Vedas as a path to achieving the highest goals in spiritual and moral life.

In the previous *adhikarana*, the conclusion was drawn that an inquiry into the nature of Dharma is necessary. The next question that arises is: Is there possibly a definition of Dharma? or is there a valid means to know what Dharma is? Pūrvaśāstra's argument is that there can be no 'definition' of Dharma, because we can only define things of the ordinary world of which we have knowledge, while Dharma is something that transcends the world, and as something that does not have its distinctive features known, it cannot be defined. Regarding the means of knowing the Dharma, no means is possible, because it cannot be perceived by the senses, and what is absolutely beyond the senses cannot be grasped by Inference, for the same reason, it must be beyond all words and phrases.

Therefore, it must be recognized that (1) there can be no definition of Dharma and (2) there can be no reliable means of knowing what Dharma is, and in such circumstances Dharma must be rejected as something that does not exist, so that the whole inquiry becomes aimless. and in vain. In answer to this, the final conclusion is that - (1) Dharma can be defined as the desired thing mentioned or established by the Vedic Injunction, in other words, what the Vedic injunction instructs as leading to the desired end is Dharma, and from this also it can be concluded that the Vedic Injunction is the only means to know the Dharma. Thus, the three ideas conveyed by the teachings are - (1) that Dharma is yang, etc., etc., (2) that the Vedic Injunctions are the only means of knowing Dharma, and (3) that the Vedic Injunctions are absolutely trustworthy. So then, once Dharma is well defined, and a valid and reliable means of knowing it is found available, it cannot be rejected as something that does not exist.

"tasya nimitta Parishthi"
(adhikarana III sutra 3 Purva Mimamsa of Jaimini)

"Understanding Dharma knowledge requires deep exploration."

This concept is related to the analysis of the causes or factors that regulate the implementation of rituals and dharmic obligations. Purva Mimamsa observes the close connection between ritual actions (*karma-kanda*) and the fulfillment of dharmic obligations (*dharmakanda*). Ritual actions are associated with clear and specific obligatory goals in the Vedas. In this context, "*tasya nimitta parishthi*" refers to the understanding of the conditions or factors that lead to a particular ritual action or dharmic obligation.

For example, in interpreting a ritual injunction in the Vedas, a Purva Mimamsa scholar will consider factors such as the social context, the individual situation, and the goals to be achieved through the performance of the ritual. They will pay attention to certain conditions that influence the implementation of the ritual, including time, place, participants, and the reasons behind the implementation of the ritual. By understanding "*tasya nimitta paristhiti*," a practitioner or scholar of Purva Mimamsa can interpret the Vedas carefully and understand the practical implications of ritual actions as well as the associated dharmic obligations. This helps ensure that ritual performance is carried out in accordance with the norms laid down in Vedic teachings and provides a deeper understanding of the importance of context in understanding religious teachings.

"sat samprayoge purusasya indriyanam biddhi janma tat pratyaksam animittam widyamana upalam bhanat"
(adhikarana IV sutra 4 Purva Mimamsa of Jaimini)

"Human recognition that takes place through contact of the senses with existing objects is sense perception, and this is not a means (of knowing dharma) because it only perceives objects that exist at this moment."

The question posed in the previous aphorism is: Can dharma be known only through the Vedas, or through other means of knowledge as well? The immediate argument is that as an 'object of knowledge', dharma must be accessible to all means of knowledge. The final conclusion is that although dharma is an object of knowledge, it cannot be reached by sense perception, because sense perception can only recognize objects that are present at the time of perception, and are in direct contact with one or more organs of perception. These conditions are not fulfilled by dharma: it is not an object that exists at the moment of perception, but must be brought into existence by a specific action of the agent, and it is also impossible to be in direct contact with the organ of perception, because it has no external form and responsibility. answer. Moreover, Inference, Presumptive Reasoning, and Negation all more or less directly depend on sense perception, since each has its basis in some fact of sense perception.

Therefore, whatever can never be reached by sense perception cannot be understood either by Inference or Presumptive Reasoning or Negation. Therefore, verbal authority is the only one of the recognized 'means of knowledge' that can provide knowledge of the dharma. Of verbal authority too, only the Veda has its validity beyond all doubt, and only the Veda can provide truly valid knowledge. It will be shown later that of the Vedas too, only those portions which are purely injunctive can be considered as intrinsically valid. Therefore, it can be concluded that truly valid knowledge of dharma can only be obtained through Vedic Injunctions (Zimmer, 1951). The undisputed authority of these injunctions becomes the 'topic' of the next adhikarana.

"autpatikah tu sabdasya arthena sambandhah tasya jnanam upadesah avyatikah arthe anupalabdhe tat pramanam badarayanasya anapeksatvat"
(adhikarana V sutra 5 Purva Mimamsa of Jaimini)

"The connection between words and their meanings is innate (and eternal), therefore commandment (which is a form of words) is a means of knowing dharma, and it will not fail in the case of objects that are not comprehended (by other means of knowledge), it has authority, according to Bâdarayana, primarily because it is independent or independent in its authority."

The question that arises after the conclusion that valid knowledge of dharma cannot be obtained from Sense Perception, Inference, etc., is - Can valid knowledge of dharma be obtained from Vedic Injunctions? The immediate argument is that it cannot be believed that the Vedic Injunctions have any reliability, because in the case of statements of trustworthy persons, it is found that we can only know what they stated after we have understood the meaning of the words contained in the statement, and it is a known fact that the meaning of words is understood only by reference to things like cows and the like in the ordinary world, whereas Dharma is something that transcends the world, and therefore the fact that it is expressed through any words cannot be ascertained by whatever means we have, it must be admitted that, insofar as the Dharma cannot be revealed to us through any words, the Vedic Injunctions cannot provide reliable information regarding it (Ramaswami, 1936).

Then again, in all cases of verbal perception, we find that it is only after objects and words have arisen independently of each other, that the people of the world establish by convention a certain relation between the two, based on which, one becomes expressed or indicated by another, and these conventions, which establish such relationships, are derived from human sources, are prone to error, as is everything human, consequently, all such relationships between words and meaning, which are human in origin, cannot be trusted, and since all verbal knowledge depends on such relations, knowledge or know-how, obtained from injunctions, which ultimately consists only of words, can never have the reliability which all things connected with dharma. The Mahābhārata says:

*dhāraṇāt dharmamityahurdharmo dhārayate prajāḥ |
yat syāt dhāraṇasamyuktam sa dharma iti niścayaḥ*

"Dharma is that which perpetuates the social order"
(karna-parvaḥ, 58-59)

According to Kalidasa:

*anena dharmah saviśeṣamadya me trivargasārah pratibhāti bhāmini |
tvayā manonirviṣayārthakāmayā yadeka eva pratigrhya sevayate*

“Dharma is the essence or fruit of *Trivargas*”
(Kumārasambhavam, 5. 37)

Here can be quoted some of the views of scholars regarding Dharma.

“The term Dharma is most difficult to define and it continually vacillates within its semantic boundaries. Dharma has broad and varied connotations in Indian thought. This can be interpreted variously as obedience to customs, duties, statutory regulations, laws, obligations, actions carried out by oneself ethically, socially and spiritually, rights, justice, good behavior, truth; virtue, morality, religion, quality, divinity, abstract phenomena etc” (Padmadas K.L., 2016: 70).

“Dharma according to its definition, *Varṇāśramadharmā*, is the Dharma about castes and stages of life. The caste system and stages of life, which are included in the Dharma system, are the framework in which the entire content of the Dharma is intertwined” (Olivelle Patrick, 2004: 478).

“Dharma is one of the most central and ubiquitous concepts in the Brāhmaṇikal tradition and the meaning of Dharma has changed somewhat over the centuries.” (Padmadas K.L., 2016:70).

The Kāmasūtra begins by paying respects to the *Trivarga*, the first-possessing Dharma (*dharmārthakāmebhyo namaḥ*). Even as the text aims to popularize *Kāma*, Dharma is also discussed with importance and it can be seen that Vātsyāyana strictly follows the principles of Dharma throughout the Kāmasūtra. In the Trivargapatipatiprakaraṇa chapter, to increase general awareness about the Trivargas, a definition is given for each of them. Dharma is defined and classified as follows:

“Discernment concerns things that are visible and invisible. Due to its supernatural and invisible effects, the practice of yajña and other ritual ceremonies can only be known through sacred texts (Super visible Virtue). Due to its material and visible nature, actions such as not eating meat, which are prohibited by the text, are a matter of morality or Dharma (Visible Virtue). One should behave according to the instructions of those who know the scriptures.”

*alaukikatvāddr̥ṣṭārthatvādvpravr̥ttānām yajñādīnām śāstrātpurvartanam |
laukikatvāddr̥ṣṭārthatvācca pravr̥ttebhyascca māmsabhakṣaṇādibhyaḥ śāstrādeva nivāraṇam dharmah | tam
śruterdharmajñāsamavāyācca pratipadyeta ||*
(Kāmasūtra, 1. 2. 7-8)

When we use the word ‘dharma’ from a worldly perspective, we are thinking about how society will be nourished (dharana) and benefited. Manu says that ‘dharma’ which is ‘*asukhodarka*’, meaning, ‘which ultimately results in unhappiness must be abandoned (Manu. 4.176 Cited from Motilal Bimal Krishna, “Moral Dilemmas in the Mahabharata”, p-61) and Bhishma says in Satyanrtodyaya Santiparva (Santiparva. 109, p-33-37.12), where the explanation of ‘dharma’ and ‘adharmā’ is made, before that, Krishna also says in Karnaparva:

*dharanad dharmamityahur dharmo dharayate prajah |
yat syad dharana sanyuk'am sa dharmā iti niscayah |*
(Mahabharata. Karna. 69.59 from Dutt M.N, p-267.)

This means, “the word dharma comes from the root word ‘*drh*’, namely to hold or uphold, and all humanity is united by dharma. The thing that unites (all mankind) is dharma” (Tilak: Gitarahasya tr by Bhalchandra Sitaram Suthankar, P-90)

Dharma restores the true meaning of values in social thought. Dharma means the flow of evolution in life. It offers a wide range of areas of stimulation and examples for all aspirants. It combines individual self-realization and social well-being. The word dharma has appeared many times in the Mahabharata, and whenever it is said there that a person is bound to do certain things in accordance with his dharma, the word dharma means the science of ethics (*kartavya Sastra*). Or then sociology (*samaja-vyavastha-sastra*); and whenever there is an opportunity to refer to the path leading to the happiness of the next world, in the second half of the Santiparva, the special word ‘moksa-dharma’ is used. Manusmṛiti (The Manusmṛiti (1.108), from Motilal Bimal. Krishna, “Moral Dilemmas in the Mahabharata”, p-54) states:

paramo dharmā event

“Good behavior is the best dharma.”

Manusmṛiti further explains that:

*vedah smrtih sadacarah svasya ca priyam atmanah
etaccaturvidham prahuh saksad dharmasyalaksanam*

(The Manusmṛiti 2.12 from Motilal Bimal.Krishna, “Moral Dilemmas in the Mahabharata”, p-54)

“The Vedas are sacred traditions, customs followed by virtuous people, and self-indulgence and the four visible characteristics of dharma.”

Vaisesika calls as the dharma responsible for prosperity (abhyudaya) as well as final emancipation (nihsreyas). The Mahabharata (The Mahabharata 3.149.28), in the context of purusārtha, also defines dharma in a similar way:

acara sambhaya dharmo, dharmad-vedah, samutihitah

“Dharma originates from good practice and the Vedas are established in dharma.”

Dharma refers to “right action”. The main aim of Mīmāṃsā is to establish the nature of right action (Dharma). Mīmāṃsā's basic premise is that action is fundamental to the human condition. Without application, knowledge is useless; without action, happiness is impossible; without action, human destiny cannot be fulfilled; therefore, right action (Dharma) is the sine-qua-non of a meaningful life on earth.

Jaimini defines Dharma as: *codanā-lakṣaṇaḥ arthaḥ dharmah* (Mīmāṃsā Sūtra, 1.1.2) “Dharma is that which leads to the highest common good (*śreyas*) and is differentiated on the basis of Vedic injunctions”. ‘*Codana*’ means ‘to inspire’, that is, the word or order of an authorized person; do this or don't do this. Dharma or law is the subject of Mīmāṃsā. Dharma is “right living” determined by universal ethical practices and personal morals. “Dharma” cannot be known through empirical means such as cognition. This can only be known through intuition or through impersonal sources of knowledge. The problem with relying on reason or intuition is that each person will come to different conclusions regarding the ultimate nature of “Goodness” (Müller, 1899).

There is endless controversy regarding most or even all ethical issues played out by “experts” who take sides on one side or another. Therefore, the best and most universal source of Dharma is an “impersonal” source such as the Veda. Dharma is action ordered by the Vedas through its governing verses and which is beneficial for the happiness of all beings. Dharma has been taken as a Vedic commandment. It imbibes the following characteristics: (1) Implies the soul to act. (2) It leads to the attainment of the highest good. (3) It shows the nature of good and evil (Acharya Madhava:” *Sarvadarshan Sangraha*”, trans by Cowell,E.b and Gough,A.E 288-89)

All actions such as the performance of sacrifices, ceremonies, etc., prescribed by the Vedas, along with all the materials required to perform them, should be considered as dharma. The entire Veda defines dharma and no part of it is considered meaningless or without any purpose. Mīmāṃsāka argued that dharma was not created by anyone, not even by kings or other powers such as gods. It is eternal and supreme. Its authority is not taken from any other source. There is no lawgiver like the God of the Naiyayikas. It has its own intrinsic validity as a self-revealing transcendental moral law found in the Vedas. So the Vedas are basically the ‘*pramana*’ (source of knowledge) to know what dharma is.

Dharma is actually a matter of moral order in human society. In Mimamsa this is considered the eternal, absolute and highest law. Mīmāṃsā places the responsibility on humans to fulfill the requirements of dharma and live life accordingly. as already mentioned in the Vedas, the Vedas provide criteria for knowing what is right and what is wrong. So, a life led in obedience to the Vedic injunctions is considered a good life.

Thus, dharma in the Indian conception is not just goodness, rights, morality, and justice, ethics; it is the overall government of all human relations with other creatures, with nature, with God, viewed from the perspective of the divine principle which operates in the forms and laws of action, the forms of inner and outer life, order. relationships of all kinds in the world. Dharma is something that unites our outer and inner activities. In its primary sense, this means the fundamental law of our nature which secretly conditions all our activities, and in this sense every being, kind, species, individual, has its own set of dharmas (Aurobindo: *Essays On The Gita*, p-162 -163)

In the context of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, the term “dharma” refers to the concept of duty, right action, or ethical norms derived from Vedic teachings. Dharma has an important role in the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, and this concept is closely related to his philosophical views on the performance of ritual actions and Vedic law. In Mīmāṃsā, dharma includes:

1. **Ritualistic Obligations:** Dharma, according to Mīmāṃsā, refers to the ritualistic obligations or actions that must be performed by individuals in accordance with the teachings of the Vedas. This includes the performance of sacrificial rites (*yajñas*), duties towards the gods, and other acts described in the Vedas.
2. **Ethical Norms:** Dharma also includes ethical norms that guide moral and social behavior. Mīmāṃsākas argue that these norms can be identified and implemented through a correct understanding of the Vedic teachings.
3. **Obligations of Daily Life:** Dharma is not only concerned with ritual actions, but also with everyday actions. Understanding and implementing dharma in Mīmāṃsā guides individuals in living their daily lives in accordance with the procedures stipulated in the Veda.
4. **Correct Understanding of the Vedas:** According to Mīmāṃsā, correct understanding of the Vedas is very important to know what dharma really is. Accurate interpretation of Vedic teachings, especially in the context of the Karma Kanda (ritual portion), is the key to determining and understanding ethical obligations and norms.

5. Achievement of Well-being: The implementation of dharma, according to Mīmāṃsā, is not just an obligation, but is also a way to achieve well-being and happiness both in this life and in the life after death (Radhakrishnan, 1967).

In the context of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, dharma is not only a set of moral rules, but also as a guide for the implementation of ritual actions and ceremonies in accordance with Vedic teachings. Understanding and fulfilling dharma is considered the path to achieving the higher goals of life. Mīmāṃsā Sūtras," written by Jaimini, is a major work in the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā that sets out the principles of interpreting Vedic rituals and guides the performance of ritual actions. Following are some of the sūtras that highlight the concept of dharma in the "Mīmāṃsā Sūtras":

Mīmāṃsā Sūtras 1.1.1:

Athato dharma-jijnasa

Meaning: "Now, therefore, we begin the inquiry into duty or dharma."

This Sūtra marks the beginning of the Mīmāṃsā Sūtras and shows the main aim of this philosophy, namely the investigation and understanding of ritual obligations or actions.

Mīmāṃsā Sūtras 1.1.2:

Sastras yonitvat

Meaning: "Because the Vedas are the highest source of knowledge."

This Sūtra emphasizes the validity and authority of the Vedas as the highest source of knowledge in the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā philosophy.

Mīmāṃsā Sūtras 1.1.5:

Tad-anityat

Meaning: "Therefore (the Vedas) are eternal."

This sūtra confirms Pūrva Mīmāṃsā's belief that the Vedas are eternal and without beginning or end.

Mīmāṃsā Sūtras 1.2.1:

Apekṣa lingad darsanat

Meaning: "In research, (Vedic) signs should be given priority because they can be seen."

This Sūtra underscores the importance of signs or guidance (linga) in the interpretation and implementation of the Vedas.

Mīmāṃsā Sūtras 1.3.1:

Sabda-pramanyat

Meaning: "Because of the authority of the words (Veda)."

This Sūtra emphasizes the principle of authority and truth of the words of the Veda, asserting that the Vedic instructions are the highest knowledge.

Mīmāṃsā Sūtras 6.1.1:

Dharmasya tattvajnanartham Sastra-yonitvat

Meaning: "So that true knowledge of dharma can be obtained, (its main source) is the Veda." (Mahesh, 1889).

This sūtra asserts that accurate knowledge of dharma is gained through study of the Vedas. These sūtras provide guidance in the understanding and implementation of dharma in the context of the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā. They highlight the validity and authority of the Vedas as the primary source of knowledge and ethical norms followed by Mīmāṃsākas in the performance of ritual actions.

In Purva Mimamsa's view, Dharma is not just a moral or ethical guide, but rather the fulfillment of ritual obligations and loyalty to the teachings of the Veda. Dharma guides individuals to carry out ritual actions with full dedication and perseverance, in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Vedas. It includes various religious ceremonies, sacrifices, and other ritual practices

laid down in the Karma Kanda section of the Veda. The importance of Dharma also lies in devotion to these sacred teachings, which requires sincere obedience and loyalty to the instructions contained in these sacred texts.

In the context of karma, Dharma also plays a key role, as actions performed in accordance with Dharma are considered to result in good karma. This means that obeying the Dharma brings goodness and happiness in this life and in the future. Therefore, Dharma in Purva Mimamsa is not just about morality or ethics, but rather a guide for individuals in fulfilling ritual obligations and maintaining loyalty to the sacred teachings which are the spiritual and religious foundation in the Hindu tradition.

III. Conclusion

According to Purva Mimamsa, Dharma is a concept that includes obligations, rules and actions ordered in Vedic teachings. It includes ritual acts, morality, and social obligations that individuals must adhere to to maintain cosmic balance and maintain social order. Dharma in Purva Mimamsa is not only a moral obligation, but also a foundation for living a life based on spiritual and ethical values. The emphasis is on carrying out tasks with selfless devotion and deep understanding of sacred teachings, in order to achieve higher spiritual goals.

Purva Mimamsa defines Dharma as the obligations or actions stated in the teachings of the Vedas. Dharma is a set of rules, moral obligations, and ritual actions mandated in the sacred texts of the Vedas. According to Purva Mimamsa, Dharma is not just morality or duty, but is also an integral part of life that forms the basis for justice, truth and harmony in society. In Purva Mimamsa, emphasis is placed on carrying out the duties laid down in the sacred teachings without expecting results driven by altruistic motives. Dharma plays an important role in maintaining cosmic balance and maintaining social order, as well as guiding individuals towards a deeper understanding of their spiritual purpose. Therefore, the Dharma in Purva Mimamsa is the moral and spiritual guidance necessary for every individual to achieve the highest goals in their life.

Bibliography

- Bartley, Chris. 2013, *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, in *Encyclopaedia of Asian Philosophy*. (Editor: Oliver Leaman). London: Routledge.
- Donald R. Davis 2006. "Dharma in Hinduism". *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Volume 34. Springer.
- Koller, J. M. 1972. "Dharma: an expression of universal order" *Philosophy East and West*. Manoa: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Mahesh Chandra Nyayratna Bhattacharyya, ed. (1889). *The Mimamsa Darsana (Bibliotheca Indica)*. Baptist Mission Press.
- Müeller, Max (1899). *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy; Samkhya and Yoga, Nyaya and Vaisheshika*. Calcutta: Sushil Gupta (India) Ltd.
- Olivelle, Patrick. 2004. *The Law Code of Manu*. New York: Oxford UP.
- Potter, Karl H. (2014). *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Volume 16: Philosophy of Purva-Mimamsa*. Calcutta: Motilal Barnassidas.
- Radhakrishnan, S.; Moore, C. A. (1967). *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton.
- Ramaswami Shastri, R.A. (1936). *A Short History of The Purva Mimamsa Shastra*. Annamalai University Sanskrit Series No. 3
- Verpoorten, Jean-Marie (1987). *Mimamsa literature (A History of Indian literature)*. Otto Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Zimmer, Heinrich (1951). *Philosophies of India*. New York: Princeton University Press.