

Karma and Phala: Exploring the Ethical and Metaphysical Dimensions of Action and Consequence in Indian Philosophy (Perspectives from Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, and Nyāya)

Author: Dr. Satish Kumar Tiwari

Assistant Professor

Department of Philosophy

Mahendra Mahila College, Gopalganj

(JAI PRAKASH UNIVERSITY, CHAPRA, BIHAR)

Mobile Number: 8737972132

Email Id- thesktiwari89@gmail.com

Abstract:

This paper delves into the complex and multifaceted concepts of karma and phala, examining how three prominent Indian philosophical schools - Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, and Nyāya - grapple with the nature of action, consequence, and divine intervention. By analyzing the distinct approaches of each tradition, this study reveals profound philosophical debates surrounding human agency, moral order, and the role of the divine in shaping destiny. Through a nuanced exploration of these diverse perspectives, this research highlights the richness and depth of Indian philosophical thought, offering insights into the intricate interplay of ethics, metaphysics, and spirituality that underlies our understanding of karma and phala.

Key Words: *Karma, Phala, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Nyāya, Vedic rituals*

1. Introduction

Karma, referring to intentional actions (*karmāṇi*) and their consequences (*phala*), forms a fundamental concept in Indian philosophy that shapes the ethical and moral framework of Hinduism. *Phala*, the result of these actions, can manifest immediately or in future lifetimes, reinforcing the cyclical nature of existence known as *samsāra*. The doctrine of karma underscores the ethical dimension of human actions, asserting that good deeds (*puṇya*) lead to positive outcomes (*puṇyaphala*), while bad deeds (*pāpa*) result in suffering (*duḥkha*), thereby influencing the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

The concept of karma and phala is deeply rooted in the Hindu belief system, where every action is believed to have a corresponding consequence (*phala*) (Kemenuh, 2020). Hindu philosophy categorizes karma into three types: *sañcita karma* (accumulated past actions that are yet to bear fruit), *prārabdha karma* (actions that have begun to bear fruit in the present life), and *āgāmi karma* (future actions that will bear fruit in future lives) (Subrata, 2020). These categories illustrate the continuity of moral causation (*karmāṇi*) across lifetimes, shaping an individual's destiny (*daiva*) based on their accumulated actions (*karmāṇi*).

Central to the understanding of karma in Indian philosophy is the doctrine of Karma Yoga, as articulated in the Bhagavad Gītā. Karma Yoga emphasizes the performance of one's duties (*dharma*) without attachment (*asaṅga*) to the results (*phala*). This practice promotes a sense of duty orientation (*dharma-ācāra*) and the absence of desire (*vairāgya*) for rewards (*phala*), seen as a path to spiritual liberation (*mokṣa*) (Mulla, 2007). Selfless action (*niṣkāma karma*) leads to inner satisfaction (*śānti*) and spiritual growth (*śraddhā*).

Indian philosophy also delves into the mechanisms of rebirth (punarjanma), with karma playing a crucial role in determining the soul's (jīva) journey through various incarnations (janma). The belief in saṃsāra, the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, posits that the soul undergoes numerous lifetimes (janma), each influenced by the karma accumulated in previous lives (pūrvajanma) (Smart, 1964). This cycle continues until the soul achieves mokṣa, or liberation, from the cycle of rebirth (saṃsāra).

Assessing arguments and philosophical positions within this framework involves a deep examination of the logical (tarka) and ethical (śīla) implications of karma. Indian philosophers have developed sophisticated methods for debating and understanding these concepts, emphasizing rational analysis (yukti) and ethical considerations (śīla) in the discourse on karma and phala. The concepts of karma and phala are pivotal to Indian philosophical thought, offering a profound understanding of the moral (śīla) and metaphysical (tattva) dimensions of human actions. Through texts like the Bhagavad Gītā and various philosophical treatises (śāstra), the Indian tradition provides a rich and nuanced exploration of these principles, highlighting their relevance to both personal ethics (svadharma) and broader cosmological beliefs (siddhānta).

2. Mīmāṃsā Perspective: Autonomy of Rituals

The Mīmāṃsā school, particularly its Pūrva Mīmāṃsā branch founded by Jaimini, emphasizes the ritualistic aspects of karma. This school asserts that Vedic rituals have intrinsic efficacy (svataḥ-prāmāṇya) and, unlike other philosophical schools, downplays the role of divine intervention (daiva). Śābara, in his Bhāṣya (Śābarabhāṣya, VIII. i.18.34), articulates this perspective by asserting that the deity's role in rituals is secondary, merely as a recipient of offerings (yajamāna), while the actions themselves directly cause the results (phala).

This paper explores the autonomy of rituals from the Mīmāṃsā perspective, focusing on the ritualistic Practice (karma-sādhana), intrinsic efficacy (svataḥ-prāmāṇya), accountability (karta-vyāpāra), and ethical conduct (śīla), as well as contemporary applications of these principles.

2.1 Ritualistic Focus and Intrinsic Efficacy

Mīmāṃsā posits that the precise and meticulous execution of Vedic rituals inherently produces desired outcomes (phala), placing a strong emphasis on ritual determinism (karma-niyati). This perspective is a stark departure from other schools like Vedānta, which involve divine will (daiva) as an active agent in the dispensation of karma. For Mīmāṃsā, the correct performance of rituals is both the means (sādhana) and the end (sādhya), ensuring the fulfillment of desires (kāma) and attainment of various spiritual and material benefits (phala).

The intrinsic efficacy of rituals, as advocated by Mīmāṃsā, underscores a philosophy where the power of rituals is embedded within the actions themselves (karma-svābhāvya). The detailed and methodical performance of rituals, adhering strictly to Vedic injunctions (vidhi), is believed to generate specific outcomes (phala) without the necessity of divine intervention (daiva).

2.2 Importance of Rituals in Mīmāṃsā Tradition

In the Mīmāṃsā tradition, rituals (karma) are considered central to the religious and moral life (dharma) of individuals. The meticulous execution of rituals, according to prescribed Vedic guidelines (vidhi), ensures that individuals achieve their desired outcomes (phala). This emphasis on ritual precision (karma-saṃskāra) highlights the belief in the inherent power of rituals (karma-svābhāvya) to shape human destiny.

(daiva). Mīmāṃsā's focus on rituals also serves to preserve and transmit Vedic knowledge (veda-pārvatī), ensuring its continuity across generations (paramparā).

2.3 Scriptural Authority

The authority of the Vedas (veda-prāmāṇya) is paramount in Mīmāṃsā philosophy. The Vedas are seen as apauruṣeya (apauruṣeya), meaning not of human origin (nāmanuṣya-kṛta), and hence, infallible (nitya) and eternal (śāśvata). This belief underscores the importance of adhering to Vedic injunctions (vidhi) in performing rituals. The Mīmāṃsā school insists that the efficacy of rituals (karma-phala) is rooted in the Vedas' divine authority (daiva-prāmāṇya), and thus, rituals must be performed exactly as prescribed (yathā-vidhi) to achieve the desired results (phala).

2.4 Ritual Determinism vs. Theistic Perspectives

Mīmāṃsā's emphasis on ritual determinism (karma-niyati) starkly contrasts with theistic perspectives (daiva-vāda), such as those found in Vedānta (vedānta) and Nyāya (nyāya), which incorporate divine will (daiva) into the karmic process (karma-siddhānta). Mīmāṃsā rejects the need for divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya), positing that the correct performance of rituals alone (karma-sādhana) is sufficient for attaining the intended outcomes (phala). This view elevates human agency and responsibility (karta-vyāpāra), suggesting that individuals have the power to shape their destinies (daiva) through ritual actions (karma).

2.5 Accountability and Ethical Conduct

Contemporary studies by scholars such as Munidewi (2017) and Sari (2020) emphasize the Mīmāṃsā notion of karma phala (karma-phala) as shaping human behavior (ceṣṭā) through a developed sense of responsibility (karta-vyāpāra). For instance, Munidewi applies this concept to auditing (lekha-samīkṣā), suggesting that the inherent accountability (karta-vyāpāra) in karma phala can enhance ethical conduct (śīla) in professional practices (vyāvahāra). This illustrates the relevance (prāmāṇya) of Mīmāṃsā principles in modern contexts (adhunika-samaya).

2.6 Karma Phala and Ethical Behavior

The concept of karma phala (karma-phala), or the fruits of actions (karma), is central to Mīmāṃsā's ethical framework (śīla-sādhana). Mīmāṃsā posits that every action (karma) inevitably leads to specific results (phala), creating a sense of accountability (karta-vyāpāra) for one's actions. This belief in the inexorable link (avyabhicāri-bhāva) between actions and their consequences (karma-phala) fosters ethical behavior (śīla), as individuals are encouraged to act in ways that produce positive outcomes (śubha-phala).

The practical applications of karma phala extend beyond religious rituals (karma-kāṇḍa) to various aspects of daily life (sahita-jīvita). Scholars like Subrata (2020) and Kemenuh (2020) have explored how the principles of karma and phala can be applied to professional practices (vyāvahāra), such as auditing (lekha-samīkṣā) and management (vyavasthā-pālana). By emphasizing accountability (karta-vyāpāra) and ethical conduct (śīla), these applications demonstrate the enduring relevance (prāmāṇya) of Mīmāṃsā principles in contemporary settings (adhunika-samaya).

Subrata (2020) and Kemenuh (2020) delve into the classifications of karma:

1. Sañcita Karma (sañcita-karma): Accumulated past actions (pūrva-karma) awaiting fruition (phala-āgama).

2. Prārabdha Karma (prārabdha-karma): Actions currently bearing fruit (phala-prāpti).

3. Āgāmi Karma (āgāmi-karma): Future actions (bhaviṣyat-karma) that will bear fruit (phala-āgama).

This taxonomy (karma-vyākaraṇa) helps in understanding the continuity (sambandha) and impact (prabhāva) of actions across different phases of life (jīvana-śataka), emphasizing long-term accountability (dīrgha-kāla-karta-vyāpāra) and ethical considerations (śīla-vicāra).

Kemenuh (2020) further explores the practical applications of karma phala in daily life (sahita-jīvita), categorizing its effects into immediate (sadyaḥ-phala), intermediate (madhya-phala), and long-term outcomes (dīrgha-phala). This approach (karma-phala-vyākaraṇa) aids in navigating life with greater mindfulness (samprajanya) and ethical awareness (śīla-jñāna).

2.7 Significance in Mīmāṃsā Tradition

Collectively, these studies highlight the importance of karma and phala within the Mīmāṃsā framework (Mīmāṃsā-darśana). The tradition's focus on the intrinsic power of rituals (karma-svābhāvya) and the consequential law of cause and effect (karma-phala-sambandha) provide a robust foundation for ethical conduct (śīla) and spiritual growth (adhyātma-vṛddhi). The Mīmāṃsā school's emphasis on the intrinsic efficacy of rituals (karma-sādhanā) underscores a philosophy of human agency and responsibility (karta-vyāpāra), contrasting with the theistic orientations of other schools (daiva-vāda) where divine will (daiva) is central. The ethical implications of Mīmāṃsā philosophy are profound (gambhīra). By asserting the intrinsic efficacy of rituals, Mīmāṃsā emphasizes the importance of individual actions (karma) and their consequences (phala). This focus on human agency (karta-vyāpāra) fosters a sense of personal responsibility (sva-tantra), encouraging individuals to act ethically (śīla) and responsibly (karta-vyāpāra). The belief that actions have direct and inevitable consequences (karma-phala-sambandha) underscores the moral dimension (śīla-dharma) of Mīmāṃsā philosophy, promoting ethical conduct (śīla) as a means to achieve desired outcomes (phala).

The Mīmāṃsā perspective on rituals also contributes to spiritual growth (adhyātma-vṛddhi). By performing rituals meticulously (karma-saṃskāra) and adhering to Vedic guidelines (veda-vidhi), individuals can achieve spiritual progress (adhyātma-pragati). The emphasis on ritual precision (karma-saṃskāra) and ethical conduct (śīla) provides a structured path for spiritual development (adhyātma-vikāsa), ensuring that individuals align their actions with Vedic principles (veda-siddhānta).

3. Vedānta Perspective: Divine Oversight

The Vedānta school, particularly Advaita Vedānta (advaita-vedānta) as articulated by Śaṅkara (śaṅkara), contrasts sharply with the ritualistic Mīmāṃsā school (Mīmāṃsā-darśana) by integrating divine will (daiva-vyāpaśraya) into the karma and phala mechanism (karma-phala-sambandha). Advaita Vedānta maintains that while individuals perform actions (karma), the results (phala) are ultimately dispensed by Brahman (brahman), the supreme reality (paramātmān), through Ishvara (īśvara) (God), who ensures each soul receives just outcomes for their actions (Brahma Sutra Bhāṣya, II.1.34). This introduces a theistic dimension (daiva-vāda) into the deterministic framework of karma, suggesting a divine intelligence (daiva-buddhi) that guides the moral order (śīla-dharma).

3.1 Divine Will and Moral Order

Advaita Vedānta's interpretation of divine will (daiva-vyāpaśraya) suggests a nuanced understanding of karma. Here, Ishvara (īśvara) does not merely oversee karma but adjusts its outcomes (phala-vyāvasthā), ensuring a just moral order (śīla-dharma) in the universe (jagat). This perspective significantly contrasts

with the Mīmāṃsā view (Mīmāṃsā-darśana), which excludes divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya), emphasizing instead the intrinsic efficacy of rituals (karma-svābhāvya). In Advaita Vedānta, the divine intelligence (daiva-buddhi) of Ishvara (īśvara) not only administers karma but also guides souls (jīva) towards moksha (mokṣa) (liberation), aligning the fruits of karma (karma-phala) with a moral cosmic order (śīla-dharma) that transcends human understanding (manuṣya-buddhi).

3.2 Law of Cause and Effect

Scholars like Wahyuningsih (2020) emphasize Vedānta's focus on the ethical dimensions of actions (karma), where the motives (bhāva) behind actions significantly influence their outcomes (phala). This view underscores the importance of ethical living (śīla) and selfless actions (niṣkāma-karma) for spiritual progress (adhyātma-vṛddhi), aligning with the broader Vedāntic emphasis on ethical motives (bhāva) and their impact on karma (karma-phala-sambandha).

3.3 Duality and Transcendence

Advaita Vedānta addresses the pursuit of transcending duality (dvaita-tātparya), aiming for the realization (prāpti) of the non-dual nature of reality (advaya-tattva), where individual self (Atman) and Brahman are one (abeda-tātparya). The doctrine of karma serves as a tool (upāya) guiding individuals towards this higher realization (utkr̥ṣṭa-prāpti), helping transcend the dualities (dvaita) of good and bad (śubha-aśubha), pleasure and pain (sukha-duḥkha), ultimately achieving liberation (mokṣa).

3.4 Challenges to Established Doctrines

The traditional Vedānta perspective (sampradāya) is challenged by scholars like Krishna (1992), who calls for a re-examination (punar-vicāra) of established doctrines (siddhānta), promoting a dynamic understanding (gatika-buddhi) of philosophical concepts (darśana). This critique (ākṣepa) highlights the evolving nature (pariṇāma) of philosophical inquiry (darśana-vicāra) and encourages ongoing discourse (vicāra-saṃvāda).

3.5 Individual Responsibility

Echoing this, Hopkins (1906) elaborates on the individual's responsibility (jīva-tantra) within the Brahmanistic karma doctrine (karma-siddhānta), emphasizing that while divine oversight (daiva-vyāpaśraya) exists, individuals are accountable (karta-vyāpāra) for their actions (karma). This dual aspect (dvaita-lakṣaṇa) of divine justice (daiva-nyāya) and personal responsibility (jīva-tantra) is fundamental to Vedānta's view on karma and phala. Advaita Vedānta's theistic interpretation (daiva-vāda) of the karma doctrine, positing Ishvara (īśvara) as the administrator (vyāvasthākara) of karma, introduces a moral dimension (śīla-dharma) that ensures justice (nyāya) and ethical alignment (śīla-saṃyama). This perspective (darśana) reconciles the deterministic aspects (niyati-āgama) of karma with the existence of a benevolent divine being (śiva-īśvara) and emphasizes the importance of ethical motives (bhāva) behind actions (karma).

Additionally, the focus on transcending duality (dvaita-tātparya) and achieving non-dual realization (advaya-prāpti) provides a spiritual context (adhyātma-saṃvāda) for the karma doctrine, framing it as part of a broader journey toward liberation (mokṣa). Overall, the Vedānta perspective (vedānta-darśana) enriches the understanding of karma and phala by weaving together divine will (daiva-vyāpaśraya), ethical considerations (śīla-vicāra), and the pursuit of spiritual liberation (mokṣa-prāpti), highlighting the complexity and depth of Indian philosophy (bhāratīya-darśana).

4. Nyāya Perspective: Rational Theism

Nyāya philosophy (nyāya-darśana), renowned for its emphasis on rational analysis (tarka) and logical reasoning (nyāya), integrates divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) within the context of karma and phala. This school posits God (Ishvara) as the efficient cause (nimitta-kāraṇa) of the universe (jagat) and the enforcer (vyāvasthākara) of the law of karma (karma-siddhānta). Udayana, a key Nyāya philosopher (nyāya-vādin), in his Nyāya Kusumāñjali (Nyāya Kusumāñjali, V.2), argues that an omniscient being (sarvajña-īśvara) is essential for maintaining the moral order (śīla-dharma), ensuring the just and efficient operation of karma (karma-vyāvasthā).

4.1 The Role of Divine Oversight

In Nyāya's framework (nyāya-darśana), the role of God (Ishvara) is pivotal (pradhāna) in upholding both the cosmic (jagat) and moral orders (śīla-dharma). By positing God as the enforcer (vyāvasthākara) of karma, Nyāya harmonizes (samanvaya) the deterministic aspects (niyati-āgama) of karma with the need for a just overseer (nyāya-pālana), providing a structured framework (vyāvasthā) for ethical behavior (śīla) and its consequences (phala). Udayana's argument (ūdana) for God's existence (īśvara-sattā), based on the necessity (āvashyakatā) of maintaining moral order (śīla-dharma), showcases Nyāya's approach (nyāya-vāda) to blending theological (śāstrīya) and logical insights (tarka) to support the operation of karma through divine justice (daiva-nyāya).

4.2 Scholarly Perspectives on Nyāya and Karma

The complexity of Nyāya's views on karma and phala is further illuminated by contemporary scholarship (samakālika-vidvat-saṃvāda). Shubhendu Bhattacharya (2024) discusses the centrality (madhya-sāra) of karma within the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika tradition (nyāya-vaiśeṣika-sampradāya), emphasizing the importance (āvashyakatā) of understanding its mechanisms (karma-vyāvasthā). Kataoka (2001) explores the causal structure (kāraṇa-vyāvasthā) in Nyāya through Kumarila's action-theory (bhāvana-vāda) of bhavana, shedding light on the systematic process (vyāvasthā) of karmic fruition (phala-prāpti). Additionally, Phillips (2001) examines the role (bhūmikā) of perception (pratyakṣa) in Nyāya, relating it to the theory (siddhānta) of nirvikalpapratyakṣa (non-conceptual perception), which is crucial (āvashyaka) for understanding how actions (karma) are perceived (upalabdhi) and judged (vyāvasthā) within the karmic cycle (karma-saṃsāra).

Nyāya's rational theism (nyāya-vāda) elegantly combines logic (tarka) and theology (śāstrīya), ensuring that the law of karma is justly administered (nyāya-pālana) by a divine overseer (daiva-vyāpaśraya). This perspective (darśana) not only aligns with broader theistic traditions (daiva-vāda) in Indian philosophy (bhāratīya-darśana) but also provides a robust defense (siddhānta) against both atheistic (nāstika) and theistic (daiva-vāda) critiques (ākṣepa). The scholarly contributions by Bhattacharya, Iwasaki, Pal, and Dasti enrich our understanding (avagama) of Nyāya's rational theism (nyāya-vāda), emphasizing its dedication (samarpita) to logical reasoning (tarka) and empirical validation (pramāṇa), thus underscoring the nuanced (sūkṣma) and intricate (jāṭīya) nature of this philosophical tradition (darśana-sampradāya).

5. Debates and Divergences

The primary point of contention among Indian philosophical schools regarding karma and phala centers around the extent of divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) in the law of karma (karma-siddhānta). The Mīmāṃsā school (Mīmāṃsā-darśana), with its ritualistic rigidity (karma-sthāna), refutes any need for divine involvement (daiva-hetu), maintaining that Vedic rituals (veda-karma) themselves possess inherent power (svābhāvya-śakti). In contrast, Vedānta (Vedānta-darśana) and Nyāya (Nyāya-darśana) acknowledge a divine overseer (daiva-vyāvasthākara) who ensures that karmic justice (karma-nyāya) is dispensed appropriately (yathā-śakti).

The Mīmāṃsā school, focused on Vedic exegesis (veda-āgama), emphasizes the inherent efficacy (svābhāvya-śakti) of Vedic rituals (veda-karma). According to Mīmāṃsā, the correct performance (samīrita-karaṇa) of these rituals intrinsically leads to desired outcomes (phala-prāpti) without the need for divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya). This perspective posits that the power of the rituals (karma-śakti) is embedded within the actions themselves (karma-svābhāvya), reflecting a form of ritual determinism (karma-niyati-vāda) (Yoshimizu, 2021).

Vedānta, particularly its non-dualistic (advaita) branch (Advaita-Vedānta), contrasts sharply with Mīmāṃsā by prioritizing knowledge (jñāna) over action (karma) for attaining liberation (mokṣa). Advaita Vedānta, founded by Śāṅkara (Śāṅkara-ācārya), integrates the concept of divine will (daiva-vyāpaśraya) into the karma doctrine (karma-siddhānta), arguing that Ishvara (God) oversees the administration of karma (karma-vyāvasthā), ensuring just outcomes (nyāya-phala). This perspective introduces a theistic element (daiva-vāda) to the otherwise deterministic framework of karma (karma-niyati-vāda), positing that divine intelligence (daiva-buddhi) guides the moral order (śīla-dharma) (Raina, 2019).

The Nyāya school (Nyāya-darśana), known for its logical and analytical approach (tarka-śāstrīya), also entertains the role of divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya). Nyāya philosophers argue that God (Ishvara) is the efficient cause (nimitta-kāraṇa) of the universe (jagat) and enforcer (vyāvasthākara) of the law of karma (karma-siddhānta). Udayana (Udayana-ācārya), in his text Nyāya Kusumāñjali (Nyāya Kusumāñjali), defends the existence of God (Ishvara-sattā) by asserting that an omniscient being (sarvajña-īśvara) is necessary (āvashyaka) to maintain the moral order (śīla-dharma) of the universe (jagat). This ensures that the law of karma operates justly and efficiently (karma-nyāya-saṃvāda) (Narasimhananda, 2023).

The debates among these schools highlight significant philosophical divergences (darśana-bheda) regarding the role of action (karma), knowledge (jñāna), and divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) in the process of karma and phala (karma-phala-saṃvāda).

5.1 Mīmāṃsā vs. Vedānta:

The debate between Mīmāṃsā (Mīmāṃsā-darśana) and Vedānta (Vedānta-darśana) revolves around the means to liberation (mokṣa). Mīmāṃsā's emphasis on ritual action (karma) contrasts with Vedānta's prioritization of knowledge (jñāna). While Mīmāṃsā asserts the sufficiency of ritual actions (karma) prescribed by the Vedas (Veda-karma), Vedānta argues that ultimate liberation (mokṣa) is achieved through the realization (prāpti) of the non-dual nature (advaya-svabhāva) of reality (tattva), where knowledge (jñāna) of Brahman (Brahman) is paramount (Yoshimizu, 2021; Raina, 2019).

5.2 Nyāya vs. Vedānta:

The Nyāya (Nyāya-darśana) and Vedānta (Vedānta-darśana) schools also differ in their perspectives (darśana) on the role of God (Ishvara) and the arrangement (vyāvasthā) of the world (jagat). Nyāya's logical approach (tarka-śāstrīya) and affirmation (abhyupagama) of a divine overseer (daiva-vyāvasthākara) for karmic justice (karma-nyāya) contrast with Vedānta's more integrated (samavāya) and spiritual (ādhyātma) interpretation (vyākhyāna) of divine involvement (daiva-vyāpaśraya). These differing views (darśana-bheda) on divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) shape their respective understandings (avagama) of karma and phala (karma-phala-saṃvāda) (Narasimhananda, 2023). Krishna (1992) challenges the traditional presentation (sampradāya) of Indian philosophy (bhāratīya-darśana), suggesting the need for a new perspective (naya-darśana) that critically examines (parikṣā) established doctrines (siddhānta). This call for a re-evaluation (punar-vicāra) implies that the debates and divergences

(darśana-bheda) within Indian philosophy are not static (sthāvara) but dynamic (jāṭīya), allowing for the evolution (pariṇāma) of thought (cintā) and the emergence (utkr̥ṣṭa) of new interpretations (vyākhyāna).

The divergences among Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, and Nyāya regarding karma and phala reflect deeper philosophical differences in their understanding of reality (tattva), ethics (śīla), and the role of divine agency (daiva-vyāpaśraya). Mīmāṃsā's ritual determinism (karma-niyati-vāda) emphasizes human agency (jīva-kartṛtva) and the intrinsic power (svābhāvya-śakti) of actions (karma), promoting a view where liberation (mokṣa) is a result of meticulous ritual practice (veda-karma-saṃskāra). Vedānta, particularly Advaita (Advaita-Vedānta), introduces a higher metaphysical dimension (meta-śāstrīya-vyākhyāna), where the realization (prāpti) of non-duality (advaya-svabhāva) and divine oversight (daiva-vyāpaśraya) are crucial for liberation (mokṣa), thus integrating knowledge (jñāna) and spirituality (ādhyātma) with ethical conduct (śīla-vyāvahāra). Nyāya's logical framework (tarka-śāstrīya) and defense of divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) provide a rational basis (nyāya-siddhānta) for understanding the moral order (śīla-dharma) of the universe (jagat), balancing the deterministic aspects (niyati-āgama) of karma with the need for a just overseer (nyāya-pālana).

These philosophical debates (darśana-bheda) underscore the richness and diversity (bheda-vāda) of Indian philosophical traditions (bhāratīya-darśana-sampradāya), highlighting how different schools (darśana) address the complexities (jāṭīya) of human existence (jīva-sattā), ethics (śīla), and the cosmos (jagat). Krishna's critique (ākṣepa) encourages continuous re-examination (punar-vicāra) and dialogue (samvāda) within these traditions, ensuring that Indian philosophy (bhāratīya-darśana) remains a vibrant and evolving field (jāṭīya-kṣetra). By critically engaging with these debates (darśana-bheda), scholars can further enrich (samavardhita) the understanding of karma and phala (karma-phala-samvāda), offering new insights (naya-dr̥ṣṭi) and perspectives (darśana) that resonate with contemporary concerns (samakālika-vicāra) and inquiries (jijñāsā).

5.3 Mīmāṃsā's Rejection of Divine Intervention

The debate between Mīmāṃsā (Mīmāṃsā-darśana) and Vedānta (Vedānta-darśana) is particularly significant in the context of karma (karma) and phala (phala). Mīmāṃsā's rejection (bādha) of divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) is rooted in its commitment (samarpita) to the self-sufficiency (svābhāvya-śakti) of Vedic rituals (Veda-karma). This school posits (abhyupagama) that the efficacy (sādhana-śakti) of Vedic rituals is intrinsic (svābhāvya) to the actions (karma) themselves, independent (svatantra) of any divine influence (daiva-vyāpaśraya). According to Mīmāṃsā, the correct performance (samīrita-karaṇa) of rituals ensures the fulfillment (phala-prāpti) of desires (kāma) and the attainment (prāpti) of liberation (mokṣa) (Yoshimizu, 2021). This perspective highlights a rigorous ritual determinism (karma-niyati-vāda) where the power (śakti) of the actions is embedded within the rituals prescribed by the Vedas (Veda-karma).

5.4 Vedānta's Integration of Divine Grace

Conversely, Vedānta's acceptance (abhyupagama) of a divine administrator (daiva-vyāvasthākara) introduces a metaphysical dimension (meta-śāstrīya-vyākhyāna) to the karma doctrine (karma-siddhānta). In particular, Advaita Vedānta (Advaita-Vedānta), founded by Śaṅkara (Śaṅkara-ācārya), argues that Ishvara (God) oversees (vyāvasthākara) the administration (vyāvasthā) of karma, ensuring just (nyāya) and appropriate (yathā-śakti) outcomes (phala) for actions (karma). This perspective suggests that divine grace (daiva-anugraha) and intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) can influence (prabhāva) the fruits (phala) of actions, thereby integrating a theistic element (daiva-vāda) into the deterministic framework (karma-niyati-vāda) of karma. According to Raina (2019), Non-dualistic Vedānta (Advaita-Vedānta) emphasizes knowledge (jñāna) over action (karma) as the primary means (pradhāna-upāya) to achieve liberation

(mokṣa), which is attained (prāpti) through the removal (nihāna) of ignorance (avidyā) and realization (prāpti) of the non-dual nature (advaya-svabhāva) of reality (tattva).

5.5 Knowledge vs. Action in Attaining Liberation

The debate extends to the role of knowledge (jñāna) and action (karma) in attaining liberation (mokṣa). Mīmāṃsā (Mīmāṃsā-darśana), with its historical focus (aitihāsika-samavāya) on Vedic exegesis (Veda-āgama), emphasizes the importance (avashyakatā) of performing prescribed rituals (karma) to achieve liberation (mokṣa). In contrast, Vedānta (Vedānta-darśana), particularly Advaita Vedānta (Advaita-Vedānta), holds that liberation (mokṣa) is achieved primarily (pradhāna-upāya) through knowledge (jñāna) and the removal (nihāna) of ignorance (avidyā) (Raina, 2019). This knowledge-based approach (jñāna-mārga) is rooted (mūla) in the Upanishadic teachings (Upaniṣad-śāstrīya) that stress (abhyupagama) the realization (prāpti) of the self's identity (ātma-tatva) with Brahman (the ultimate reality) (Brahman).

5.6 Comparative Insights

Clooney (1985) explores (vicāra) the spiritualization (ādhyātma-vikāsa) of sacrifice (yajña) in both Christian and Hindu traditions, drawing on Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta to illuminate (prakāśa) each other. By comparing (samākara) the two traditions, Clooney highlights (abhivādanam) how each incorporates (samāvṛta) and transforms (pariṇāma) the concept of sacrifice (yajña). In the Mīmāṃsā tradition (Mīmāṃsā-sampradāya), sacrifice (yajña) is a precise ritual act (karma-kriyā) with inherent efficacy (svābhāvya-śakti), whereas in Vedānta, particularly in its non-dualistic interpretation (Advaita-Vedānta), sacrifice (yajña) is seen more metaphorically (lākṣaṇika) as the surrender (samarpaṇa) of the ego (ahaṅkāra) and the realization (prāpti) of one's true nature (sva-svarūpa).

The debates between Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta on the role of knowledge and action in attaining liberation highlight significant philosophical divergences (darśana-bheda). Mīmāṃsā's emphasis (abhyupagama) on ritual action (karma) reflects a worldview (jagat-vyāpāra) where human agency (jīva-kartṛtva), as expressed through meticulous performance (samīśrita-karaṇa) of rituals, is paramount (pradhāna). This view aligns with a practical and procedural approach (karma-mārga) to spirituality (ādhyātma), where liberation (mokṣa) is seen as the cumulative result (phala) of correct ritual practices (samīśrita-karaṇa). In contrast, Vedānta's emphasis (abhyupagama) on knowledge over action introduces a contemplative and introspective dimension (jñāna-dīpā) to the spiritual quest (ādhyātma-sādhana). By positing (abhyupagama) that liberation (mokṣa) is achieved through the removal (nihāna) of ignorance (avidyā) and realization (prāpti) of the self's unity (ātma-tatva) with Brahman (the ultimate reality), Vedānta shifts the focus (samavāya) from external rituals (bāhya-karma) to internal realization (prāpti) and divine grace (daiva-anugraha). This perspective aligns with a more metaphysical and mystical approach (tattva-mārga) to spirituality, where the ultimate goal (parama-puruṣārtha) is self-realization (ātma-siddhi) and union (yoga) with the divine (Brahman).

Nyāya's rational theism (Nyāya-darśana) offers a middle ground (madhyama-pratipad) in the discourse (vicāra) on karma (karma) and phala (phala), acknowledging divine involvement (daiva-vyāpaśraya) while maintaining a logical structure (tarka-śāstrīya) to the karma theory (karma-siddhānta). Nyāya philosophers (Nyāya-vādin) argue that without a divine overseer (daiva-vyāvasthākara), the precise (samīśrita) and just (nyāya) operation (vyāpāra) of karma would be impossible (anupapatti). This perspective (darśana) aligns with broader theistic traditions (daiva-vāda) in Indian philosophy (bhāratīya-darśana), which assert (abhyupagama) that an intelligent (buddhi) and moral (śīla) divine being (Brahman) governs (vyāvasthā) the universe (jagat). According to Nyāya, God (Ishvara) is the efficient cause (nimitta-kāraṇa) of the universe (jagat) and enforcer (vyāvasthākara) of the law of karma (karma-

siddhānta). This view (darśana) posits (abhyupagama) that an omniscient (sarvajña) being (Brahman) is necessary (avashyaka) to maintain moral order (śīla-dharma), ensuring that every action (karma) receives its appropriate consequence (phala). This theological stance (daiva-vāda) provides a rational foundation (tarka-śāstrīya) for the belief (śraddhā) in a just (nyāya) and orderly (vyāvasthita) universe (jagat) governed by divine intelligence (Brahman).

Bhattacharya (2020) explores (vicāra) the complex (jāṭīya) and multifaceted (aneka-āyāma) nature of Nyāya's rational theism (Nyāya-darśana). The Nyāya Philosophy (Nyāya-darśana), founded by Maharishi Gautama (Gautama-ācārya), is inherently theistic (daiva-vāda), but the role of God (Ishvara) in the creation (sṛṣṭi) of the Vedas (Veda) remains contentious (vivāda). Bhattacharya highlights (abhivādanam) the school's emphasis (abhyupagama) on logical reasoning (tarka-śāstrīya) and rational inquiry (yukti-śāstrīya) in affirming divine oversight (daiva-vyāpaśraya). Iwasaki (2021) delves (vicāra) into the Nyāya school's acceptance (abhyupagama) of God's existence (Ishvara-sattā), focusing (samāvṛta) on its soteriological inquiries (mokṣa-vicāra) and the authority (prāmānya) of scriptures (śāstra). Nyāya's acceptance (abhyupagama) of God is rooted (mūla) in a rationalist approach (yukti-śāstrīya) to epistemology (pramāṇa-śāstrīya) and logical reasoning (tarka-śāstrīya). This school uses logical proofs (anumāna) and inferential reasoning (anumāna) to establish (siddhi) the existence (sattā) of God, thereby integrating theological principles (daiva-vāda) within a rational framework (tarka-śāstrīya).

Pal (2023) emphasizes (abhyupagama) Nyāya's rationalist approach (yukti-śāstrīya) to epistemology (pramāṇa-śāstrīya) and soteriology (mokṣa-śāstrīya). Dasti (2011) adds depth (gambhīrata) to this discussion (vicāra) by examining (vicāra) the classical proofs (anumāna) for God (Ishvara) in the Nyāya tradition (Nyāya-sampradāya), illustrating (abhivādanam) the rigorous (sūtra) inferential methods (anumāna) employed (prayujyate). Nyāya's approach (darśana) to divine oversight (daiva-vyāpaśraya) and karma (karma) can be seen (drṣṭi) as a response (uttara) to both atheistic (nāstika) and theistic (āstika) critiques (ākṣepa). By grounding (mūla) theological claims (daiva-vāda) in rational inquiry (yukti-śāstrīya), Nyāya provides (pradāna) a robust defense (siddhi) against atheistic objections (ākṣepa) to theism (āstika) while also addressing (samāvṛta) the need (avashyakatā) for a moral (śīla) and just (nyāya) universe (jagat). This middle ground approach (madhyama-pratipad) ensures (siddhi) that the law of karma (karma-siddhānta) operates (vyāpāra) justly (nyāya) and efficiently (sūtra) under divine supervision (daiva-vyāpaśraya). Nyāya's rational theism (Nyāya-darśana) offers (pradāna) a compelling synthesis (sāmagrī) of logic (tarka) and theology (daiva-vāda), ensuring (siddhi) that the law of karma (karma-siddhānta) is justly administered (nyāya-vyāvasthā) by a divine overseer (daiva-vyāvasthākara).

This perspective (darśana) aligns (samāvṛta) with broader theistic traditions (āstika-sampradāya) in Indian philosophy (bhāratīya-darśana), asserting (abhyupagama) that an intelligent (buddhi) and moral (śīla) divine being (Brahman) governs (vyāvasthā) the universe (jagat). The scholarly discussions (vicāra) by Bhattacharya, Iwasaki, Pal, and Dasti highlight (abhivādanam) the nuanced (jāṭīya) and intricate (aneka-āyāma) nature of Nyāya's rational theism (Nyāya-darśana), emphasizing (abhyupagama) its commitment (samarpita) to logical reasoning (tarka-śāstrīya) and empirical validation (pramāṇa-śāstrīya).

6. Conclusion

These debates (darśana-bheda) among Mīmāṃsā (Mīmāṃsā-darśana), Vedānta (Vedānta-darśana), and Nyāya (Nyāya-darśana) highlight (abhivādanam) significant philosophical divergences (darśana-bheda) regarding the role (svabhāva) of action (karma), knowledge (jñāna), and divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) in the process (vyāpāra) of karma (karma) and phala (phala). They reflect (pratibimba) broader philosophical inquiries (vicāra) into the nature (svabhāva) of reality (tattva), ethics (śīla), and the divine (Brahman). Mīmāṃsā's ritual determinism (karma-niyati-vāda) emphasizes (abhyupagama) human

agency (jīva-kartṛtva) and the intrinsic power (svābhāvya-śakti) of actions (karma), promoting (pradhāna) a view (darśana) where liberation (mokṣa) results (phala) from meticulous ritual practice (samīrita-karaṇa). Vedānta introduces (āgama) a higher metaphysical dimension (meta-śāstrīya-vyākhyāna), integrating (sāmagrī) knowledge (jñāna) and divine oversight (daiva-vyāpaśraya) as crucial (avashyaka) for liberation (mokṣa). Nyāya's logical framework (tarka-śāstrīya) and defense (siddhi) of divine intervention (daiva-vyāpaśraya) provide (pradāna) a rational basis (yukti-śāstrīya) for understanding (bodha) the moral order (śīla-dharma) of the universe (jagat). These philosophical debates (darśana-bheda) underscore (abhivādanam) the richness (samāpti) and diversity (aneka-āyāma) of Indian philosophical traditions (bhārātīya-darśana-sampradāya), highlighting (abhivādanam) how different schools (darśana) address (samāvṛta) the complexities (jāṭīya) of human existence (jīva-sattā), ethics (śīla), and the cosmos (jagat).

This exploration (vicāra) enriches (vivṛddhi) the understanding (bodha) of karma (karma) and phala (phala), offering (pradāna) new insights (nava-dṛṣṭi) and perspectives (darśana) that resonate (anurāga) with contemporary concerns (āgama-vicāra) and inquiries (vicāra). By critically engaging (vicāra) with these debates (darśana-bheda), scholars (pāṇḍita) can further appreciate (vivṛddhi) the complexity (jāṭīya) and depth (gambhīrata) of Indian philosophical thought (bhārātīya-darśana). The Mīmāṃsā perspective (Mīmāṃsā-darśana) on karma (karma) and phala (phala) offers (pradāna) a detailed framework (sūtra) for understanding (bodha) the moral (śīla) and metaphysical (meta-śāstrīya) dimensions (vyākhyāna) of human actions (karma). By focusing (samāvṛta) on the intrinsic power (svābhāvya-śakti) of rituals (karma) and the ethical implications (śīla-anvaya) of actions (karma), Mīmāṃsā provides (pradāna) a compelling approach (pradhāna-upāya) to ethical living (śīla-vṛtti) and spiritual development (mokṣa-sādhana), emphasizing (abhyupagama) personal accountability (jīva-kartṛtva) and the systematic nature (sūtra) of ritual actions (karma).

7. References

1. Bhattacharya, Pranabesh. "Analysis of theism of the Nyāya Philosophy - An analytical study." (2020).
2. Clooney, Francis X.. "Sacrifice and Its Spiritualization In The Christian and Hindu Traditions: A Study In Comparative Theology." *Harvard Theological Review* 78 (1985): 361 - 380.
3. Dasti, Matthew R.. "Indian Rational Theology: Proof, Justification, and Epistemic Liberality in Nyāya's Argument for God." *Asian Philosophy* 21 (2011): 1 - 21.
4. Hopkins, Edward Washburn. "XXI. Modifications of the Karma Doctrine." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 38 (1906): 581 - 593.
5. Iwasaki, Yoichi. "Nyāya." *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy of Religion* (2021): n. pag. 346
6. Kataoka, Kei. "Scripture, Men and Heaven: Causal structure in Kumarila's action-theory of bhavana." (2001).
7. Kemenuh, Ida Ayu Aryani. "Ajaran Karma Phala Sebagai Hukum Sebab Akibat Dalam Hindu." (2020).
8. Krishna, Daya. "Indian Philosophy: A Counter Perspective." (1992).
9. Munidewi, Ida Ayu Budhananda. "Akuntabilitas dalam Perspektif Ajaran Karma Phala Sebagai Pedomannya Untuk Membangun Karakter Auditor." *Jurnal Ilmiah Akuntansi dan Bisnis* 1 (2017): 54-64.

10. Mulla, Zubin R. and Venkat R. Krishnan. "KARMA YOGA : A CONCEPTUALIZATION AND VALIDATION OF THE INDIAN PHILOSOPHY OF WORK." (2007).
11. Narasimhananda, Swami. "God and the World's Arrangement: Readings from Vedānta and Nyāya Philosophy of Religion by Nirmalya Guha, Matthew Dasti, and Stephen Phillips (review)." *Philosophy East and West* 73 (2023): 1 - 4.
12. Pal, Babaloo. "Rationalism in Nyaya Philosophy: An Exploration of Epistemology and Logical Reasoning." *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research* (2023).
13. Phillips, Stephen H.. "There's Nothing Wrong with Raw Perception: A Response to Chakrabarti's Attack on Nyaya's NirvikalpakaPratyaksa." *Philosophy East and West* 51 (2001): 104 - 113.
14. Raina, Simran K. "Knowledge and Action in Non-Dualistic Vedānta: The Incongruity." *Tattva - Journal of Philosophy* (2019).
15. Sari, Anggy Paramitha. "Pemahaman Holistik tentang Karma Phala dalam Lontar Tattwa Wit: Perspektif Filosofis." (2020).
16. Smart, Ninian and Karl H. Potter. "Presuppositions of India's Philosophies." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 15 (1964): 265.
17. Subrata, I Nyoman. "Ajaran Karma Phala menurut Susastra Hindu Perspektif dalam Kehidupan Sehari-Hari." (2020).
18. Wahyuningsih, Merliana Dewi. "Karma dan Objeknya Perspektif Vedanta." (2020).
19. Yoshimizu, Kiyotaka. "Mīmāṃsā." *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy of Religion* (2021): n. pag. 466.