**MPY – 001: Indian Philosophy**

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**1 : Explain the Mimamsa theory of knowledge in detail.**

Mimamsa in sanskrit, means “reflection”, “revered thought” or “critical investigation’. Also known as Purva-mimamsa or Karma Mimamsa is one of the six orthodox schools of Hinduism.

**The Mimamsa theory of Knowledge**

The validity of knowledge is defined as getting an information about something, which is not contradicted by another knowledge. Knowledge arisen from the determinate source is accepted as valid. Evidence is required for falsity of truth.

Mimamsa prominently discusses the validity of knowledge, criterion of truth, and falsity and sources of knowledge. In Mimamsa, the theory of intrinsic validity, called swatahpramanyavada is given greater credence.

Mimamsa admits two kind of valid knowledge, immediate and mediate, in terms of perception, called pratyaksha. Percetion, which is completed in two stages, gives the real knowledge of the world, composed of different objects.

**Nature and sources of knowledge**

The **pramana**, enable a person to have correct cognitions of the world. When the information flows from the five senses, called pramanas, to the mind, called manas, and ultimately realised by the soul, it is termed as Immediate knowledge. At the sensory level, it is the bare knowledge, and the subject knows the object, and it is not known what it is. This primary, intermediate and immediate knowledge is called nirvikalpa pratyaksha, or **alocana jnana**.

At the next level, the knowledge of object is processed, with the light of the subjects past knowledge, and comes to understand what it is, about its qualities, and the name it possesses. At this level, the subject gets a determinate perception, called savikalpa pratyaksha.

Non perceptual sources of Knowledge

There are five other valid sources of knowledge, admitted by Mimamsa :

1. Inference, called Anumana:
2. Comparison, Called Upamana:
3. Authority or testimony, Called Sabda:
4. Postulation, called Arthapati:
5. Non-perception, called anuplabdhi:

Inference, called Anumana: is the knowledge of objects, not through perception, but through the apprehension of some mark, called Linga, which is invariably related to the inferred objects, called sadhya. There is an relation between the two, called vyapti.

Comparison, called Upamana: The term upamana can be translated as comparison, analogy, identification, knowledge by similarity or knowledge by assimilation, etc. Upamana is derived from the words 'upa’ meaning ‘sadrsya’ or “similary” and “mana” meaning “cognition” (upa Mat lyut). Upamana derivatively means the knowledge of the similarity between two things. In Mimamsa, comparison is perceived as the knowledge of an object, which is experienced, is related to the experience of objects perceived in the past.

**Authority, or Testimony called sabda**: The source of knowledge is given great attention in Mimamsa philosophy, and it is also prominent in the Vedas. IT could be defined as knowledge derived from the words spoken or written by an authoritative Individual, is personal testimony, called Pauruseya, Authority may give information about the existence of something, called Siddhartha-Vakya or provide mere directions about the existence of the action, called Vidhaya-vakya.

The knowledge derived from the Vedas, is impersonal, called apauruseya. The vedas provide the directions for performing sacrificial rites, which extend to show all existential sentences, regarding, soul, immortality, etc. The vedas are considered as the book of commandments. This supports the modern pragmatism which holds that every type of knowledge, could be ordinary, scientific, or philosophical, should be valuable only when it leads to some practical activity.

**Postulation, called Arthapati**: is the necessary supposition of the unperceived fact, which alone can explain the phenomenon that demands explanation. If, a fact is not being explained by a single instance, or understanding, it requires another fact which could be supposed, or postulated, in order to obtain knowledge about the existence of the first fact.

Non-Perception, called Anuplabdhi: Non perception, called anuplabdhi, of an object is its non impact on any of the perceptions. If no perceptions are simulated, by the object, it is perceived to be non existent.

This is accepted only by the Bhatta school of Mimamsa.

**2. Make a detailed exposition of the Samkhya theory of evolution.**

**Samkhya System**, founded by Sage Kapila, is a philosophy of dualist realism. The self is different from the body and the senses, the manas, and the intellect. Purusa is the Self, which has the characteristics of intellect, and the consciousness (caitanya). The eternal unconsciousness principle is the Prakriti, is the ultimate cause of the world. Prakriti has three main characteristics, called gunas, namely, Rajas, Tamas, and Sattva.

Theory of Evolution:

As per Samkhya, the point of contact, called samyog, between Purusa, the self, and the prakriti, or primal matter, is the starting point of the evolution. The point of contact, called samyoga, is a sort of effective relation through which primal matter, prakriti, is influenced, by the presence of self, the Purusa.

The existence, of Purusa or Prakriti alone could not result in the theory of world. The intelligence of Purusa, guides the process of evolution, but cannot do anything on its own. The Prakriti, does not have any consciousness or intellect to make any decisive moves, and is directed from inactiveness to activation. It is only the cooperation of Purusa and Priakriti, which results in the creation of world objects. The geometrically opposite nature of Purusa and Prakriti, lead together the world objects, just like a blind man is guided by the lame man. Prakriti is appreciated by Purusa, called darshanartham. Purursa requires prakriti, to discriminate itself from the latter, and thereby attain liberation, called kaivalartham, as the oxen are different from the cart they draw.

The contact between Purusa and Prakriti creates a disturbance in the equilibrium, which is present between the three gunas. Although this creates a chaos, which is existent almost everywhere in the universe, it is a systemised chaos, as opposed to the randomised chaos, as exists on other planets of the solar system and the universe beyond. The contact produces a tremendous commotion in the infinite bosom of prakriti, and each of the three gunas tries to preponderate over the rest.

The first product of evolution after the contact is called mahat, or buddhi. It is a psychological aspect. Special functions of Buddhi are ascertainment and decision making. The subject makes the distinction between subject and object through intellect. The budhhi, at this level has the purest existence in the Sattvic form, which means the characteristic, guna, of Sattva form. It has the attributes of virtue, called dharma, knowledge, called gyana, detachment, called vairagya, and excellence, called aisvarya. When Buddhi is vitiated by the next guna, tamas, it has contrary attributes as vice, called adharma, ignorance, called agyana, attachment, called asakti or avairagya and imperfection, called anaisvarya. The purusa attaches itself to Buddhi and start to classify it as itself. Buddhi stands nearest to consciousness.

Ego, called Ahankara, is the second product of prakriti, which is formed as the contact, or samyog happens. This is the next product of mahat. Ahankara, or ego is the feeling of “I and mine”, or Abhimana. It is ahankara, which the self considers itself, as the agent or the cause of actions. Ahankara considers itself as the owner of properties. Ahankara could be existence in the predominance of any of the three gunas. It could be Sattvika, with the element of Sattva predominating, taijas, or rajas, when Rajas predominates and bhutadi, or tamas, when Tamas predominates. With the predominance of sattva, it arises eleven object, the manas, the five organs of perception, called gyanindriyas, and the five organs of actions, called karmendriyas. The third charcteristic, or Tamas, derives the five subtle elements, called tanmantras. These tanmantras, or the five subtle elements, evolve into the five gross elements of earth, water, light, air, and ether. The second characteristic, or Rajas, is concerned into both the first, Sattva, and third, Tamas. It supplies the energy needed for the transformation of Sattva into Tamas and its products.

The five organs of perceptions, buddhindriyas, are developed by Ahankara, for the enjoyment of the self. The mind is the central organ which partakes the nature of the organs of both knowledge and action. The mind, ego and intellect are internal organs, or antahkarana, and the organs of action are the external organs, of bahyakarana.

The evolution of Prakriti into world objects makes it possible for the selves to enjoy or suffer the consequences their good actions, or merits, or bad actions, or demerits.

3. Answer any two of the following questions in about 250 words each:

**a) Discuss the salient features of Indian philosophy.**

Indian Philosophy refers to the philosophy, or the set of philosophies which originated in the Indian soil, not limited to our country named India, but includes the areas which were having the same set of ideas in the South Asian Peninsular region. “Philosophy” is the nearest word for the Indian equivalent of “Darshana”.

Salient features of Indian Philosophy

1. **Moksha** or Liberation is the ultimate goal of life. It is also the highest form which could be attained by an individual. Some philosophies also refer to as Nirvaan, mukti and Kaivalya. The puranas describe life and death as a continuous cycle, and liberation is to free oneself from these cycles. The four values which are proper goals, or the ultimeate aims in life are termed as Purusharthas, which are Dharma, which is righteousness, or moral values, Artha, which is prosperity or economic values, Kama, which is pleasure or psychological values and Moksha which is liberation. Artha and Kama are lower values, and Dharma and Moksha are higher values.
2. The seekers of truth are expected to live the life of renunciation, and a life of detachment, which will lead to external solace. Suffering, or pain is believed to be the main motivator to attain moksha. Non attachment, opens up and purifies the mind, and leads to pure and perfect wisdom and self-illumination.
3. The darker side of life, which is suffering, pain and sorrow are emphasised quite highly. Indian philosophy starts with pessimism, and moves to optimism and culminates in eternal pragmatism. The seekers find ways to eradicate and eliminate suffering, and enjoy the life of bliss, or ananda. This is termed as **Parmananda**, or sat chid ananda.
4. The law of **karma** has been given a high importance. All actions yield results, and the efficacy of fruits is karma. The karmas are deposited in our intellect, and consciousness, and are termed as Sanchit Karma.
5. Religion is an important part of philosophy. Vedic religion, or **sanatan** dharma is the starting point of Indian philosophy. Visista Advaita and Dvaita are primarily based on Vaishnava traition, and Saiva Sidhhanta is based on saivic tradition

**b) Explain the Atomic theory of Vaisesika.**

Atom, or **Parmanu**, is considered as the minutest particle which could not be further broken into subtypes. This should not be confused with the atom, as used in modern science or Quantum Physics. All physical things are composed of atoms.

A **Dravya**, or substance, is the element in which a quality or action can exist. The Dravyas in this philosophy are of nine types, in which first four are physical, viz, earth, or Prithvi, water, or jala, light, or tejas, air, or vayu. When an element is broken into smaller to smallest parts, we reach a level after which the part could not be broken or separated into smaller part. These indivisible or inseparable parts are called Paramanus, or atoms. If we do not believe in indivisibility, this will be the fallacy of infinite regression. Hence, these parmanus could neither be produced or destroyed, and hence are considered eternal. The atoms for the elements are different from each other in quality, and characteristics. Each atom has its own separate reality.

The atomic theory of vaisesikha explains the part of the world which is non eternal. All composite objects, begin with combination of two atoms, called **dyad**, or dvyanukas, or the first compound, and the combination of three atoms is called triad, or tryanukas. The atomic theory deals with the creation and destruction of these non-eternal objects. The destruction is defined by the separation of these combinations. Further, more types of compounds arise from these dyads and triads.

The universe, which is a combination of physical bodies, mind, intellect, and egoism, exists and interact with one another in time and space, **akasha**.

Vaisesikha agrees to the existence of Soul, or **atma**, and god, **parmatma**, and also agrees to the law of karma. The physical world presupposes the moral order. The universal law, or adrsta, is the process of creative will of god. Directed by adrsta, the soul makes contact with atom, and primeval motion comes into being. The creation and annihilation is actually orderly and morally systemisated composition and decomposition of compounds.

4. Answer any four of the following in about 150 words each:

**a) How many elements of the material world do the Carvakas believe in?**

**Carvaka** is the heterodox school of philosophy. They believed that perception, or pratyaksha, is the only valid source of knowledge, called **pramana**. Hence they held that nothing exists except the five senses, and refuted the inference, or **anumana** and testimony, or **sabda**.

Carvakas established that materialism is the only theory that matter is the only reality. Only material objects can be perceived and their reality could be asserted.

They hold that matter is composed of only four kinds of elements, or **mahabhuta**, namely, air, or vayu, fire, or agni, water or ap, and earth, or ksiti. Carvakas did not consider ether, which is unlike other schools. Thee four elements are gross forms, rather than subtle. Material objects, as well as living organisms, are composed of these four elements and their composition. They are produced by these elements and decomposed at death.

The consciousness was perceived by Carvakas, as a quality of the body, composed of material elements, as an afterglow of matter. The soul was understood, as the conscious living body itself, as caitanya visista deha eva atma.

**b) What is Avidya according to Advaita Vedanta?**

The Upanishads conceive Brahman as the pure ground of all reality and consciousness. It is the ultimate source of all joy, or **paramananda**. Brahma is supreme learning, the soul of the universe, the divine essence through which all created things emanate.

It is only through the realisation of self, or Brahman, that rebirth can be stopped and along with it all miseries could be ended. On who realises his unity with the immortal Brahman, realises immortality.

One who dives into the deepest recess of self, realises his identity with Brahman and gets into the heart of Infinite joy.

Sankara distinguishes between Higher Brahman and Lower Brahman. Higher Brahmanis known through right knowledge, or vidya. This is Nirguna Brahman, which is free from attachments, names and forms. The main characteristic to understand is Knowledge, or Vidya.

The lower Brahman, is the Saguna Brahman, which has characteristics. The lower Brahman is viewed in the aspect of ignorance, or **Avidya**. When there is no clear understanding, all learning becomes Avidya.

When the refection of Atman, the permanent self, is subjected to Avidya, it becomes a living body of senses, or jiva.

**c) Briefly explain anatmavada (no-soul theory).**

Buddha preached the doctrine of impermanence, or **anitya**, stating that all aspect of Human body, mind and consciousness are subjected to change. Buddha says, that the contemplation on object makes us realize, that everything arises from the causes and conditions and is in every respect impermanent. This is also agreed in several other systems of philosophy, with and exception of soul, or Atman, which is permanent, and moves on from one body to another. As per the theories, if there is no permanent being, the life would not be worth living.

Buddha believes the continuity of stream of successive states that compose of life and after life. Each state of life is a series of states, depending upon the condition just preceding it and gives rise to the one succeeding it. Life is a series of such states, and the Buddha says a permanent soul is the most deceitful of such illusions. Buddha points out that the one who suffer from the illusion of the self, does not know the nature clearly.

**e) Describe the seven types of judgments presented in syadvada.**

Different kinds of immediate and mediate knowledge that we possess about objects show that every object has innumerable characters. The universe can be looked at from many points of views and each view yields a different conclusion. Imperfect beings look at objects from only one point of view and consequently have the knowledge of only one aspect or character of the thing. This doctrine, that all judgements are conditional, holding good only in certain conditions, circumstances, or senses, is called Syadvad. The judgements made on the basis of this is called **nyaya**.

Jain Epistemology describes this as a series of seven steps called “**saptabhanginaya** ", or sevenfold predication.

a) **syat asti** – ‘in some way, it is’ or ‘may be, it is’, or ‘somehow S is P’. A box is red.

b) **syat nasti** – ‘in some ways,it is not’ or ‘may be, it is not’ or ‘somehow S may not be P’. A box may not be red.

c) **syat avaktavyam** – ‘in some ways it is indescribable’ or ‘may be, it is indeterminate’ or ‘somehow S may be indescribable’. The redness of box cannot be described adequately.

d) **syat asti ca nasti ca** – ‘in some ways it is and it is not’ or ‘may be, it is, may be, it is not’ or ‘somehow S may be or may not be P’.

e) **syat asti ca avaktavyam ca** – ‘in some ways, it is and it is indescribable’ or ‘may be, it is and also indeterminate’ or ‘somehow ‘S’ is ‘P’ and is indescribable’.

f) **syat nasti ca avaktavyan ca**– ‘in some ways it is not and it is indescribable’ or ‘may be, it is not and also indeterminate’ or ‘somehow ‘S’ is ‘not P’ and is indescribable’.

g) **syat asti ca nasti ca avaktavyam ca**– ‘in some ways it is, it is not and it is indescribable’ or ‘may be, it is and it is not and also indeterminate’ or somehow ‘S’ is ‘P’ ‘not P’ and indescribable.

5. Write short notes on any five of the following in about 100 words each

a) **Darsana**

Indian philosophies are marked by a striking breadth of outlook which testifies to its unflinching devotion to the search for truth. As philosophy aims at the knowledge of truth, it is termed in Indian literature, as Darsana, which is “the vision of truth”. The intuitive vision consists of wisdom about the reality and the secrets of human life both inner and outer. The interpretations from such wisdom form the basis of philosophical enquiry pertaining to metaphysical doctrines, logical truths, ethical codes, and religious practices. The direct realisation of truth is called **tattvadarsana**.

The revelations of philosophers or saints, have been codified and classified as having broadly the ritualistic sections and the section of wisdom, called jnana. A philosopher first states the existing views, or the views of his opponents, called purvapaksha, then followed by the refutation of his own views, called khandana, followed by proof of philosophers own position, which is the subsequent view, called uttarapaksha, or the conclusion, called siddhanta.

b) **Purusarthas**

The highest values of human life, which a person is supposed to follow, are called Purusarthas. There are four purusarthas, namely 1) Dharma, 2) Artha, 3) Kama, and 4) Moksha. All purusarthas are important, however, in cases of conflict, the dharma is considered most important.

1. **Dharma**: Synonym for Virtue, righteousness, duty, right, morality, justice, good, characteristics, tradition, ordinance, law, etc. Dharma signifies behaviour as per rita. In Buddhism, it means “cosmic law and order”.
2. **Artha**: This generally indicates the attainment of riches and worldly prosperity, advantage, profit and wealth. Artha related texts discuss this as individual, social, as a compendium of economic policies, politics and laws.
3. **Kama**: This is a comprehensive term, which includes all desires: desires ranging from the cravings of the flesh and the yearnings of the spirit. These discuss arts, emotions, love, erotics, relationships and other sciences in the pursuit of pleasure.
4. **Moksha**: Every school of philosophy in India, promotes the highest values of human life, called moksha. Other synonyms for the same are Mukti, Apavarya, Kaivalya, or Moksha. These develop and debate the nature and process of liberation, freedom and spiritual release.

Every school of though had their own views on Purusharthas, and their own hierarchies of orders.

c) **Sat** and **asat**

"The true essence and that "which is unchangeable" of an entity, species or existence is referred as Sat. It is also used as a prefix for several other words, where it works as an essence for the word, or action. Eg, SatDharma, is the true essence of Dharma.

Anything which is non-existing, illusionary, which appears and disappears, is asat.

In vedic texts, some philosophers believe, there was everlasting truth, or sat before creation, and Untruth, or Asat before creation, and the creation happened as a result, because something is required for creation. Other philosophers believe, that there was nothing as Sat or Asat before creation, as they could not be defined before creation.

d) **Asatkarya vada**

Asatkāryavāda literally means 'the theory of non-existent effect'. This is the Nyaya theory of causation. A cause is the unconditional and invariable antecedent of effect. A specific cause produces a specific effect, and a specific effect is produced by specific cause. Plurality of cause is ruled out. A real effect is produced by the cause that it did not existed earlier. The effect does not pre-exist in its material cause but is a new creation, a real beginning. The essential characteristics of a cause are its

1. antecedence: the fact that it should precede the effect,
2. invariability: it must invariably precede the effect and
3. unconditionality

e) **Sarvodaya**

Sarvodaya means “universal uplift” or the rise of all, or the society in which the good of all is achieved. Mahatma Gandhi had the dream where the goal of Sarvodaya is achieved. He dreamt of India, in which all communities live in perfect harmony, with equal respect for all values.

Gandhiji viewed that earth provides enough to satisfy every person’s needs, but not for the greed. In the Sarvodaya society of his dream, therefore, every member will be free from any greed for limitless acquisition of material wealth and more and more luxurious living and they will follow the motto of simple living and high thinking. Everyone will, thus, get ample opportunity to produce and earn sufficiently through honest work for decent and dignified living.