

UDAYANA'S REBUTTAL OF THE NON-EXISTENCE OF PROOF AS THE PROOF FOR THE NON-EXISTENCE OF THE SELF

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Abstract

All the systems of Indian philosophy accept the existence of the self (*pudgala*, *jīva*, *puruṣa*, *ātman*, *dehātman* etc.). Their discussion however involves conspicuous disagreements. Among several others, a long discourse on this issue was held between Nyāya and Buddhism. The eleventh-century Nyāya thinker Ācārya Udayana's masterpiece *Ātmatattvaviveka* (Discerning the Nature of the Self, hereafter ATV) represents the crux of the discourse. He examines four basic objections against the Nyāya conception of the self: the doctrine of impermanence (*kṣaṇabhāṅgavāda*), the rejection of external objects (*bāhyārthabhaṅga*), the rejection of the difference between substance and properties (*guṇaguṇibhedabhaṅga*) and non-cognition (*anupalambha*), and rejects each of them. The limited objective of the present article is to explore his refutation of the non-cognition argument which appears in the last part of the discourse.

The non-cognition argument (also called *argument ex silentio*) is offered to prove the non-existence of the self (*ātman*) on the basis of its non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*): There is no self because it is not apprehended. The rejection in question is not a general rejection, instead, it is meant for disproving the existence of an unchanging spiritual substance, namely, the self as conceived by the Nyāya tradition (acceptable to Vaiśeṣika as well). Udayana adopts a two-fold strategy to counter this argument: (a) the non-apprehension argument is not tenable, (b) there are acknowledged modes of the apprehension of the self. The following is the scheme of the article.

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First, the Nyāya conception of the self is described in order to show the kind of self Udayana is for. Second, the non-apprehension argument is explained as it is presented by him in ATV along with his rebuttal. The third section focuses on the arguments presented to establish the existence of the self. The concluding section is to reflect how successful Udayana has been in establishing the existence of the self.

Keywords: Nyāya, Buddhism, Udayana, Ātmatattvaviveka, Ātman, Anupalabdhi, Self

Introduction

“Who am I?” has been a perennial question in Indian philosophy. A purportedly objective response to this question is supposed to address the “What am I?” question as well. For leading a meaningful and socially productive life, the “Why am I” question is equally important. Whereas the first question intends to elicit a comprehensive response (the whole of me), the second question leads us to an exploration into various dimensions of our being (my way of being in different roles). The last question is to keep us mindful in every engagement (the greater objective of my life). Clarity in our conception of the self is a common expectation in the above questions. All the systems of Indian philosophy devote sufficient space to the discussion on the existence and nature of the self (*puḍgala*, *jīva*, *puruṣa*, *ātman*, *jīvātman*, *dehātman*, etc.). Their discussion however involves conspicuous disagreements. Arindam

Chakravarti observes that “one is not a doubter of the *existence* of the self but is simply a disputant of the spiritual-substance—a theory of the self” (Chakravarti, 1982, p. 212). Among several others, a long discourse on this issue was held between Nyāya and Buddhism. The eleventh-century Nyāya thinker Ācārya Udayana’s masterpiece *Ātmatattvaviveka* (Discerning the Nature of the Self, hereafter ATV) represents the crux and inclination of the discourse. He examines four basic objections against the Nyāya conception of the self: the doctrine of impermanence (*kṣaṇabhāṅgavāda*), the rejection of external objects (*bāhyārthabhaṅga*), the rejection of the difference between substance and properties (*guṇaguṇibhedabhaṅga*) and non-cognition (*anupalambha*), and rejects each of them. He follows largely the *reductio ad absurdum* method in his argumentation (Tewari, 2021, p. 44). The limited objective of the present article is to explore Udayana’s refutation of the non-cognition argument which appears in the last part of the discourse.

The non-cognition argument (also called *argument ex silentio*) is

offered to prove the non-existence of the self (*ātman*) on the basis of its non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*): There is no self because it is not apprehended. The rejection in question is not a general rejection, instead, it is meant for disproving the existence of an unchanging spiritual substance, namely, the self as conceived particularly by the Nyāya tradition (acceptable to the Vaiśeṣika system as well). Udayana adopts a two-fold strategy to counter this argument: (a) the non-apprehension argument is not tenable; (b) there are acknowledged modes of the apprehension of the self. The following is the scheme of the article. First, the Nyāya conception of the self is described in order to show the kind of self Udayana is for. Second, the non-apprehension argument is explained as it is presented by him in ATV along with his rebuttal. The third section focuses on the major arguments advanced to establish the existence of the self. The concluding section is to reflect how successful Udayana has been in establishing the existence of the self.

The Nyāya Conception of the Self

The Nyāya conception (of the self) is a logical formulation of the common perspective towards the self: the self is responsible for the life in the body of a creature; it is the driving force behind every animate activity; it is responsible for the unity of experiences of an individual; there are many selves, every living body involves a distinct self substance which underlies the states of awareness; and it survives the death of the body. In short, the self is regarded as 'the unitary essence of a person' (Watson, 2014, p. 175). The Nyāya-sūtra (hereafter NS) enumerates twelve knowable objects (*prameya*), namely, self, body, sense organs, sense objects, intellect, mind, activity, fault, transmigration, fruit, pain, and liberation (*ātma-śarīra-indriya-artha-buddhi-mañ-pravṛtti-doṣa-pretyabhāva-phala-duḥkha-apavargāstu prameyam*, NS 1.1.9). The appearance of the self (*ātman*) at the very beginning of the *sūtra* indicates its prominence among all the knowables.

Udayana, in the initial paragraph of ATV, points out the necessity of the knowledge of the self for the reason that it is declared, by all adepts in spiritual matters in one voice, as the only means to eradicate misery from life. Buddhism is believed to have denied the existence of the self, and Nyāya seeks to establish its existence as distinct from the body, senses, and mind. Udayana emphatically says that the self needs to be known either as a counter-positive (*pratiyogi*) to the negation of the self or as a distinct substance (*anuyogi*) from

those with which it is likely to be mistaken (Udayanācārya, 1995, p. 3). The Nyāya tradition proposes that the self (*ātman*) is a permanent and immaterial substance. It is the locus of knowledge (*jñānādhikarana*). There are two kinds of selves: the Supreme Self (*paramātman*) and the individual self (*jīvātman*). The Supreme Self (or God) is one and is the omniscient locus of eternal knowledge. The individual selves are many, distinct in each body, and they are ubiquitous and eternal (Annambhaṭṭa, 2010, p. 30). Their cognition, desire, etc. are not eternal.

In his commentary on NS, Vātsyāyana (4th century CE) says that the self is not perceived (*tatrātmā tāvatpratyakṣato na gṛhyate*). His observation is perhaps motivated by the fact that Gotama (2nd century BCE), after the enumeration of the knowable objects in NS 1.1.9, presents six marks (*hetu*) which are to inferentially prove the existence of the self. Desire, aversion, volition, pleasure, pain, and cognition are the signs of the self (*icchā-dvaiśa-prayatna-sukha-duḥkha-jñānāni ātmano liṅgam*, NS 1.1.10). These six immaterial properties are said to be located in the self. Vātsyāyana explains that these marks of the self involve memory. We desire something when we recall that it has generated a pleasant feeling and therefore, we want more of it. If our encounter with a situation or object was painful, we remember it and develop an aversion with respect to the situation or object. Similarly, we can say that volition involves memory in view of the fact that we recall pleasant or unpleasant feelings with an object and accordingly tend to acquire or get rid of it. The phenomenon of recollection necessitates the sameness of the self that is present at the time of an experience and the self recollecting the experience later. The recollection of pleasure and pain naturally drives our behavior.

Our behavior is invariably preceded by cognition (*jñāna*, *buddhi*, *upalabdhi*, *cetnā*, etc.). Every activity is either to avoid (*hāna*) what is unpleasant and harmful or to acquire (*upādāna*) what is pleasant and useful. And such purposes can be entertained only by an agent endowed with the ability to recall his/her previous experiences. For Nyāya, such an agent is none but the self (*ātman*). Moreover, the objects are revealed in the 'qualifier-qualified' (*dharmadharmin-bhāva*) form in our cognition. That is, an object of cognition is always known as the possessor of certain qualities; it is the qualities of an object which are immediately available to us in the process of cognition. The first moment of encounter generates a cognition which is devoid of the qualifier-qualified structure, that is why it is called concept-free or indeterminate cognition (*nirvikalpaka-jñāna*). When the cognitive process reveals the structure of an object in terms of its being the

locus of certain properties, the resultant cognition (emerged in the self) is called determinate cognition (*savikalpaka-jñāna*). The whole process shows a cognitive-agential-role (*jñāna-kartātva*) of the self in the process of cognition. In compliance with the common-sense belief, the Naiyāyikas argue that cognition is not possible without a cognitive agent. In their realist framework, it is quite natural for them to talk of the phenomenon of cognition necessitating an actual locus, which is nothing but the self. The self as a cognitive agent is a unit in the world, and therefore should be available as an object of cognition in virtue of having certain unique qualities mentioned above. Cognition—the illumination of an object—seems intrinsically so different a phenomenon from other elements of the cognitive act, such as the presence of light, a contact between sense and object, etc. which constitute the condition-complexes—that it cannot simply be regarded as the product of the collocation of conditions. It is, therefore, reasonable to accept cognition as a quality altogether different from material qualities. Given the radically different character of cognition, it is aptly taken to be an immaterial quality that cannot reside in a material substance. Hence, an immaterial substance, namely the self, is accepted as the locus of cognition. Along with cognition, the above immaterial qualities are taken to be the identifying (*paricāyaka*) characteristics of the self. Gotama and Vātsyāyana treat them as genuine marks (*hetu*) to inferentially establish the existence of the otherwise imperceptible self.

Uddyotakara (6th century CE) does not criticize Vātsyāyana for his assertion that the self is imperceptible, he nonetheless says that its existence is known from the authoritative sources (*āgama*). Later Vācaspati Miśra (9th century CE) interprets Vātsyāyana's remark in such a way that does not exclude the perceptibility of the self. He can however be seen as addressing the concern of the first-person ascription of bodily attributes in common perceptions such as "I am tall", and "I am fair" where a person tends to identify oneself with certain physical features which indeed are perceptible. Udayana elaborates more on these lines suggesting that not only the internal states such as pleasure and pain but also their locus self is also the object of internal perception. K. K. Chakrabarti however observes that "such perception does not show beyond a reasonable doubt that the self is an immaterial substance" (Chakrabarti K. K., 1999, p. 56). Such an apprehension creates a conceptual space for the discussion on the existence of any imperceptible substance such as the self.

Argument from Non-cognition (*argument ex silentio*)

From the fact that something is not cognized in a situation where it would have been cognized had it been present, one can plausibly claim the non-existence of that thing there. Non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*), though literally means the absence of cognition, is recognized as a means to knowing the absence or non-existence of an object by some Indian philosophers. It (non-cognition) is different from ignorance in that the latter completely lacks awareness whereas the former is very much an act of awareness. Ordinarily, the awareness of the absence of something requires, *interalia*, prior acquaintance with the object. A child, for instance, first feels the presence of her mother as a source of love and care, and subsequently, she begins to feel her (mother's) absence when she is not around. This psychic fact of our cognitive life suggests the primacy of positive facts so much so that the absence of any fact is understood in reliance upon its positive counterpart. That is, a child needs to be acquainted with the feeling of having the mother around in order to make sense of her absence in otherwise cases. Now the question is: Can we meaningfully talk about the absence of something which is absolutely beyond the ken of human cognition or the cognition of any creatures at all? How can we make sense of the expressions which purportedly represent absolute non-existence? Udayana deals with these quandaries in the penultimate section of ATV.

Considering the metaphysics of change in Buddhism and the materialist worldview of Cārvāka, it can be said that Udayana responds primarily to these systems in the abovementioned section of ATV. For Buddhism, the self (*puḍgala*) is an aggregation of five mutually supportive psychophysical factors (*pañca-skandha*), namely, *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saṃjñā*, *saṃskāra*, and *viññāna*. The Cārvāka understanding of the self as a living body (*dehātman*) is deeply materialistic since there is nothing immaterial discovered through sensory perception, the only reliable means of knowledge for a Cārvāka. Both of these systems disregard the existence of the self (*ātman*) as a permanent substance that is eternal, unchangeable, and multiple. However, the use of particular terminologies such as *nairātmya*, *kṣaṇika*, and the phrases and arguments articulated by his rivals indicates that he considers particularly the Yogācāra Buddhists as his prime opponent. The following is the basic non-cognition argument that Udayana examines in this part: There is the nonexistence of the self because it is not cognized as separate from the body etc. (*dehādibhinno nāstyātmā, anupalambhāt*). The argument can be reformulated as (Chakrabarti K. K., 1999, p. 268):

Premise 1: Whatever is not cognized is nonexistent.

Premise 2: The self is not cognized.

Conclusion: Therefore, the self is nonexistent.

Udayana focuses on the expression 'not cognized' (*anupalabdhi/anupalambha*) in his analysis. He considers two possibilities in this regard: (1) the self is not cognized by anyone, or (2) the self is not cognized by some, particularly the opponent. The first case is a doubtful proposition because it is not possible to ascertain that the self is not known to anyone. And, therefore, the claim (i.e., the self is nonexistent) made on the basis of this proposition is suspect. The underlying assumption is that some may have cognized the self. The second case makes the claim even weaker because the non-cognition of someone with respect to something is not a reliable ground to assert the nonexistence of that thing. For, the person may have defective sense organs or may have paid insufficient attention. Thus, the first case raises doubt regarding the truth of the second premise, and the second case raises apprehension regarding the truth of the first premise, thereby, the argument becomes unsound and contestable.

The above argument fails because of the doubt regarding the cognizability (of the thing or the knower). And, therefore, Udayana modifies the argument on behalf of the opponent:

Premise 1: If a cognizable thing is not cognized, then it is nonexistent.

Premise 2: The self is a cognizable thing and it is not cognized.

Conclusion: Therefore, the self is nonexistent.

According to Udayana, the above-modified argument also does not hold good because the second premise asserts that 'the self is a cognizable thing' which is unacceptable to the opponent. If the self is cognizable, it cannot be said to be nonexistent since *cognizability* and *nonexistence* cannot go together. Since the Buddhists do not accept the cognizability of the self, they cannot proclaim its nonexistence on the ground of the non-cognition of a cognizable self (*yogyānupalabdhi*) acceptable to Nyāya. It may be argued (by the opponent) that Nyāya accepts cognizability (or perceptibility) of the self and therefore there is a situation of limited acceptance of cognizability for the argument's sake. The limited acceptance of cognizability for the argument's sake would have logical merit if it were part of a *reductio (tarka)*. Because *reductio ad absurdum* argument

is to expose the absurdity of a viewpoint. Since the opponent intends to offer an independent inference to prove one's position (that is, there is no self.), they cannot ground their argument on a dangling probans (*hetu*) with a dependency on the derivation of the rivals. Otherwise, any misunderstanding of or change in the rival's position would make the inference vulnerable. Thus, Udayana argues that the non-cognition argument fails to demonstrate the nonexistence of the self.

As mentioned earlier, Nyāya accepts that the self is an eternal and unchanging reality. Eternal means something that is neither born nor perishable. Contrary to this belief, Buddhism considers reality as incessantly changing and every phenomenon as causally conditioned—originated depending on certain causal conditions. From a Buddhist perspective, Uddyotakara considers the following independent inference as a challenge to the Nyāya concept of the self (Chakrabarti K. K., 1999, p. 147):

Premise 1: Whatever is unoriginated is nonexistent, for example, the hare's horn.

Premise 2: The self is unoriginated.

Conclusion: Therefore, the self is nonexistent.

If we look at the form of the above argument, it is valid. If everything unoriginated is nonexistent, the self can be called nonexistent on the condition that it is not originated. Being an eternal substance, the Nyāya self is not originated. Also, that premise 1 is supported by a case with which Nyāya does not disagree. For, the Nyāya metaphysics does accept the existence of unoriginated substances like atoms (*paramāṇu*), time (*kāla*), self (*ātman*), etc. Thus, it appears a genuine challenge to the Nyāya conception of the self. Uddyotakara and Udayana adopt the following strategy to deal with the issue. Their contention is to show that the claim “the self does not exist” cannot be consistently made. For an opponent, this sentence means that the self does not exist anywhere and anytime in the way in which a “hare's horn” does not exist. Hare's horn is a nonentity—an absolutely unreal. But the analogy of nonentities like round-square, hare's horn, or the son of a barren woman is unenlightening with reference to the self. For, we make sense of these expressions by using three concepts involved: (a) round/hare/son, (b) square/horn/woman, and (c) a relationship between

them. Their conceptual combination forms an expression that fails to meet the referential requirement. There is no

single entity that can be referred to by such expressions. Uddyotakara says that we understand the expressions purportedly suggesting nonentities as false because a relationship between the familiar entities (such as hare and horn, and round and square) does not obtain in the actual reality (Chakrabarti K. K., 1999, p. 152). The concept of self is unlike the above-mentioned complex concepts. Nyāya's emphasis is to treat this concept as a basic notion with a unitary reference. In order to dispel the non-cognition argument, Udayana offers positive proofs as well for the existence of the self in the last part of his ATV.

Proofs for the Existence of the Self

In the last part of his ATV, Udayana offers two major arguments to prove the existence of the self (*ātman*), actually, the individual self (*jīvātman*) [he discusses the authenticity of the Vedas and the existence of God along with the nature of liberated self briefly since he devotes an independent treatise *Nyāyakusumāñjali* for proving the existence of the supreme self (*paramātman*)]:

- (a) Argument from the First-Person Indexical
- (b) Argument from Recognition

(a) Argument from the First-Person Indexical

Udayana says that all living beings have the awareness of their own existence. The feeling of one's existence is neither inferential since it is not based on any mark, nor recollective since what is not experienced cannot be recollected. The knowledge of the self is available in immediate self-awareness. This knowledge has a positive object, namely the self. Thus, a shred of compelling experiential evidence for admitting the existence of the self is the *feeling* of 'I' as the locus of all our thoughts and experiences. Each of us has a sense of 'I' (*aham*) or I-consciousness (*ahamiti vikalpasya prāṇbhṛnmātra*, ATV, p. 344), and this sense conceptually grounds one's ability to distinguish oneself (the 'I') from the other (*idam*) or what is not 'I'. The self appears as the content of a determinate inner-perceptual cognition, says Udayana. It cannot be said that this awareness is without any content, nor we can say that one is mistaken about the content of such awareness which is unlike the awareness of objectively available things inasmuch as everyone has immediate

access (*aparokṣānubhava*) to such knowledge and no one has even an iota of doubt over one's own existence. Hence, *immediacy* and *incorrigibility* seem to be the unique features of I-consciousness (*aham-pratyaya*). Since I-consciousness is not contradicted by any other awareness, it must have an objective basis, namely, the self. If this incorrigible and non-linguistic feeling is recognized as objectless, it would be difficult to consider ordinary experiences with an objective basis, and it will lead to various behavioral problems.

In his paper *Self-reference and Self-awareness*, Sydney Shoemaker introduces the notion of 'immunity to error through misidentification' in the discussion of selfidentity (Shoemaker, 1968, p. 556; Pryor, 1999). He contends that the first person claims and beliefs expressed by using 'I' as *subject* are immune to error through misidentification. For, it cannot happen that one is mistaken in recognizing oneself as the sufferer while undergoing pain. In the expressions like "I am in pain" therefore, it is naturally assumed that the referent of 'I' is the actual speaker, namely, the self. There is however a debate whether the self is a spiritual substance or the reference is anything else or 'I' is a non-referential expression. James Pryor begins his article with reference to *The Blue Book* where Ludwig Wittgenstein describes two usages of the first person: the use as *object*, and the use as *subject* (Pryor, 1999, p. 271). The second use is regarded as an unmistakable application of the I-expression.

If we survey various I-expressions in ordinary language, we come across a wide variety of such uses, all of which can be subsumed under two broadly conceived categories: *informational* and *declarative* uses (Sokolowski, 2008, p. 10). I-expressions in the informational use are generally intended to enable us to pick out ourselves as a unit in the world. The following are some ways in which we identify ourselves as the bearer of specific selfidentificatory features, such as 'I am tall', 'I am the author of X', 'I am the tenth member of the Diners Club', and so on. I-expressions in the declarative sense are expressive of our self-identity as defined by our particular engagements and commitments. In this use, we make a pronouncement that directly asserts our self-existential identity in the very act of making the specific pronouncement. An example of this use is provided by the context of a wedding, where one of the two would-be spouses declares to the other: "I accept you as my lawful wife (or husband)." Another example would be to say: "I promise to return the money I have borrowed from you." It might be suspected that the informational use of I-expressions does not quite carry the self-existential implication needed to constitute an argument for the existence of the self, and

these can be reinterpreted in impersonal terms, that is, without using any self-referential terms. The suspicion might be stronger in the case of assertions like 'I am tall', which may be (mis)interpreted as 'This human body is tall', in which interpretation no reference to the 'I' is made. This would not be the right interpretation precisely because it would be an incomplete version of the complete interpretation 'This human body, which is *my* body, is tall.' Clearly, in the full version, the first-personal possessive pronoun 'my' occurs and therefore re-introduces self-reference as a constitutive component of the entire assertion. This is a testimony to the presence of the self-existential implication of I-expressions in general.

The Nyāya endeavor is to argue for a metaphysical ground of self-referential expressions. Since no one can deny the existence of the referent of the term 'I', in compliance with their realist framework, they claim that the referent of the first-person pronominal expression (which might be described as the 'self-existential' expression) is nothing but the self (*aham-padārtha* or *ahamkārāspada*). The Mīmāṃsā system also argues that the term 'I' is denotative of the existence of the immaterial self (Taber J. A., 1990). The reality of *ātman* as distinct from the mind, senses, and physical body is affirmed in the I-consciousness (*ahamdhi*). The knowledge of the self is called perceptual due to its apprehension through I-consciousness (*ahampratyayagamyatvenātmanaḥ pratyakṣatvam*, (Nārāyaṇa, 1975, p. 195)). All our experiences are in the form of 'I see,' 'I do,' 'I think,' 'I enjoy,' etc. and it is unintelligible to attribute the qualities such as seeing, doing, and enjoying to the mind, senses or physical body, which are physical and therefore incapable of being the locus of such feelings.

Unlike Vātsyāyana, Udayana says that I-consciousness is not inferential because this awareness is not an outcome of the awareness of something in which it is grounded. If an opponent says that its ground is memory, it cannot be accepted because memory is rooted in a previous experience and I-consciousness is a natural, immediate, and pre-linguistic awareness. An alternative interpretation of such consciousness is offered by the Buddhists without resorting to any eternal substance. They say that the I-feeling is due to beginningless craving (*vāsanā*) which is the sedimentation of impressions accumulated through the life stages. This is a beginningless mental construction which is devoid of any objective support. Udayana argues that if an incorrigible consciousness like *ahampratyaya* is taken to be the outcome of the beginningless craving and therefore dubitable, then every ordinary appearance becomes suspect, and

such a dangling situation of knowledge leads us astray.

One may argue that the so-called I-consciousness could be due to an incidental cause such as the acquisition of certain linguistic competence (from a trustworthy or an ordinary source of language—*āpata-* or *anāpta-śabda*), or perception of a genuine sign (*liṅga*) or spurious sign (*liṅgābhāsa*), or veridical or erroneous perception. Udayana says that perceptual awareness

functions as the basis of inferential and testimonial knowledge, and such awareness could be veridical or erroneous. Whether veridical or erroneous, perceptual awareness involves objects (*savastuka*). The appearance of unmediated I-consciousness has its basis in the pre-linguistic or pre-conceptual veridical or erroneous perception. If the pre-conceptual I-consciousness is an immediately preceding state of the conceptual I-consciousness, the objective basis of the former is naturally I-consciousness only. If the appearance of I-consciousness is a non-veridical perception, the mistaken content of such perception indicates the presence of the objective basis of I-consciousness (somewhere, actually here and now). Thus, I-consciousness is either directly objective (as the object of indeterminate cognition) or indirectly objective (as the object of determinate cognition). In other words, even an illusory awareness would affirm the objective basis of I-consciousness, namely the self. The objective basis of I-consciousness cannot be denied on the ground that the self is cognized through external sense organs, for, it is evidenced by mental perception like intellect and mental states. One may recall here the Cartesian doubt where, despite all efforts, the devil cannot deceive with respect to the feeling of our own existence.

The opponent may say that the basis of I-consciousness could be the body, intellect, sense organs, or their collections rather than an immaterial substance like the self. Udayana says that the body etc. is invariably associated with a self which is evident in the expressions like “my body,” “my intellect,” etc.; otherwise, the feeling of my-ness would arise with respect to the bodies associated with other-selves as well. In fact, the self as me is the meaning of “my-ness” (*sva*) in the expression “my body” etc. It is a reflexive feeling which the self adopts to itself. For the same reason, the body, etc. cannot be the object of I-consciousness. The body, sense organs, etc. are felt as instruments. Moreover, Udayana argues that the self is not identical with I-consciousness itself. The way the objects of cognition are felt as different from cognition, the cognizer is also experienced as different from cognition or consciousness. The Nyāya view of the self considers it the substratum of conscious states. If it is said that the

constitutive cause which is different from the form of I-consciousness appears as I-consciousness and there is no self apart from this appearance, Udayana would perhaps feel no difficulty unless it is recognized with the Yogācāra Buddhist store-house consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*). He has argued against the theory of momentariness in the first part of ATV. Besides the argument from the first-person indexical, some arguments based on recognition and memory are adduced to prove the existence of an unchanging self. If there is no underlying unchanging substance of our experiences, the phenomenon of recognition and memory cannot be accounted for. Since recognition involves memory, the convenient name adopted for further discussion is the argument from recognition.

(b) Argument from Recognition

Recognition is a complex experience which involves perception and memory. If I see a tangible object from a distance and later touch it, this proves the existence of an unchanging agent (me) who touched an earlier seen object (*yo'ahaṁ rūpamadṛakṣaṁ sa evāhamadhunā śpṛśāmi* (Udayanācārya, 2005, p. 343)). The agent of both experiences is the same and the sameness is expressed as "I touch what I saw" (Chakrabarti A. , 1992). Such recognition is a determinate cognition where an agent identifies that the earlier cognition and the later cognition belong to one and the same person. This way recognition is used as a mark (*hetu*) to infer the existence of a durable self. One may consider that recognition as a mark could be a spurious one: it could be acceptable to Nyāya but not to the Buddhist opponent; it could be illusory and therefore unhelpful; it could be promiscuous like the recognition of an ever-changing flame. These examples of recognition fail to establish the durability of the agent. Udayana says that recognition is not a simple appearance; instead, it is a combination of successive appearances of an experiential self and the remembering self which suggests the existence of an unchanging (*sthira*) self.

The experiences of one person cannot be remembered by another person. The opponent may argue that recognition can be satisfactorily explained on the basis of the fact that the later experience emerges as materially caused by the earlier experience. This invariable material relation gives rise to a diachronic feeling of the sameness of the agent (*ekakartykatva*), rather than showing the existence of an elusive durable self. Udayana says that a causal relationship between two experiences cannot be established since

they are two separate cognitions. In a durable self, two experiences emerging at different times are not causally connected. This is evident in the cases where two cognitions are seen punctuated by long duration. In fact, it is the self which is materially responsible for two successive experiences. If there has been a causal link between the two similar cognitions like the cognition of a teacher and a student taught by her, it would have been possible that the student remembers at least some of the experiences of the teacher. For, the knowledge of a student is materially caused by the knowledge of the teacher and both cognitive states are similar. Similarly, Udayana examines various causal links between cognitive states and physical states and finds problems in them. The relationship between these states is in need of a unifying single substance, namely the self.

The nature of recognition cannot be ascertained unless an underlying unchanging reality is accepted. This reality is the self, according to Udayana. The very act of recognition establishes a separate existence of the agent, the recognizer. The recognizer cannot be a changing reality otherwise it can neither have a distinct I-consciousness nor will cognize itself as separate from the changing states of cognition. Besides recognition, Udayana considers memory and *āmnāya* (*śruti*—the Vedas) also as evidence for the existence of the self.

Concluding Remarks

Uddyotakara (c. 6th century AD Nyāya thinker) contends that the proof for the existence of the self is not required as no one has doubt over one's existence. For him, the only viable consideration could be whether the self is the body or the cognitive faculties or a psycho-physical complex or something other than all these. There are various perspectives developed in Indian philosophy in this regard, ranging from materialistic to idealistic. But there are a few who hold the materialistic position in this tradition. As it is evident from the foregoing discussion, there is a strong urge for the acceptance of an immaterial entity which underlies all psychological activities. Radhakrishnan considers the human self as 'an emergent aspect of the world process and not a substance different in kind from the process itself' (Radhakrishnan, 1994, p. 264). In this sense, the self is the unchanging principle in accordance with which the replenishment of the bodily constituents takes place. He distinguishes this organic notion of the self from the self as a subject. The subject of experience is taken to be the psychological entity that functions

as the persistent substratum of all cognitions and recognitions. But Radhakrishnan quite rightly observes that the self as an organized whole is the problem for psychology, whereas the self as a subject is the problem for metaphysics. Both the problems essentially relate to the individualistic conception of the self: whether the existence of such a substratum can be shown that not only unifies all our discrete experiences but is the very subject of all cognitions. Ordinarily, we tend to understand the elusive substratum on the analogy of physical things: it is the substratum of certain features which are essential to its nature. And we find a variety of opinions regarding its nature. The proofs advanced by Udayana for the existence of the self at best demonstrate the existence of the individual self, namely, the unitary essence of a person. Whether the proposed unitary essence is an eternal substance is a matter of concern. In view of the Sāṃkhya proofs for the existence of the self, K. C. Bhattacharyya observes: '[T]he self is inferred primarily as the explanation of the *unity* of the body. The body and, in fact, any complex that functions as a simple unity can so function because of a simple unity from which it is undistinguished and which appears to function for its own good' (Bhattacharyya K. C., 2008, p. 193). But one may wonder if such an explanatory requirement can be fulfilled without resorting to any elusive metaphysical entity. Contemporary philosophical thinking of the self tends to side with the naturalistic explanation—the explanation which is grounded in our nature as human beings.

In his proposal of liberal naturalism, Jonardon Ganeri says: "My view is that the self is a unity but not a simple unity, that it is metaphysically dependent on there being physical objects and properties, and that it is of finite temporal span, a little less than that of the body" (Ganeri, 2012, p. 319). His conception is a naturalistic appropriation of basically three theories of the self in Indian philosophy, namely, Cārvāka, Buddhism and Nyāya. As discussed, the Nyāya conception of the self is a philosophical account of the ordinary understanding of the self. Ganeri seeks to discard its eternal status in his appropriation and retains the functional unity of the self. His conception of the self is based on the examination of two important concepts used by Indian philosophers in thinking about mental states and their locus. The first is the idea of a "place" (*ādhāra*) where the mental states are believed to be located and the second is the idea of a "basis" (*āśraya*) depending on which they arise. Udayana argues that the self (*ātman*) is the only locus of mental properties in virtue of not only being non-physical in nature but also being the only eternal substance that can hold these properties.

The revival of Panpsychism and the introduction of Cosmopsychism in the contemporary discourse on the nature of mind and consciousness is conspicuous in this regard. According to Panpsychism, mental properties are not emergent properties of material composition; instead, they are fundamental and all-pervasive in the natural world. This theory proposes to address the hard problem faced by the physicalists as how could insentient matter give rise to conscious experience (Shani, 2022, p. 7). However, it has its own share of the problem: how could elementary sentient entities combine so as to give rise to a variety of mental phenomena? Its problem is called the combination problem. On the other hand, Cosmopsychism generally accepts the reality of individual subjects which are grounded in a more fundamental cosmic subject (Shani, 2022, p. 8). But this theory of the self faces an individuation problem as how a single cosmic subject gives rise to the multiplicity of lesser subjects like human beings. Udayana's articulation of individual subjects involving each an eternal metaphysical self provides an answer to the above combination and individuation problem. However, his evidence in terms of I-consciousness and recognition fails to provide conclusive epistemic justification for the existence of entirely unchanging metaphysical selves. As far as its spiritual value is concerned, an all-pervasive character of the self is intriguing. Every individual self is ubiquitous; however, it is seen as functional only where the conditions of its function (body, mind, sense organs) are fulfilled. A liberated individual self is devoid of any awareness in need of these conditions. In its liberated state, the self is distinct from other eternal substances in terms of its potential candidature for being the place of awareness. Awareness arises depending on the fulfilment of the conditions of cognition.

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