



CERTIFICATE NO : ICRESTMH /2024/C0824861**Problems of Self in Indian Philosophy: A Glimpse****Swapan Saha**Research Scholar, Department of Philosophy,
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ABSTRACT

Numerous Jaina and Buddhist thinkers have recently voiced their significant disagreement with this Carvaka perspective, joining other prominent Indian philosophers from the Advaita Vedanta, Nyaya-Vaisesika, Samkhya-Yoga, Mimamsa, and Visistadvaita Vedanta schools. There is a radical shift in perspective when a young guy ages. This finding lends credence to the idea that there must be a connecting component that does not vary with the body but instead stays the same throughout all stages. The individual is that part. The jiva, or self, is an everlasting entity in Jainism. The self does not exist in a state of creation or destruction. A living, breathing thing that has been around for a long time and will surely be around for even longer in the future. In this article, problems of self in Indian Philosophy: a glimpse has been discussed.

Keywords: *Problems, Self, Indian, Philosophy.*

INTRODUCTION

It's except for the Carvaka school of thought, all of India's philosophical traditions maintain that the ego does not pass away. But being materialists, the Carvakas reject the idea of an immutable entity called the self. They deny the existence of an everlasting spiritual essence called the "self." Our usual concept of the "self" is based on transient matter that disappears along with its sources. Substance disintegration occurs. No matter what happens to a person's mind-body complex, their existence will go on indefinitely.

The scholar would now want to start by offering some Buddhist criticism of the Carvaka method. The Carvaka theory, which states that consciousness is a physical characteristic, is not shared by Buddhists. According to Buddhist belief, the mind is the source of the body since consciousness creates the embryo or the physical form (nama-rupa).

PROBLEMS OF SELF IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The Jaina philosophers have also contested the materialist view, which holds that mind and body are inseparable. The ability to reflect within, according to Vidyananda, is evidence of the self's reality. "I am happy," "I know," and similar expressions are experienced by anyone. There is no room for doubt or dispute here; this idea of T is personal. In no way does this imply that "I am fat" in a physical sense. The two renditions of "I am happy" and "I am fat" couldn't be more unlike. The latter relies



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solely on internal processes, while the former relies on extracellular senses. All contemplation must centre on the individual. Having said that, everyone looks the same on the outside. The experiences that form the basis of the Carvaka's endeavor to associate the "I" with the body—"I am fair-colored," "I am fat," etc.—are not introspective because they depend on external sensations. Although introspection is a form of self-awareness, it is impersonal and makes reference to the outside world.

It is the belief that the physical body is the source of consciousness that Vidyananda challenges. Since the physical body is the sole source of awareness, he wonders why a corpse lacks it. Saying that a lifeless body can't breathe suggests that our awareness originates from somewhere other than our physical form. But the Carvaka could argue that the coming into being of consciousness is contingent upon the arrangement of material components into a living body. The next natural question is: who is responsible for assembling the parts into the physical form? There is an organizer within each individual.

When asked where consciousness came from, Vijnanabhiksu disagrees with the Carvaka explanation. There is no way for the four material elements to combine and form consciousness since "only that thing can result from the combination of some elements, which, though in a dormant stage, already possess the latter." Being immaterial, awareness cannot reside in any material element. (Cassam, Q., 2021).

Mind and spirit should be inseparable if they were inherent qualities; after all, they would last as long as matter itself. But a dead body doesn't show any signs of life. Once again, a portion of the body becomes unconscious when cut off from the remainder. The qualities of an object are contained in its material parts. Consequently, the body as a whole is inherently incapable of supporting awareness. Consequently, it is more reasonable to assume that consciousness is the only attribute of an immortal soul. In addition, the self is described as eternal in Samkhya-Yoga since it is an ultimate principle that is neither caused nor impacted by time.

We must recognize the awareness of the different bodily components (fingers, toes, etc.) or their atomic parts in order to comply with Vatsyayana's criticism of Carvaka materialism. In addition, if different parts of a body might be conscious, then every part of that body would be aware, so there should be an infinite number of knowers. The fact remains, nonetheless, that every physical body contains exactly one knower. Though it is a part of the body, consciousness is not a property of the body. Just as fire is a quality of matter, so is water the ability to be hot. The second point is that consciousness is definitely not a physical quality, unlike complexion. Even after the body dies, consciousness remains; nonetheless, a dead body has no awareness whatsoever.

The fact that the Carvaka concept cannot account for memory is another one of its shortcomings. Memory will remain a mysterious phenomenon if the body is the basis of awareness, as pointed out by Udayana in his Kusumanjali. If a person's physical form and their sense of identity were identical, the latter would have no memory of the former. There is a marked difference between a child's physique and a young person's body due to the child's physical growth. The fact that we can recall



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the actions of a particular bodily component even when it is no longer physically present proves beyond a reasonable doubt that memory is not a physiological process. These things point to the necessity of an immutable memory-storing substance that is independent of the physical body and unchanging during the lifespan. That is, one's identity. According to the Nyaya-Vaisesika school of thought, there is an eternal being that is both self-aware and static.

Similarly, Mimamsakas disagree with Carvaka's point of view. They state, "The self is distinct from the body, as the self-possesses the qualities of knowledge, feeling, etc., while the body lacks these qualities." Whereas people are aware of the physical body's attributes, they are unaware of the self's qualities. Things like action, volition, knowledge, pleasure, suffering, etc. do not belong to a corpse because they do not exist in a lifeless body. That being the case, these traits can't be linked to the physical form. This is one's sense of identity. After a while, the physical form dies, but the soul lives on. There is no beginning or end to the self; it is eternal, or nitya.

Another point that Advaitins agree on is that the body is not the ego. Atman, or Brahman as it is known in Advaita Vedanta, is a self-aware, self-luminous being. This atman becomes jivatman when it establishes a connection with the physical body. A person's ego, in contrast to their physical body, is immortal. Although light is an essential component for seeing, it does not grant visual perception. Light is just a precondition for visual perception. Consciously perceiving things may also require the body, in a similar spirit. Thus, the self, and not the body, is the rightful owner of awareness.

According to the Carvaka, it is the merging of material elements that gives rise to awareness. Therefore, how would one define consciousness? Is it part of the physical universe, or does it have some other category? Since non-material entities cannot exist according to the Carvakas, consciousness must be material. Also, they can't think of consciousness as a property of matter, as all physical things and their qualities are objects of awareness. Material objects are grasped by consciousness. As a result, its objects fail to notice it.

Memory, recognition, and the synthetic unity of the conscious states cannot be explained if consciousness is viewed as a physical quality. Overcoming these problems is possible when we recognize an eternal self.

Also, according to visistadvaita, the jiva (soul) is separate from the physical body. The materialist philosophy, according to Ramanuja, sees the body as the embodiment of the ego. It becomes relevant to consider if every part of the body has jiva if one asserts that the whole is jiva. There is no way for one limb to remember the experience connected with another if the body's parts include jiva; in other words, you can't transfer memories from one limb to another. Another problem would arise if we claimed that jiva is present in the body as a whole rather than in its constituent parts. The total wouldn't contain Jiva if it weren't one of the constituent elements. No amount of individual parts can make up for the whole lacking any essential trait. A person's physical body, which consists of several organs and tissues, is also incapable of consciousness because it is a simple, pot-like object devoid of intelligence. Like how someone can confuse a hot iron ball for a fireball due to ignorance, the



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experience that manifests as "I am fat," "I am beautiful," etc., merely shows the layperson that the body is the soul. But genuine adherents of the revealed scriptures distinguish between body and self. In our day-to-day lives, we might not see a difference between our bodies and ourselves. When broaching highly sensual subjects, we must depend on the realities presented in biblical writings. The eternal self, comprised of awareness and joy, does not perish, according to the Sruti and Smrti scriptures. (Sethy, D. K., 2021).

The six changes that take place in material existence—birth, being, development, transformation, diminution, and death—have no effect on the soul, according to Lord Krishna, because the soul is eternal. There is no beginning or end to the life of the soul. The eternal soul, according to Lord Krsna, is free from being and unbeing. The word purano, meaning "old" or "always the same," cancels out any modifications to the soul's development. A physical person's stature increases as their organs and tissues proliferate, but an immaterial soul's stature does not change at all; it stays the same.

A person's spirit cannot be destroyed, dissolved, or withered. There is nothing essential, immutable, pervasive, or everlasting about the soul.

The soul, according to Lord Krishna, is immortal since it is indestructible, unbreakable, and unending. This means that the soul must have an eternal nature, or nitya. The transient physical body can only be burned, wet, or withered. In its sarva-gatah sense, the soul is tiny, extremely fragile, and all-encompassing. The soul's pervasiveness makes it subtler than air or even atoms. Because it is the subtlest thing there is, the soul cannot change. It is sanatanah, meaning forever and perpetually existing, since it is acala, meaning permanent and unshakable.

Thereby, the ego is everlasting. It stands apart from the senses, the mind, and the body. The self is said to be born when it forms connections with the body and senses; when it does not, it is said to be dead. The soul has nothing to do with birth and death; it's the physical body that does it. When we're alive, our souls have names and shapes, but when we die, those things fade away.

The soul's life throughout infancy, childhood, youth, and old age is established by the same factor that establishes its everlasting character. A new-born has no concept of where they fit in the world. Happiness, fear, and anguish all wash over him. To make sense of this, the only plausible explanation is that he has seen comparable things in a previous life. When a mother holds her new-born son in her arms, the child feels safe and secure.

Despite his lack of experience with female caregivers, he finds great joy in recalling memories of his own mothers from previous lives. Similarly, a baby will show signs of fear if someone grabs him from the parapet of a building on the third floor and swings him around as if to throw him down, even though he wouldn't fully comprehend the gravity of the situation. But recollections of heights from other lives make him dizzy. Feelings of loss are similar. A baby experiences empathy when he or she sees another person's tears. His lack of interest in such matters would be a reflection of his



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inability to remember a past life, which proves not only the reality of the self but also its immortality. Unlike a lotus flower, an adult man's face does not automatically change expression when he is joyful, terrified, or unhappy. So, the opening and shutting of a lotus flower cannot account for the physiological responses of a new-born to these feelings. Consequently, similar changes should also occur in a baby. In addition, we are aware that the specific, mostly automated, reasons for lotus changes are the impacts of temperature, precipitation, and season. The only thing that can explain fluctuations in emotions like joy, dread, etc., is memory continuity. (Andersen, M.B., 2020).

Another example of how a soul's desire to feed itself was satisfied during a previous incarnation is the sucking habit that develops in a new-born. This intrinsic demand for nutrition is far stronger than the magnetism of iron. But since the source isn't plainly evident, we have to guess about its characteristics and constraints. The activity itself must serve as the basis for our decision. Consequently, there is an absolute minimum distance at which iron can approach a magnet. The only times a baby moves are when it needs to eat or be held by its mother. Is this motion caused by something new or by previous habits?

It has been noted that adults remember prior events in order to satiate their needs. It must also be the same for a baby.

Finally, a man's desire is innate, and it stems from reminiscing about his past experiences—something that can only be imagined in a body from the past. Things that the soul has experienced in a previous body beckon it back to them. Because a sexual desire links two successive births, we are unable to trace its origins to the physical body.

But then the issue comes: how can we be sure that the power that draws a new-born baby—their recollection of past experiences—is not the same force that produces the attributes of a material (like a jar) and the substance itself from the same source? Unlike pots and their attributes, souls and their attractive qualities are not generated simultaneously with samkalpa, imagination, and cognition.

The concept that living organisms may appreciate inanimate objects creates an attractive force, which likely stems from memories of past interactions. This leads us to believe that the baby's attraction is based in part on its recollections of previous interactions.

Attraction could be manufactured, like the quality of a pot, if the soul were a commodity and if it were based on anything other than the memory of previous events. Having said that, it is not true. But adrsta, the duality of merit and demerit, could be the driving force for romantic interest. The growth of adrsta is caused by actions in previous lives, not in this one. Consequently, the connection to a past body can never be denied.

Actually, the allure of an item comes from the mind's total fixation on it; the only thing that influences future thoughts is continuous exposure to the object. The sphere of birth, which governs the new-born's attraction, is dictated by karma or adrsta. All of these things show that the soul is everlasting.



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The soul's everlasting essence is intimately related to the ideas of reincarnation and transmigration. According to the karma principle, good actions have good results and bad actions have bad results. Feeling the fruits of one's labor is essential for the soul. It is bound to be involved. This is how new life begins.

So, as the spirit passes from one body to another, it gains merit or demerit based on its good or bad deeds. Doing good deeds brings joy, which is definitely temporary and usually followed by suffering. In order to feel pleasure, one must first feel suffering.

Old age, death, and grief are universally inevitable tragedies that everyone must face. As a result, people view life through the lens of "all suffering" and servitude. The break from this revolving door of life and death is freedom. And if man wants to escape these inevitable pains, he should seek this liberty.

Hindu philosophy revolves around the concepts of rebirth and transmigration. According to Hindu belief, after death, the soul moves into a new body. Keep in mind that the soul does not reincarnate but rather moves on to a new body after departing from the old one, just as we change our clothes when we go from one clothing to another.

Similar to how a guy would gladly receive new clothes when he gives up his old, worn-out ones, the embodied spirit really loves a new body when it gives up its old, worn-out one.

Those who struggle for justice and give their lives for it will be rewarded with better bodies in the heavenly realms of blessing, according to Vedic literature. Changing gears like this is like dumping out your old, worn-out clothes and replacing them with fresh ones. Thus, according to an alternative viewpoint, the immortal soul is unchangeable and will assume a new body upon the death of the physical one. (Li, R., 2018).

The karmaphala determines whether a soul is a devata, a human, or an animal. By performing good deeds, he increases his chances of receiving God's blessings, becoming a devata, and spending eternity in paradise. When the karmaphala is fully enjoyed, the soul will reincarnate into a more fitting body. And the one who does both good and bad karma eventually becomes a human. Furthermore, those that engage in negative karma undergo metamorphosis into insects, animals, etc. According to Hindu belief, a jiva becomes human after a series of rebirths during which it receives good karma.

In Hinduism, the rule of karma states that after death, the soul enters a new body and goes through samsara again. On the other hand, the Smṛti Sastras state that as a lifetime religious duty, one must perform śraddha, which is to provide nourishment and drink to the dead. If you believe that the soul reincarnates after a specific amount of time, you may wonder if it is wise to conduct śraddha on behalf of the dead for the rest of your life. To rephrase: does the śraddha-performing dictum contradict the concept of rebirth?



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To better understand this challenge, consider the following arguments:

The sraddha system is followed by almost every caste in Hindu Vedic religion. The origin of the term sraddha is the prefix sraddha, meaning reverence. In modern times, sraddha is still performed in honor of ancestors who have passed away.

The main purpose of sraddha is to pay respects to the souls of our ancestors who have passed on. Along with sacred music, we present the soul of the departed with food, fruit, drink, and other necessities. Sraddha is performed by the heirs in place of the parents who have passed away. Therefore, the procedure would carry on after our deaths, with our heirs also performing the rite. At every Hindu ritual, including marriage, the sacred thread ceremony, and the first rice-taking ceremony for a baby, sraddha is performed for the ancestors.

Sraddha is unnecessary for the liberated because, upon death, their souls unite with Paramatman. Sraddha is the only way out for people who can't break free. Reincarnation free from the karmic effects of sancita, prarabdha, and sanciyamana is the fate of spirits who are unable to attain emancipation. The soul undergoes a continual process of reincarnation after the death of its previous body; this process persists so long as the soul is unable to attain liberation. (Ackeren, M.V., Archer, A., 2018).

There is close communion between the human spirit and physical form. As it resides in the human body, the soul is affected by the body. Because of this, the spirit goes through joy, sorrow, hunger, and thirst. A new body is bestowed upon the ego upon death in accordance with the rule of karma. Having said that, the soul's transfer to a new body after physical death is a process that requires time. In this spiritual phase, sraddha is necessary. But what happens to the spirit when it leaves this body and enters the next? According to Hindu belief, after death the soul assumes the form of an ethereal body. During this time, he is still experiencing hunger and thirst. (Jonkers, P., 2020).

Therefore, his offspring do sraddha and provide him sustenance in the shape of sacred songs. The afterlife is either paradise or torment, depending on how the soul spends its karma. After experiencing his karmaphala, whether good or bad, he enters a new body. For instance, he assumes the form of a human being when engaging in mixed karma and an animal when engaging in negative karma. But the duration of this period or phase for each soul is something we just do not know.

While a day, month, year, or even a hundred years may seem like a long time to us, when we think of the everlasting duration, it could seem like a tiny second to the soul. We should provide the soul food and drink at this time of transition so that he can fulfill his physical needs, such as hunger and thirst, which remain after he leaves the human body. Take an inkpot as an example; it will still have some stains on it even after you pour out all the ink. This means that the spirit retains some physical impulses even after the body has passed on. Having said that, the absence of a physical form after death prevents the soul from gratifying its physiological needs. (Dimkov, P.R., 2020).



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Additionally, the spirit maintains a sense of hope that his progeny will gratify his baser needs by adhering to specific rites. As a result, we participate in sraddha throughout our lives, which comprises tending to the soul's material needs and praying earnestly to God for its welfare. During this process, a soul may have already crossed over into a different body.

The soul may also be experiencing the aftereffects of sacrifices made at this time. This might happen to us all the time, since we sometimes find that consuming the same old thing makes us happier. Why? Because at a sraddha, our ancestors make offerings of food, drink, and other things from a previous life. Rituals of rebirth and sraddha are thus not incompatible.

Our love and reverence for our ancestors compels us to perform sraddha for their everlasting peace of soul. By doing sraddha, we show him how much we love, respect, and are devoted to him. (Kathuria, R., 2019).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is that the self and its permanence are recognized by nearly all Indian philosophical traditions. Keep in mind that the idea of a permanent actual self is rejected by Buddhists. The phrase atman, used in the Upanishads, was considered synonymous with reality by Buddha, who used the terms bodhi and prajna. Rather than openly integrating his bodhi with the atman, Buddha degraded it to the level of the jiva and rejected it as unreal. Their genuine selves are unaffected by their criticism. They contend that consciousness is nothing more than an awareness flow. Although Buddhists believe in rebirth, they find it hard to fathom how a non-eternal self might experience it. What good are karma, reincarnation, and nirvana if there is no eternal and immortal self? This makes it seem like there is internal conflict inside the Buddhist understanding of the self. Even as the physical form takes shape, the spirit remains eternally unborn, undead, and reborn. The soul is eternal, unchanging, unborn, and unaffected by physical death.

God is like a parent to us. Similar to how we offer prasada to God or other devatas at least once a year, we perform sraddha for our parents after they die away. We consider sraddha and puja to be good deeds. Due to our faith in karmaphala, which dictates the type of body a soul inhabits in its next incarnation, doing these rites will increase our inventory of good deeds and may bring about favorable results.

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