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The Introductory Part of Udayana's Critique of the Buddhist Doctrine of Momentariness

Kisor Chakrabarti

Institute of Cross Cultural Studies and Academic Exchange, Elon, NC 27244, USA; kisorchak@gmail.com

Abstract: In the Buddhist view, all real things are subject to constant change, and nothing real endures for more than one moment. The Buddhist holds that only causally productive things are real and offers arguments to prove that anything that produces an effect must undergo immediate change and cannot be permanent. In his *Ātmatattvaviveka* (ATV), Udayana (a Nyaya philosopher of the 11th century) raises objections to Buddhist arguments and tries to show that a causal condition can endure through time. Moreover, although a causal condition may have the ability to produce an effect, the production of an effect may be delayed until all other causal conditions are available; during this time, a causal condition may continue to exist and remain unchanged. I explain Udayana's critique of the Buddhist position with the help of selections from the Sanskrit text. I translate the selected texts into English with notes and provide expository comments. (Diacritical marks are omitted from names).

Keywords: constant change; permanence; causal condition; Buddhism; Nyaya

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1. Introduction

The following selections are from the first part of the ATV. All page numbers of the ATV text are from the ATV, eds, V.P. Dvivedin and L.S. Dravid, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, 1986. Since Udayana writes in a very condensed style, explanatory notes are provided with the English translation, along with occasional references to important contributions of three classical Sanskrit commentaries that are added in the standard printed Sanskrit text of the ATV.

Text. . . . Tatra bādhakam bhavat kṣaṇabhaṅgah . . . .(ATV 20)

Translation (Tran): There an opposed view is that everything is momentary.

Note. Udayana holds the classical Nyaya-Vaisesika (NV) view that the self is a permanent substance (*dravya*) that is the substratum of its changing qualia (*guṇa*), such as pleasure, cognition, etc., and ontologically different from them. In the above text, he cites an opposed viewpoint endorsed by Buddhist philosophers (we skip three other rival views he cites due to limited space). Clearly, that everything is momentary conflicts with the NV position that the self is permanent. Towards the end of his work, Udayana argues directly for NV views, but only after critically discussing rival views, though the first and by far the largest part of the work is devoted to criticism of the doctrine of universal flux. The classical commentators Samkara Misra (SM), Bhagiratha Thakkura (BT) and Raghunatha Siromani (RS) point out that, in philosophical discourse, it is not only useful to argue for one's own position, but also to argue against the opposing views, and that the refutation of opposing views may contribute towards further development, clarification and better understanding of one's own positive views. (ATV 20–22) [Since the three classical commentaries of SM, BT and RS are included in the standard printed Sanskrit edition of the ATV, the ATV's page numbers are used for references to these commentaries also.]

The fact that Udayana devotes so much space to the critique of momentariness suggests that the doctrine was influential in the philosophical circles of his time. Udayana is a great philosopher.[1] While criticizing the doctrine of momentariness, he developed it to a high level of sophistication. His critique of Buddhist philosophy had a long-lasting impact. Buddhist philosophy in India never recovered fully from his thorough and relentless critique and never ascended to the high stature it deservedly enjoyed before and during his time. He belongs to the transition between "old" Nyaya and "New" Nyaya and decisively influenced the latter, which is a living school with brilliant thinkers, and which has generated hundreds of sophisticated and subtle philosophical works that are relevant for contemporary philosophy. In this very large literature, he is simply referred to as "the teacher", a title applied to no one else.

What is meant by being momentary? SM provides several explanations, one of which is: being something which is the negatum of destruction (i.e., that which is destroyed) in the moment immediately after its origin (ATV 21). Thus, something momentary ceases to exist in the moment immediately following the moment of its origin, existing for only one moment and, thus, is momentary in the strict sense. Alternatively, BT explains something momentary as that which exists at a given moment and does not exist at any other moment (ATV 21).

What is a moment? It may be explained, in Nyaya terminology, as that which is not the locus of the negatum of any prior absence belonging to itself. To explain: at any given moment, there are the prior absences of all non-eternal things yet to be. These non-eternal things are the negata of these prior absences. Since none of these negata are existent at that moment, the latter does not become the temporal locus of any of them. Thus, the description fits any given moment of time.[2] There are other accounts of "moment" and "momentary", and it may be debated as to which account is preferable and why. We skip that conversation due to a lack of space.

> Text. Tatra na prathamah pramāṇa-abhāvāt. Yat sat tat kṣaṇikam yathā ghatah saňśca vivada-adhyāsitah śabdādih iti cet na pratibandha-asiddheh. (ATV 22)
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> Tran: There the first (view that all things are momentary) is not tenable, for there is no proof. Suppose it is inferred that whatever is real is momentary, like a pot and that sound, etc. that are the subject of contention are real? No (the inference is not sound), for the pervasion is not justified.
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> Note. Udayana begins the examination of a classical inference for the doctrine of universal flux, advanced by highly influential Buddhist philosophers, in response to the Nyaya contention that there is no proof of the doctrine.[3] The inference may be reformulated as:
>
> All real things are momentary, e.g., a pot.
>
> All sounds, etc., that are the subject of contention are real.
>
> Therefore, all sounds, etc., that are the subject of contention are momentary.

2. The Main Buddhist Argument

In terms of formal logic, the inference is formally valid, and the conclusion follows necessarily from the premises. If the premises are justified, the conclusion is justified.

In terms of Nyaya logic, the outcome (*nigamana*), or the conclusion that the inferential subject (*pakşa*) possesses the probandum (*sādhya*), is drawn on the basis that the probans (*sādhana*, *hetu*) is pervaded (*vyāpta*) by the probandum and belongs to the inferential subject. Thus, the cognitive state that the probans is pervaded by or invariably concomitant with the probandum and the cognitive state that the probans belongs to the inferential subject are requisite conditions of the cognitive state that the probandum belongs to the inferential subject that is the outcome or conclusion. In the above inference, the sound, etc., represents the (modified) inferential subject, being real, the probans, and being momentary, the

probandum. The conclusion that sound, etc., is momentary is drawn on the basis that sound, etc., is real and that all that is real is momentary.

One difference between a merely formal approach and the Nyaya approach is the following. According to the former, a contradiction logically implies any proposition, and a logical truth is logically implied by any proposition. For example, it is raining and not raining logically implies that Mt. Everest is the tallest mountain, which logically implies that 2 = 2 = 4. Such irrelevance of premises to the conclusion is precluded in Nyaya logic because of the conditions, as indicated above, though formal validity is required in Nyaya logic for an inference to be sound. (The said irrelevance is disallowed in Aristotle's syllogism by the requirement that any two propositions in a categorical syllogism must share a term).[4]

The crux of the inference lies in the claim that all real things are momentary. How is this justified? This is summarily indicated by the citation of a pot as a corroborative observed example or instance for the generalization or pervasion that all real things are momentary. In the Buddhist view, a pot is nothing over and above a collection of atoms and an aggregate of qualia and motions that are constantly changing. Macroscopic objects, such as pots, may appear to be enduring substances. But a careful study of the core constitution of these reveals, in the Buddhist view, that they are all incessantly changing and momentary. Once the illusion of permanence is debunked for ordinary things such as pots, one may find that the general claim that all existent things are momentary is reasonable. A favorite example of Buddhist philosophers from early times that helps to realize this is a burning lamp. In a windless place, there may appear to be a single flame that is shining steadily. But even cursory attention shows that there is a rapid and unbroken succession of momentary flames: as the fuel is consumed, every moment there is a series of flames, each of which is momentary and different from one other. While there are such undisputed corroborative examples, accepted by both the Buddhists and the Nyaya, for the said generalization, there are no undisputed counterexamples acceptable to both sides; the Buddhist would dispute the claim of permanence in any case suggested. Accordingly, the generalization that all existent things are momentary is prima facie reasonable.[5]

The other premise that sounds, etc., which are the subject of contention, are real is less controversial, for the Nyaya too holds that these are real. The Nyaya not only holds that these are real; it holds further that the final sound wave in a series of sound waves is momentary. Although the Nyaya rejects the view that all things are momentary, it accepts that some existent things are momentary. This provides further support for the generalization that all real things are momentary: it reinforces that, while there are no undisputed counterexamples, there are undisputed corroborative examples. However, the qualification 'the subject of contention' (in sounds, etc., which are the subject of contention that is the inferential subject) is added for the following reason. Since the Nyaya accepts that some existent things, such as the final sound wave, are momentary, it is not useful for the Buddhist to try to prove that these are momentary. The said qualification shows that the Buddhist is not arguing for what is already accepted by both sides; rather, the Buddhist is arguing for where there is disagreement between the two sides. Arguing for what is accepted is a ground of defeat (*nigrahasthāna*); the qualification avoids that.

As noted, examples, confirming or disconfirming, should be acceptable by both sides. What about a pot cited as a confirming example? Like everything else, it is momentary for the Buddhist. But, for the Nyaya, a pot is a permanent substance different from the changing states. Is it then an appropriate example? Not if it is taken to be any pot. However, in the Nyaya view, too, a pot out in the sunshine or in contact with fire has constantly changing parts and is undergoing constant change. Although a pot in contact with fire may appear to be enduring, for the Nyaya, as well, it is a series of rapidly succeeding new pots being generated and destroyed each moment. In this sense, a pot is cited as a confirming example.

3. Critique of the Argument

Udayana rejects the above inference as unsound on the ground that the pervasion is not justified. A justified pervasion is supported by undisputed confirming examples and is not refuted by undisputed counterexamples. Additionally, there should also be support from counterfactual reasoning (CR, *tarka*). A pervasion confirmed in hundreds of observations may later be falsified by a counterexample. Hence, the doubt that a pervasion amply confirmed may be still false is reasonable. A pervasion is not justified unless such doubt is countered by a favorable (*anukūla*) CR that shows that supposing that the pervasion is false has undesirable consequences. For example, the pervasion that all smoky things are fiery is considered to be supported by CR and justified. Suppose that the pervasion is false—that fire is not a necessary condition of smoke, and that there is smoke without fire. Then, it is hard to make sense of such common activities as unwaveringly lighting fire to make smoke. Such CR provides the epistemic support for the pervasion to be reasonable and justified. Udayana implies that the pervasion that all real things are momentary lacks the support of CR, that the doubt that there may be existing things that are permanent is reasonable and the pervasion is not justified.

Another difficulty is the following. Buddhist philosophers such as Ratnakirti, etc., hold that nothing that is not causally productive is real and all real things are causally productive (Jha 1997, p. 682ff; Chakrabarti 2012, pp. 210–12). In fact, being causally productive is offered as a ground for being momentary. Now, the final sound wave, like the preceding sound waves, is momentary in the Buddhist view. But it is not causally productive. It cannot then be accepted as real in the Buddhist perspective. However, if the final sound wave is not causally productive and unreal, the immediately preceding sound wave, too, is not causally productive and unreal; this regress threatens the ontic status of the whole series and exposes a serious problem for the Buddhist position that opts for a series of momentary states over permanent entities. For both the Buddhists and Udayana, the universe has no beginning, and an infinite regress of preceding causal conditions is accepted. But an infinite regress of succeeding states, if a Buddhist courts that to avoid the dilemma over the final sound, etc., could, among other things, spell difficulty for the Buddhist view of nirvana. For many Buddhist philosophers, in nirvana, the series of momentary states of ignorance and so on comes to an absolute end. Could an infinite regress of succeeding states fit this view of nirvana? Alternatively, a Buddhist philosopher could accept an infinite regress of succeeding states in nirvana with the stipulation that these are not defiled but undefiled states. This would, of course, help to show that nirvana is not a state of extinction, as alleged by some critics.[6] But then nirvana is understood as an endless process of regenerating undefiled states. This, for Udayana, amounts to adding to one's ontology the burden of not only an infinite number of succeeding states, but also an infinite number of prior absences (*prāk-abhāva*) and posterior absences (*dhvaṅsa-abhāva*) of each such state. By contrast, in *mokṣa*, or the absolute end of all suffering, for Udayana, the self that has no beginning and no end exists in its own nature for eternity without undergoing any change (though a liberated self may serve as a causal condition). Without any doubt, Udayana would like to argue that the theory of *mokṣa* is more economical than the theory of nirvana, which incorporates an endless regeneration of states. The issue of economy is not limited to the discourse of nirvana and *mokṣa*. Nyaya philosophers have argued that the theory of permanent substances is more economical on the ground of stipulating fewer ontological entities than the theory of momentariness, accepting an eternal generation of states (ATV, 33).

> Text. Sāmarthya-asāmarhya-lakṣaṇa-viruddha-dharma-saṅsargeṇa bheda-siddhau tat-siddhih iti cet. Na viruddha-dharma-saṅsarga-asiddheh. (ATV, 34)
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> Tran: Suppose that that (the said pervasion) is justified by proof of difference based on the attribution of the opposed characters of ability and inability? Not so, for the (claim of) attribution of opposed characters is not true.

> Note. Udayana claimed above that the pervasion that all real things are momentary is not justified. Now, the Buddhist counterargues to show that the pervasion is justified. Consider a seed in a store that is not productive. Now consider a seed planted in soil with water, etc., that is productive. Being productive and not being productive are opposed and cannot belong to the same thing and, accordingly, a seed in a store is different from a seed planted in soil, etc. Udayana claims that a seed in a store is permanent. But a seed in a store is also undergoing change and is productive of the change. Indeed, being productive is the ticket to reality. Nothing unreal, such as a hare's horn, is productive. If something is productive, it has ability to produce. If something is not productive, it lacks the ability to produce. Such ability and inability are opposed. If something has the ability to produce an effect, it does not depend on anything else for production and produces the effect. But once it produces the effect, it no longer has the ability to produce that effect (though it may have ability to produce another effect). Thus, anything producing an effect at a given moment, as it must to be real, must be different from anything in the next moment, for nothing in the next moment has ability to produce the same effect already produced in the previous moment. It follows that nothing can remain the same for any two moments, for then the same thing must be both able and unable to produce the same effect, which is impossible. In other words, something must be productive to be real. But when it produces something, it ceases to be the thing that has the ability to produce that thing. Therefore, we must have a different thing and the thing in the previous moment is gone. This applies to anything at any moment; universal momentariness follows.

In reply, Udayana agrees that opposed characters cannot be truly attributed to the same thing at the same time. But he questions if ability and inability to produce are truly opposed. Hence, it remains questionable if the said pervasion is justified. This point is clarified in the following.

> Text. Prasaṅga-viparyayābhyām tat-siddhih iti cet. Na. Sāmarthyam hi karaṇatvam vā yogyatā vā. Nādyah sādhya-avśiṣṭatva-prasaṅgāt. (ATV, 34)
>
> Tran: Suppose it is said that that (the said pervasion) is justified with the help of conditional arguments? No. Is ability to produce or causal efficacy being an instrumental causal condition or being capable by nature? Not the first, for then there is the charge of being indistinguishable from the probandum.
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> Note. The Buddhist now offers two conditional arguments to show that the above pervasion is justified. (1) If a thing at a given moment were incapable of producing the effect, it could not have performed it; but it does (as it must to be real); therefore, it is not incapable of producing the effect. (2) If a thing were capable of producing the effect (in the succeeding moment), it should have performed it, but it does not; therefore, it is not capable of producing the effect. The first conditional proves capability and the second, incapability. The two arguments together show that a thing, when it is productive, must be different from when it is not productive. Since these conditional arguments apply to any two moments, it follows that nothing is the same for any two moments and that all that is real is momentary.

Udayana replies by distinguishing between two kinds of causal conditions. The first kind is an instrumental causal condition or an instrument (*karaṇa*). While each causal condition is a necessary condition for the origin of the effect, one of the causal conditions may be singled out as being the most efficient (*sādhakatama*), and that causal condition is called the instrument. What is meant by a causal condition being the most efficient among others? There are two senses in which a causal condition may be regarded as being the most efficient. One such sense is that (the sense intended in the present context) it is a causal condition that is immediately followed by the origin of the effect (*phala-ayoga-vyavacchinnam Kāraṇam Karaṇam*). In this understanding, since the other causal conditions,

though necessary, are not immediately followed by origin of the effect, they are not regarded as being the most efficient. In another sense, an instrument is a causal condition that is possessed of a causal operation (*vyāpāra*), which is immediately followed by the origin of the effect (*vyāpāravat Kāraṇam Karaṇam*). For example, in cutting a tree with an axe, the axe is the instrument and the contact between the axe and the tree is the causal operation that is immediately followed by origin of the effect, viz., cutting the tree. In this understanding, since the other causal conditions, though necessary, are not possessed of a causal operation that is immediately followed by the origin of the effect, they are not regarded as being the most efficient.

The second kind of causal condition is a causal condition that is not an instrument, but which is capable by nature (*yogya*). Such a causal condition is neither followed by the immediate origin of the effect nor possessed of a causal operation that is followed by the immediate origin of the effect. For example, a kind of stick that is needed to make a traditional kind of pot and threads that may be weaved together to make a piece of cloth are causal conditions in the second sense.

Now suppose that causal efficacy or capability is understood in the sense of being immediately followed by the origin of the effect. Then, the conditional is: if a thing were not capable of producing the effect, i.e., if a thing were not immediately followed by the origin of the effect, it would not have performed that, i.e., it would not have been immediately followed by the origin of the effect. This makes the antecedent (*āpādaka*) and the consequent (*āpādya*) of the conditional indistinguishable and, therefore, useless for the proof. (Being indistinguishable or the same as the probandum (*sādhyasama*) is a kind of pseudo-probans (*hetvābhāsa*).[7] (In modern logical terminology, the conditional above is of the form 'if p then p', which is logically or necessarily true, but factually empty and redundant.)

> Text. Vyāvṛtti-bhedāt ayam adoṣa iti cet. Na. Tat-anupapatteh.Vyāvartya-bhedena virodho hi tat-mūlam. Sa ca na tāvat mitho vyāvarttya-pratikṣepāt gotva-aśvatvavat tathā sati virodhāt anyatara-apāye bādha-asiddhayoh anyatara-prasaṅgāt. Na ca tat-ākṣepa-pratikṣepabhyām vṛkṣatva-śiṅśapātvavat para-apara-bhāva-anabhyupagamāt. Abhyupagame vā samarthasya api akaraṇam asamarthasya api kaaṇam prasajyeta. Na api upaādhibhedāt kāryatva-anityatvavat, tat-abhāvāt. (ATV, 34–43)
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> Tran: What if this is not a flaw because there is difference with respect to differentiation? No; it does not stand upon examination. The difference (opposition) due to the difference of the differentiata (*vyāvarttya*) is the basis of that (difference with respect to differentiation). That is not like the mutual exclusion of the differentiata as in the case of cow-ness and horse-ness. If it were so, since either would be negated due to opposition, the result will be either negation (*bādha*) [of the consequent] or falsity (*asiddhi*) [of the antecedent]. Nor is it like tree-ness and *aśoka*-ness through inclusion and non-inclusion, for it is not that there is the relation of being greater or smaller. If it were so, there would be either something which is capable of producing the effect but is not an instrument or something which is an instrument but is not capable of producing the effect. Nor is it also due to difference of the associates like that of effect-ness and non-eternality, for those (such associates) are not there.
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> Note. The traditional Buddhist theory of meaning is that words signify meanings primarily by way of exclusion or differentiation from others (*anya-apoha*). For example, the word cow primarily signifies what excludes or is different from what is not a cow. This Buddhist theory rejects the theories that a word primarily signifies (1) an individual (*vyakti*), (2) a universal or class character (*jāti*), (3) the form (*ākṛti*), (4) the relation (*sambandha*) between the individual and the universal or (5) the individual as related to the universal.

Accordingly, the Buddhist claims that the antecedent and the consequent of the said conditional are distinguishable. Being incapable of producing the effect excludes all that is

capable of producing the effect. On the other hand, not performing (the job) or not being a causal condition excludes all that performs the job or all that becomes a causal condition.

Udayana gives the usual Nyaya response that true differentiation should be based on the difference between those differentiated. (1) For example, what the word cow excludes is different from what the word horse excludes. This makes sense because the differentiata, viz., cows and horses, are different and are mutually exclusive. (*Anyonya-vyāvartye pratikṣiptavatyoh gotva-aśvatva-lakṣaṇa-vyāvṛtyoh bhedhah sambhavatu*, SM, ATV, 39.) In other words, such exclusion, in some cases, is based on the differentiata being related as contraries: no horses are cows, and no cows are horses. The formal relation of contrariety is stated precisely by the expression '*mitho vyāvrtya-pratikṣepa*', and cows and horses are cited as cases of instantiation. The formal law is reiterated in the classical commentary of SM, quoted above. RS has explained contrariety as *vyāvartasya niyamena pratikṣepa* or invariably excluding the differentiatum (ATV, 41). (2) Again, what the word tree excludes is different from what the word *aśoka* (a kind of tree with red flowers) excludes. Although all *aśokas* are trees, all trees are not *aśokas*. (3) Further, even where the two words are co-extensive, the associates (*upādhi*) may be different. For example, in the classical Nyaya universe of positive reals, the words effect and non-eternal are co-extensive. All positive reals that are effects are non-eternal, and vice versa. Still, the associates of the two words are different. The word effect is associated with prior absence (*prāk-abhāva*): an effect is non-existent before its origin. On the other hand, the word non-eternal is associated with destruction (*dhvaňsa*): a non-eternal (positive) thing is non-existent after its destruction. Hence, it may make sense to say that what the word effect excludes is different from what the word non-eternal excludes, even though the two are co-extensive. What the word effect excludes are things that are not subject to origin; what the word non-eternal excludes are things that are not subject to destruction. Thus, it is feasible to interpret 'all effects are non-eternal' as 'all those which exclude those that are not subject to origin also exclude those that are not subject to destruction'.

But none of the above three possibilities, Udayana claims, apply to the two words here, viz., incapability and not performing the job or not being a causal condition. (1) The references of these two words are not accepted as mutually exclusive, as are accepted the references of the words cow and horse. Clearly, it is not accepted that, if something is incapable in the sense of not being immediately productive, then it is invariably not a causal condition. Under the circumstances, if it is still claimed that the references of the two words are exclusive, the result would be either that the consequent would be rejected (*bādha*) or the antecedent would be false (*asiddhi*): either it could be that if something were incapable, it might not be a non-causal condition, or it could be that if something were not a causal condition, it might not be incapable.

(2) It is also not true that the extension of one of these two words is accepted as greater than that of the other, as it is accepted in the case of the words tree and *aśoka*. It is accepted that all *aśokas* are trees, but all trees are not *aśokas* (an *aśoka* being a species of the genus tree). However, there is difficulty if it is accepted that the extension of being incapable is greater than that of not being an instrumental causal condition, or that the extension of not being an instrumental causal condition is greater than that of being incapable. If the latter, then there would be something that is not an instrumental causal condition, but is still not incapable, i.e., there would be something that is not immediately productive and is still capable in the sense of being immediately productive. This is a contradiction: capability is here understood as being immediately productive, and mutatis mutandis in the former case.

RS explains *ākṣepa* and *pratikṣepa* in Udayana's text as *parigraha* and *parityāga*, respectively, or as inclusion and exclusion, respectively (*ākṣepa-pratikṣepābhyām parigraha-parityāgābhyām*, ATV, 43). He points out that, if the extension of capability were greater than that of being immediately productive, there would be something that is capable but not immediately productive. On the other hand, if the extension of being immediately productive were greater than that of capability, there would be something that is not immediately

productive (at present), but which is immediately productive (later) (ATV, 43). Neither is acceptable from the point of view of universal flux. Indeed, Udayana argues at length to show that something capable may not be immediately productive and something not immediately productive now may be so later, and that this supports permanence.

(3) Further, it is not the case that the associates of capability and being productive are different, as they are for being an effect and being non-eternal (SM, ATV, 43). If one were to claim that the associates are different, that should be demonstrated; but the Buddhist has not achieved that. Thus, it is not acceptable that the differentiations of capability and (immediate) productivity are different in any one of the above three ways. Hence, the objection that the antecedent and the consequent of the given conditional are indistinguishable is unrefuted; accordingly, the claim that all that is real is momentary remains unsubstantiated.

> Text. . . . Na api dvitīyah. Sa hi sahakāri sākalyam vā prātisvikī vā. Na . . . ādyah pakşah siddhasādhanāt . . . . Yat sahakāri-samavadhānavat tat hi karoti eva iti ko . . . na abhyupaiti . . . . Na ca akarana-kale sahakāri-samavadhānavatvam asmābhih abhyupeyate . . . . (ATV, 46)
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> Tran: Not also the second. Is it (1) having all the auxiliary conditions or (2) being of the nature of each specifier of causality? But not the first, for that would involve proving what is already accepted. That which is attended by (all) the (other) causal conditions invariably produces the effect: who denies this? On the other hand, when it does not produce the effect, we do not admit that (all) the auxiliary causal conditions are available.
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> Note. Udayana has earlier distinguished between two different interpretations of ability or causal efficacy, viz., (1) being an instrument or being immediately followed by the effect and (2) being capable by nature. He has raised objections against the first interpretation. Now, he proceeds to examine the second interpretation, which boils down to having the specifier of causality (*kāraṇatā-avacchedaka*), i.e., having that feature by the virtue of which something is a causal condition. For example, to make a traditional clay pot, we need clay, water, a wheel, a stick, etc. Each of these is a necessary condition and may be said to possess a feature, by virtue of which it is a causal condition of a pot. For clay, that feature may be called clay-ness, for a wheel, wheel-ness, and so on. Then clay-ness, wheel-ness, etc., are the specifiers of causality. Though each is a necessary condition, none of these by itself is a sufficient condition: only the sum total (*sāmagrī*) of these is, for Udayana, the sufficient condition.

By way of examination, Udayana asks first: does causal efficacy now mean for a causal condition to be attended by all other causal conditions? He accepts this. He implies that this falls short of proving momentariness and is consistent with permanence. If a causal condition is not attended by all other causal conditions, it will not produce the effect right away; it may produce the effect later if the sum total of conditions is available, and it may continue to be capable by nature and continue to endure and remain the same.

> Text. Prātisvikī tu yogyatā anvaya-vyatireka-vişayībhūtam bījatvam vā syāt tat-avāntara-jātibhedo vā . . . (ATV 48)
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> Tran: Is inherent ability (to produce the effect) the same as seed-ness (etc.) which are the contents of awareness of co-presence (*anvaya*) and co-absence (*vyatireka*) or is it a specific property subordinate to that (seed-ness)?
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> Note. Udayana examines if inherent ability or being capable by nature may be construed as being of the nature of specifier of causality. First, he offers the interpretation that inherent ability is the same as seed-ness, etc. This boils down to that that which has seed-ness, etc., viz., the seed, etc., are inherently able. In other words, the seed is a causal condition of the sapling and seed-ness is the specifier of the fact of the seed being a causal condition of the sapling. This is

known through the observation of the co-presence and co-absence of the seed and the sapling, i.e., through the observation that the sapling sprouts when the seed is there (as with all other causal conditions) and does not sprout when the seed is not there.

The second interpretation is that inherent ability is the same as a particular property (*jātibheda*) subsumed under (*avāntara*) seed-ness, etc. This property is called *kurvadrūpatva*, which means, roughly, 'being currently or immediately productive'. Some Buddhist philosophers admit this additional property to account for the fact that, while the seed in the field, for example, produces the sapling, the seed in a storage does not. If possession of seed-ness, etc., were the criterion of inherent ability, both the seed in the storage and the seed in the field should have produced the sapling. Accordingly, only what possesses this additional property is inherently able.

Text. Na . . . ādyah, akurvatah api bījajātīyasya prakyakşa-siddhatvāt, tava api tatra avipratipatteh. (ATV, 49)

Tran: Not the first: it is known through perception that there are those which do not produce the effect (sapling) and yet are of the same kind as the seed; you too do not disagree on this.

Note. The Buddhist does not admit universals that are different from and independent of the particulars. Nevertheless, the Buddhist, too, holds that both what is called the seed in a storage and what is called the seed in a field are different from everything else that is not a seed. Udayana implies that such a position does not necessarily support momentariness and may be consistent with permanence. He implies further that the Buddhist is not at liberty to deny that the seed in a field and the seed in a store are of the same kind: this is a matter of common experience in the form of perception that cannot be set aside without compelling counter evidence, which may be hard to come by if such counter evidence is grounded in perception and presupposes perception.

Text. Na dvitīyah. Tasya kurvatah api mayā anabhyupagamena drşţāntasya sādhana-vikalatvāt. Ko hi . . . sustha-ātmā pramāņa-śūnyam abhyupagachhet. Sa hi na . . . pratyakşeņa anubhuyate . . . . Na api anumānena, liňga-abhāvāt. Yadi na kaścit viśeşah katham tarhi karaņa-akaraņe iti cet. Kah evam āha na iti. Param kim jāti-bheda-rūpah sahakāri-lābha-alābha-rūpah vā iti niyāmakam pramāņam anusarantah na paśyāmah. . . . Yah ayam sahakāri-madhya-madhyāsīnam akşepa-karaņa-svabhāvah bhāvah sa yadi prāk api āsīt tadā prasahya kāryam kurvāņah gīrvāņa-śāpa-śatena api na apahastayitum śakyata iti cet. Yuktam etat yadi akşepa-karaņa-svabhavātvam bhāvasya pramāņa-gocarah syāt, tat eva kutah siddham iti na adhigachhāmah. Prasaňga-viparyayābhyām iti cet, na, pasparāśraya prasaňgāt. Evam svabhāvatva-siddau tayoh pravŗttih, tat-pravŗttau ca evam sbhavātva-siddhih iti. (ATV 50)

Tran: Not the second. Since I (=the Nyaya) do not admit that that which is productive possesses that (immediate productivity), the (intended) corroborative example (the seed producing a sapling) is devoid of the ground (immediate productivity). Which sensible person would admit something without proof? For sure it does not become the object of perception. Nor is it proved by inference, for there is no probans. (Objection): If there is no specialty (difference, *viśeşa*), why is it that some are productive and some are not? (Reply): Who says that there is none? But is the explanation in terms of the particular (additional) property (immediate productivity) and its absence or is it in terms of availability and non-availability of auxiliaries? In this regard we do not find any decisive ground even after examination. (Objection): If the thing which becomes immediately productive when together with auxiliaries already possessed this nature, it would have produced the effect by force and could not be stopped even by a hundred divine curses. (Reply): This would have been reasonable if there were a proof

that things have the (additional) property (called) immediate productivity; but we do not know how that is proved. (Objection): The proof is by way of conditional reasoning from supposition (*prasaṅga*) and reverse supposition (*viparyaya*). (Reply): No, for then there is circularity. If this property were proved, those reasonings would have held; and if those reasonings held, this property would have been proved.

Note. Udayana argues to refute the second suggestion that inherently ability is the same as having the property of being currently or immediately productive. The Buddhist claims that whatever is inherently able is immediately productive. This may be restated in the conditional form as (1) if something is inherently able, it is immediately productive (*prasaṅga*) and (2) if something is not immediately productive, it is not inherently able (*viparyaya*). Udayana grants that if (1) holds then (2) holds, and vice versa. But if (2) were offered as proof of (1) and vice versa, the argument would be circular and flawed. The Buddhist claims that immediate productivity should be admitted as an additional property when a causal condition is immediately followed by the effect. If the causal condition were already possessed of this (additional) property, then there is no reason why the effect was not produced earlier. Udayana objects that presence and absence of all other causal conditions suffices as the reason. The Buddhist counterargues that it should be admitted that a causal condition has the additional property called immediate productivity whenever all other causal conditions are available. Udayana objects that this is not acceptable, for no such additional property is observed and there is also no inferential evidence for this property. It is an observed fact that an effect comes into being if, and only if, all the causal conditions are available, and not otherwise. The observed presence and absence of causal conditions explains why and when the effect originates or not. Hence, inferring the additional unobserved property called immediate productivity is, Udayana implies, uneconomical and unacceptable.

The Buddhist may contend that the very origin of the effect provides evidence for the additional unobserved property of productivity without delay, for otherwise production would have been delayed. Thus, the inference of the additional unobserved property is necessary to account for the observed fact of origin of the effect and, therefore, not uneconomical. But, for Udayana, the evidence is not conclusive. The observed fact of the origin of the effect without delay may be explained as a causal condition that is together with all other necessary conditions, meaning that there is a sum total of necessary conditions and that the sum total is a sufficient condition.

4. Summary

The arguments above may be reformulated and summarized as follows. The Buddhist argues that things such as pots appear to be permanent, but they are not, for they causally interact as all real things must: only things that causally interact or are causally efficacious are real. If something is not causally productive, it is unreal, like a hare's horn. But causal efficacy precludes permanence. Something causally efficacious must have the ability to produce the effect; how can it produce the effect otherwise? Further, if something is unproductive, it follows that it lacks the ability to produce. However, if something has such ability, it must produce the effect, for there is no reason not to produce. In fact, non-production implies a lack of ability. But when something with such ability produces the effect, it can no longer have that ability, for only something non-existent can be originated. It follows that nothing can endure for more than one moment. If something did, it would have to be both capable and incapable of producing the effect, which is impossible: capability and incapability are opposed, and nothing can have opposed characters. In response, Udayana argues that ability and inability are not opposed. It is observed that when a causal condition is productive or is immediately followed by the origin of the effect, the causal condition is together with all other auxiliary causal conditions. Thus, the ability

to produce the effect means that a causal condition is together with all other auxiliary causal conditions. Similarly, it is also observed that, when a causal condition is not together with all other auxiliary causal conditions, the effect does not come into being. Thus, the inability to produce the effect means that a causal condition is not together with all other auxiliary causal conditions. When construed thusly, the same thing can be both capable and incapable of producing the effect, depending on the availability or unavailability of all auxiliary causal conditions at different times, and can be permanent. The Buddhist argues that an account of capability and incapability requires the admission of an unobserved inferred property called immediate productivity, which implies momentariness. Udayana objects that there is no decisive reason to prefer the uneconomical Buddhist account, which involves an unobserved property, over the account in terms of availability or unavailability of all auxiliary causal conditions based on observation.

5. Conclusions

The selected texts above constitute a small part of the first chapter of the ATV dealing with the critique of the doctrine of universal flux. The argument moves on as the Buddhist goes deeper into the concept of a causal condition, especially that of an auxiliary causal condition, the concept of origin, the concept of destruction, the nature of perception as a source of knowing with reference to the distinction between determinate and indeterminate perception, why the same thing cannot be the object of both perception and inference, why only indeterminate perception is the source of knowledge in the strict sense, why only unique particulars that can only be immediately productive and momentary are real, why the admission of enduring substances such as stones as well as unchanging universals such as humanity are fraught with serious difficulties and why the differentiation theory of meaning makes sense. Udayana responds with meticulous care and thoroughness to the formidable dialectics of Buddhist philosophers. While arguing against the Buddhist views, Udayana presents them with a marvelously high level of profundity and rigor. A thorough study of the whole first chapter of the ATV, as well as the writings of the great Buddhist masters, is necessary for a proper understanding of Udayana's critique of the doctrine of momentariness. A substantial book of hundreds of pages is needed for such study, which is beyond the scope of this paper: one should withhold judgment until the Buddhist and the Nyaya views are discussed fully. The doctrine of constant change is found in Western philosophy and Far Eastern Philosophy.[8] However, Buddhist philosophers have developed it and Nyaya philosophers have critiqued it in great depth and rigor, which deserves serious study. Such study should be of interest for historians of philosophy seeking to understand the treatment of momentariness in Indian philosophy, as also for the epistemologists and scholars of ontology of today dealing with similar issues.[9]

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Notes

[1] Besides the ATV, Udayana authored the *Nyāyakusumānjali*, which is mainly devoted to in-depth and rigorous analysis and defense of causality, induction, etc. His ground-breaking contributions are relevant for contemporary philosophy. Towards the end of this work, he offers proofs of the existence of God. He also wrote the *Pariśuddhi*, which deals with all the sixteen major topics of Nyaya philosophy with a preponderance of logical and epistemological themes. Further, he is the author of an unfinished work called the *Kiranṇaāvalī* (probably his last work), which deals with ontological categories, such as substance, qualia, etc. Again, he is the author of the *Pariśiṣṭa*, which is devoted to fallacies. Finally, he wrote the *Lakṣaṇāvalī* and the *Lakṣaṇamālā*, both of which deal with definition. He belongs to the Nyaya school, which is one of the oldest, most productive and most influential schools of philosophy. (the influence of Nyaya on the development of logic in South/South East Asia and the Far East is substantial.) His

illustrious Nyaya predecessors include Vacaspati Misra (9th century CE), Jayanta Bhatta (9th century CE), Uddyotakara (6th century CE), Vatsyayana (2nd century BCE?) and Gotama, the founder of the school and author of the *Nyayasutra* (6th century BCE?). Some of his illustrious successors are Gangesa (13th century CE), Mathuranatha (16th century CE), Raghunatha Siromani (16th century CE), Jagadisa (18th century CE) and Gadadhara (18th century CE).

[2] In the Nyaya view, time is one, infinite, simple, indivisible and eternal, and divisions of time, such as moments, months, etc., are based on associated conditions. Still the divisions of time are not unreal. When I say that I have lived longer than my brother, living longer than my brother, if true, is a real characteristic (*dharma*) of me and implies that I have existed for more moments than my brother. In the Nyaya view, all things happen in time and time is the locus of all non-eternal things. Accordingly, a moment is the locus of all non-eternal things happening then.

[3] See, for example (Ratnakirti 1975, chps. 4 and 5, RN).

[4] For further discussion, including the Nyaya approach to the logic of relations, see (Bhattacharya 1990, chp. III).

[5] See Chakrabarti (1999), specifically, the Preface and the Introduction, for a discussion of the principle of induction arguing that both corroborative examples and counterexamples of a generalization should be acceptable to both sides in a systemic study.

[6] See RN *op cit*. and (Santaraksita 1981, p. 166ff).

[7] See (Chakrabarti 1978, chp. IV). In a typical kind of inference, that the probandum belongs to the inferential subject, is inferred from the premises that the probans belongs to the inferential subject and that the probans is pervaded by the probandum. If the probans were the same as the probandum, the premises would be that the probandum belongs to the inferential subject (which is the same as the inferential conclusion) and that the probandum is pervaded by the probandum. Such premises are useless for showing that the conclusion (which may be open to challenge) is reasonable or acceptable.

[8] In the opinion of some scholars, Heraclitus, who promoted constant change, was influenced by Indian thought. See (McEvilley 2002, chp. 1). The doctrine of constant change in the Far East was influenced by Indian Buddhism.

[9] The interested reader may consult Kisor K. Chakrabarti's English translation, with notes on the first chapter of the ATV published in instalments in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy and Religion*, 1996–2021.

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