

The defense of the self, that is, of a continuously existing individual self through time, is one of the more intriguing features of the Mīmāṃsā system. Besides posing formidable problems for the Buddhist opponents of the self theory, it is of direct relevance to the ongoing Western debate about personal identity. Śābarasvāmin (fifth century) and Kumārilabhaṭṭa (seventh century), the two Mīmāṃsā thinkers I shall treat here, develop a position which contemporary Western theorists of personal identity tend to overlook. Yet it is, at least, not patently untenable, and it appears to have been held by some of the earlier philosophers who treated personal identity. In this article I shall expound the Mīmāṃsā position—or, more exactly, one particular argument of that position which I believe to be of special interest—and then relate it to the Western discussion.

My purpose in this comparative study is twofold. First, I seek to understand the doctrine of the self as presented in the original Mīmāṃsā texts. To do so, one must achieve a *philosophical* understanding of the doctrine; one cannot interpret a text adequately—be it philosophical or medical or mathematical, and so forth—unless one understands in some measure independently of the text what it is about. Comparison of the presentation of a philosophical idea in one text with presentations of the same or similar ideas in other texts stimulates philosophical understanding of it, insofar as to comprehend something is to know to what it is similar and from what it is dissimilar. Cross-cultural comparisons often yield more varied contexts in which an idea, in various guises, is discussed, revealing more of its ramifications—as well as, of course, relating it to the familiar. As Bhartṛhari notes, “insight attains clarity through the study of diverse traditional views” (*prajñā vivekaṃ labhate bhinnair āgamadarśanaiḥ—Vākyapadīya* 2.484). All this goes without saying for most of the readers of this journal, but there is no harm in repeating it. My second, subsidiary, purpose is to recover a lost argument from the history of Western philosophy. The study of another philosophical tradition often affords a philosopher new perspectives on types of reasoning that exist in his own but, for whatever reasons, have been forgotten or left undeveloped. The discovery of a more rigorous, or just somewhat different, formulation of an argument in another tradition can revive interest in it. Salvaged and refurbished, it can sometimes be made use of in contemporary discussion. Precisely such an argument, I believe, is that for the existence of the self, which I discuss in this article. However, I do not attempt to apply it in actually solving any aspect of the modern debate about personal identity. I am content here merely to identify it as *prima facie* relevant.

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I

The Mīmāṃsā argument in question is developed from a certain Nyāya argument for the existence of the self. Śābara, in his discussion of the self in his commentary on *Mīmāṃsā Sūtra* 1.1.5, considers several Nyāya arguments and their criticisms. The last of these is none other than the argument expressed in *Nyāya Sūtra* (NS) 1.1.10: *icchādveṣaprayatnasukhajñānāny ātmano liṅgam iti*. This *sūtra* is by no means easy to interpret—the commentator Uddyotakara himself offers three ways¹—but one reading of it, the one adopted by Śābara, is as follows: The existence of a continuously existing, substantial self can be inferred from the occurrence of desire, aversion, effort, and so forth, insofar as these states are directed towards objects that have been experienced to be pleasant or unpleasant in the past. Now, the Naiyāyika assumes, one certainly cannot desire what someone else has experienced in the past. Therefore, in order for desire and so forth to occur, there must be one self existing continuously from the past to the present who both had the pleasurable experience of the object and desires it now. As Śābara and others who have discussed this argument make clear, it ultimately rests on the claim that one cannot desire a thing one does not *remember* (as yielding pleasure). And one cannot remember *someone else's* experiences. For memory to occur there must be a single, continuously existing substance who both had the remembered experience and remembers it.² I shall, therefore, refer to this argument as the argument from memory.³

What is wrong with this argument? Why is the Mīmāṃsaka not content with it? Its weakness is just the premise that a memory of a past experience is possible only if there is a continuously existing substance that both had the experience and is now remembering it. For the Buddhists developed a plausible alternative account of memory. A person might not be a single substance existing continuously through time but a series of what, borrowing from contemporary philosophy, we might call person stages. Each person stage, consisting of various psychological and physiological factors (*skandhas*), lasts for only an instant, but as it passes away it gives rise to another person stage having important continuities with it. (A “person stage” as usually defined—a phase in the series of states and events which we ordinarily call a “person”—does not presuppose the existence of a continuous substance.) Memory, in this theory, would be the result of a chain of memory impressions (*vāsanās*) occurring in a series of person stages, initiated by an original experience occurring at person stage *A* and eventually giving rise to a memory experience (an experience similar to the original experience or having it as its object) at a subsequent person stage *Z*. Thus, the Nyāya argument from memory is not conclusive (*anekānta*). Memory experiences might take place without a continuous, substantial self.⁴

The Mīmāṃsaka considers this criticism as valid. Kumārilabhaṭṭa main-

tains that Śabara, in discussing the various Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika arguments for the self, merely intends, by means of Buddhist objections, to point up their inadequacies.⁵ He moves beyond all of them to adopt a uniquely Mīmāṃsā position, which the Buddhist is unable to assail. Here, as usual, the Mīmāṃsaka is asserting himself to be the only competent defender of the faith among orthodox Hindu thinkers. The irony here, as elsewhere (in the discussion of God's existence, the defense of the authority of the Veda, and so forth), is that he nearly ends up agreeing on more points with the Buddhist than with the other representatives of the Brahmanic tradition.

What, then is Śabara's argument? It is but a revision of this Nyāya argument from memory. That is, Śabara argues that a substantial self is made evident to us by the very notion 'I' (*ahampratyaya*) as it occurs in memory. I quote now from the *Mīmāṃsāsūtrabhāṣya*:

When a thing has been seen on one day, the notion "I saw this" arises on a later day. And this [recognition] refers to an inner self (*pratyagātmani*), nothing else [that is, certainly, not to a collection of *skandhas*]. For the present [collection of *skandhas*] is different from the one that saw [the thing] earlier. Hence, there is something besides the [collection of *skandhas*] to which this word 'I' applies. . . . [Here,] we do not consider the word 'I' that we employ to be the means for inferring another thing [besides the *skandhas*]. Rather, we consider the *experience* of recognition (*pratyabhijñā*), which goes beyond the word (*śabdād vyatiriktam*) [to be the means of inference]. [So, one could not argue that no conclusion can be drawn from the use of 'I' here because it is used only figuratively.] For this is the meaning we comprehend [when we employ this word]: "We perceived yesterday, we remember now." Therefore, we understand that we existed yesterday and we exist today. And those things which existed yesterday and exist today, they are not such as have passed away. [That is, they exist *continuously* from yesterday to today.]⁶

The thrust of the argument is this: Memory establishes the existence of a continuous self not insofar as it *presupposes* a single subject of experience that both had the remembered experience and now remembers it, but insofar as it directly reveals one. For it is part of the content of many of my memories that I, who am now remembering, am the one who did or experienced the thing that is remembered. And that means that it is part of the content of many of my memories that I, who am remembering now, am identical with a thing—a subject of experience—that existed in the past. From this I infer that I have existed continuously through time. (Thus, technically, we still have to do with an inference. The ground of inference (*hetu*) is the recognition of myself as identical with a thing that existed in the past, the conclusion of my continuous existence through time.) Just as the establishing of any other object that exists now that it existed also in the past justifies the belief that it has existed continuously from the past to the present, so does the *recognition* of myself as a subject of experience in memory. We may refer to this as the argument from self-recognition.⁷

Kumārila adds very little to this. The *ātmavāda-adhikaraṇa* of his *Śloka-*

vārttika comprises only 148 *ślokas*, even though Śabara devotes considerable space to his discussion of the self. Kumārila may have thought the self a more appropriate topic for Vedānta than Pūrva Mīmāṃsā (thus, see the concluding *śloka* 148). Most of his effort goes to establishing that the thing that is identified as ‘I’ is not the physical organism, including the mind and the senses. For the ‘I’ is an agent of knowledge (*jñātr*)—it is one who has *experienced* something in the past—and the physical organism is incapable of knowledge by itself. Nor can this recognized entity be a cognitive state (*jñāna*), as a (Yogācāra) Buddhist might argue. For cognitive states are fleeting. The same cognitive state that ‘experienced’ something in the past cannot be ‘remembering’ now. But one need not have gone to any length arguing for these things. They are immediately conveyed by Śabara’s formula, if interpreted literally: the notion ‘I’ in memory refers to (or, “arises with respect to”) an inner self and nothing else (*pratyagātmani caitad bhavati, na paratra*). The idea seems to be that I recognize myself as a distinct kind of entity, not as a body nor even as a subject of experience in general, for which the expression ‘I’ is required. The argument may, then, be seen to depend partially on another Nyāya view, namely, that the word ‘I’, insofar as it is a unique word different from the words ‘body’, ‘idea’, and so forth, requires a unique occasion for its use.⁸ This is Hume’s argument against the existence of a substantial self turned on its head: there *must* be some distinct impression corresponding to the notion ‘I’; otherwise the notion would not occur. Moreover, Śabara adds, any collection of *skandhas*—including physical form, that is, the body and sense organs—changes over time. But in memory I recognize the same subject as my present self—I recognize *me*—not something just similar or related to me. That is, I recognize not just a distinct type of entity but a distinct particular.

From what I have said, the Mīmāṃsā argument for the self might be interpreted as a merely linguistic one: from the way we talk about things we infer the way things are. This is a notoriously unreliable kind of argument. Certainly, the way we talk does in some measure reflect our experience of the world, but not always nor in all respects. But I believe that it would be a mistake to interpret the argument in this way. As I see it, in spite of its form as an inference, it amounts to the assertion that our way of talking about the self, specifically, the reference to ourselves in our memory reports as continuously existing and self-identical, is indeed an accurate expression of our experience.⁹ Viewed in this way, the argument comes down to a direct appeal to a certain intuition which, if acknowledged, ought to settle the issue immediately. If one does not acknowledge it, on the other hand, then the dispute about the self is exposed as unresolvable. I, for one, am inclined to agree with the Mīmāṃsā analysis of memory. It at least seems truer to my experience than those accounts which suggest that when I remember something, I recall *some subject of experience or other* having undergone the experience.

Rather, it seems to me that when I remember something, I do recognize *me* undergoing it. And that would seem to exclude my being a body or a cognitive state, which could under no circumstances be quite identical with the present body or cognitive state (especially when I am remembering something that took place long ago). In any case, in recognizing myself I do not, evidently, recognize a certain body or an idea. The Mīmāṃsā account also entails that whenever I have an experience, I am aware of myself having it. Otherwise, I could not later, in self-recognition, identify the subject of the experience as myself. Thus, the Mīmāṃsā analysis of memory experience—the claim that it entails a self-recognition—is supported in some measure by the widespread belief that when we know something, we know that we know it.

So far, in discussing the Mīmāṃsā argument from self-recognition I have, while pointing out various ways in which it relates to Nyāya ideas, gone along with the Mīmāṃsā claim that this argument constitutes an advance beyond Nyāya thought about the self. But is that really true? In the first *āhnika* of the third *adhyāya* of the *Nyāya Sūtra* and its commentaries, we in fact find a discussion that comes very close to expressing the argument from self-recognition.¹⁰ I now turn to this discussion with the purpose of further clarifying the Mīmāṃsā point of view.

NS 3.1.1 reads: *darśanasparśanābhyām ekārthagrahaṇāt*. Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara interpret this as an answer to the question whether, from statements such as “I see with my eyes,” “I know with my mind,” and “I feel pleasure and pain with my body,” one can infer that there is a self that is distinct from mind, body, and senses. For such statements suggest that there is an agent that employs the senses, the mind, and the body in cognitive acts, and usually agent and instrument are distinct entities. The commentators explain, however, that it is possible that such statements merely express a relationship between part and whole; that is, they may be referring to a relationship, not between a particular faculty and some altogether different entity (a self), but between a particular faculty and the collection of all the faculties that constitute the physical organism (*dehādisaṅghāta*). (On this view we say, “I see with my eyes,” just as we might say, “The house stands by means of its pillars.”) The *sūtra*, then, responds to this possibility by asserting that there must be a distinct entity which employs these faculties as instruments in acts of cognition, “because one and the same object is apprehended by both [faculties of] seeing and feeling.” Vātsyāyana elucidates: “The very same object which was [formerly] apprehended by the sense of sight is [now] apprehended by the sense of touch. [Thus, we express our experience by saying.] ‘What I saw with my eye I now also feel with the sense of touch, and what I felt with the sense of touch I now see with my eye.’ These two cognitions [of seeing and touching] are joined together (*pratisandhīyete*) as having the same object and the same agent; and they do not have an aggregate as their agent, nor is the sense organ [itself] the agent.” The point is: there must be some one entity

distinct from any sense organ which both sees and feels the object. For one sense organ cannot perceive the object of another: an eye, for example, cannot feel. Nor could the *aggregate* of faculties be responsible for these acts of cognition, for it is *one* thing, not a group, that perceives the object on separate occasions. And, the aggregate consisting solely of various faculties, one would still have the absurdity of one faculty cognizing the object of another. Thus, Vātsyāyana concludes, “That [thing] which is the perceiver of the same object by means of [both] the eye and the sense of touch, which combines together the two cognitions which have the same object and the same agent but different efficient causes [that is, which are produced by different sense organs]—that is the self.”¹¹

Now this argument seems indeed very closely related to the Mīmāṃsā argument from self-recognition. It appeals to the same basic fact on which the latter turns, namely, that the same subject of experience who cognized something in the past may cognize that thing now. At *NS* 3.1.7 the term ‘recognition’ even occurs: *savyadr̥ṣṭasyetareṇa pratyabhijñānāt*. Vātsyāyana interprets this to mean that we know that there is a bearer of consciousness distinct from the body and the various faculties because we recognize with the right eye what we once saw with the left! If the right or left eye were the bearer of consciousness, this could not occur, for, once again, one faculty cannot recognize what has been experienced by another (the two eyes are here, oddly enough, being considered as distinct faculties).¹² Nevertheless, this argument does not appeal to the more specific fact on which the Mīmāṃsā discussion focuses, that the *self* is recognized. Self-recognition directly reveals the existence of the self in the past and the present. But in all the examples given of memory or recognition by Vātsyāyana it is objects of sense that are recognized or remembered, while the self is still being *inferred*, essentially as in the discussion of *NS* 1.1.10, as the single entity continuous from past to present, which recognition and memory must presuppose. Moreover, the ultimate aim of *NS* 3.1.1 is only to prove that the self—whose existence as the continuous *pratisandhātṛ* (connector) of memories was, in fact, supposedly already established at 1.1.10—is an entity *distinct* from the aggregate of body and faculties. Thus, Vātsyāyana stresses examples that involve experiences of various kinds—for example, “What I *saw* in the past I am *touching* now”—where it is clear that a particular sense organ could not be the subject of the experiences. But for the Mīmāṃsaka the argument from self-recognition establishes only the *permanence* of the self. The explicit demonstration of a distinction of the self from the faculties is then carried out, it seems, as an afterthought, by a different method than that of Nyāya, namely, by appeal to the notion that a material organism and its faculties cannot be bearers of consciousness.

At *NS* 3.1.14, however, Vātsyāyana actually refers to the fact that every memory contains not just an awareness of an object previously experienced,

but an awareness of the object *as* previously cognized by an agent of cognition: “This memory which occurs with reference to an object not presently apprehended, in the form ‘I knew that thing’—the object of this memory is a previously known thing, qualified [as being known] by an agent of cognition [through] a process of cognition (*jñātrjñānaviśiṣṭaḥ pūrvajñāto ’rthaḥ viśayaḥ*), not just the thing.”¹³ Here, again, the context is the Buddhist theory of memory. The Buddhist has charged in the previous *sūtra* that the fact that a perception of an object by means of one sense can stimulate a memory relating to another sense—for example, that seeing a mango can cause one’s mouth to water—cannot be adduced in support of the existence of a self which is distinct from the sense faculties (the argument would be basically the same as that of 3.1.1 and 7: there has to be some third entity capable of perceiving the objects of both faculties); for the self, the Buddhist argues, is not part of the content of memory—only the sense object, the mango, is (*NS* 1.1.13: *na, smṛteḥ smartavyaviśayatvāt*). Thus, it is reasonable to think that only the mango, experienced in a certain way in the past and now presently being perceived by some other sense, causes the memory; we have no evidence that a self has a role to play. Vātsyāyana then interprets *NS* 3.1.14 (*tadātmagūṇasadbhāvād apratiśedhaḥ*, “Because of the existence [of memory] as a quality of the self, one cannot deny [the self]”) as yet another expression of the idea that memory is possible only if it belongs to a continuous self, for one thing (faculty) cannot remember what another has experienced. But Vātsyāyana goes on to say that the Buddhist is also wrong in thinking that the object of memory is merely the thing that was previously experienced. Memories of an absent object in fact apprehend the object *as having been experienced in an act of knowledge by a knowing subject*. Thus, typically, we say something like, “I knew that thing,” or, “That thing was known by me.”¹⁴ In memories with respect to an object at hand (*pratyakṣe ’rthe yā smṛtiḥ . . .*)—that is, in acts of recognition—more than one cognition pertaining to a single object are expressly attributed to a single subject: “I am seeing the thing I saw before.” Thus, Vātsyāyana suggests, in memory a single self comes to the fore as a factor in several experiences.

Here, it seems, the Nyāya philosopher Vātsyāyana has gotten even closer to the fact that is central to the Mīmāṃsā discussion of the self, namely, that in recognition we ascribe various experiences to one and the same self; the past existence of a subject of experience is part of the content of memory. But he still stops short of saying that the *self* is *recognized* in memory. The object of recognition here is still some other thing. (Recall, on the other hand, how Śābara formulates the fact of recognition: “*We* perceived yesterday, *we* remember now.”) And Vātsyāyana is still appealing to our ascribing various experiences to a single self only as a basis for an inference to a self distinct from the body and the faculties: a particular *faculty* could not be the subject

of various kinds of experiences; therefore it must be some other kind of thing. One way to appreciate the difference between the Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya approaches is to note that it can be asked precisely at this point of the Naiyāyika—as in fact the Buddhists did ask (and, as we shall see below, as Locke asked in his day): Granted that we do *ascribe* several experiences to one subject, how do we *know* that we have to do with the same subject in every case? How do we know that the entity we repeatedly experience as ‘I’ is the same in every cognition? For certainly it is conceivable that in different cognitions one has to do with qualitatively indistinguishable but numerically different things. The Naiyāyika has no answer to this question, but the Mīmāṃsaka answers it, in effect, by asserting that, indeed, we know that we have always to do with the same entity because we *recognize* it from cognition to cognition. Thus, the proof of the permanence of the self—that from moment to moment there exists only one subject of experience—is placed on a firmer footing.¹⁵

Note also that the basic Nyāya argument presented by *NS* 3.1.1 for proving the distinction of the self from the faculties is fallacious. It may well be that one sense organ cannot apprehend the object of another, but that does not rule out that a collection of various faculties could. In the case of an army, while it is certainly true that the artillery cannot charge and the cavalry cannot bombard, it is nevertheless the case that the army can both charge with its cavalry and bombard with its artillery; and no one believes that an army consists of anything more than its artillery, cavalry, infantry, and so forth. So, similarly, there seems no reason why a mere aggregate of faculties, including a mind and various sense organs, could not think with its mind, perceive one kind of thing with one sense and another kind of thing with another, and yet be the *same* thing which performs each act. Thus, this kind of argument is inconclusive and fails to secure the distinctness of the self. Here, too, the Mīmāṃsā argument seems more fit for success insofar as it entails that, in self-recognition, we cognize the self directly as a single thing that remains identical over time. That rules out all other candidates which could undergo any measure of change, such as the body, mind, and sense faculties.

In the end, however, we must be aware that the Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā arguments are very closely related. If the Mīmāṃsaka ‘discovered’ the argument from self-recognition, he did so only by looking at the same facts to which the Naiyāyika had already called attention and giving them a slightly different twist—or perhaps, indeed, the Naiyāyika was originally introduced to those facts by the Mīmāṃsaka. In general, a comparison of these arguments demonstrates how Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā, at this stage in the history of Indian philosophy, developed in close interaction with each other.

It remains, before we move on to discuss Western parallels to the doctrine of self-recognition, to consider briefly the Buddhist response to the Mīmāṃsā

position. This is to be found in Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṅgraha* (TS 241–284). Śāntarakṣita, quoting Kumārila at length (some of the *kārikās* attributed to the Mīmāṃsā but not locatable or precisely matched in Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* may well be from his longer, lost commentary on the *Śābarabhāṣya*, the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā*), directs most of his criticism against the Mīmāṃsā belief that the self is an eternal, essentially conscious entity that continues (essentially) unchanged throughout its various transformations (states of consciousness), as a snake remains the same in passing from a coiled to an uncoiled state (TS 223–225). Śāntarakṣita asks, if consciousness is truly single and eternal, then how can a multitude of fleeting ideas appear within it (TS 241)? Moreover, if pleasure, pain, and so forth, as states of consciousness, are not altogether distinct from the self, then when they arise and disappear so must the self arise and disappear (TS 268). In short, the Buddhist, here as elsewhere, is unable to conceive of continuity through change; indeed, he argues that such a possibility is incoherent. “The snake becomes curved, etc., because it is subject to perpetual flux; if it had a permanent form, then, like the soul, it could never come by another state” (TS 274, Jha's translation, amended). With regard to the argument from self-recognition Śāntarakṣita argues in general—initially against the Naiyāyika—that neither the word ‘self’ (*ātman*) nor the word ‘I’ (*aham*) is a referring expression. ‘Self’ is only a conventional term for mind or consciousness (*citta*), which is a fleeting factor of the life-stream according to the Buddhist. It has no unique referent. Verbal usage being established merely by convention, words are often used to talk about nonexistent things (TS 204–206). Similarly, the word ‘I’ does not report a self-*perception*. No such thing as a self—having eternal consciousness, omnipresence, and so forth—is manifest to us when we employ that word. Were that the case, there would be no dispute about its existence (TS 212–216). These points then apply directly to the argument from self-recognition. Nothing is recognized when we think, “I am the one who experienced this in the past.” For the notion ‘I’ is just an idea without any basis, originating from the beginningless tendency to ascribe (erroneously) substantive being to things (TS 275–284).¹⁶

It should be noted that the doctrine of the self-perceived character of cognitions (*svasaṃvedyatva*), crucial to Yogācāra epistemology, is not brought into this discussion. It is not appealed to as, say, the basis of an alternative analysis of self-consciousness. Although Kumārila, as we saw, saw fit to deny that ‘self-recognition’ could be the cognizing of one (earlier) idea by another (later) idea, Śāntarakṣita does not take up the gauntlet over this. Rather, he simply relegates the *self*-consciousness that the Hindu philosopher has in mind—the awareness of a unique type of thing called ‘self’—to the realm of delusion. Further below we shall have occasion to consider the Mīmāṃsā response to this maneuver.

II

I shall now attempt to show how the sort of view developed by the Mīmāṃsā philosophers—the doctrine of self-recognition in memory—fits into the Western discussion of personal identity.

The approach to the self in the West has been somewhat different from that of Indian philosophy. Indian thinkers have been primarily concerned with the soul or self, that is, whether there is a continuous, spiritual substance distinct from body, mind, and senses to which the word ‘self’ refers. Western philosophers, on the other hand, have been primarily concerned with the common concept of a ‘person’, specifically, with the identity of what we refer to as a ‘person’ through time.¹⁷ The main question in the West has been: What is the (necessary and sufficient) criterion (or criteria) that determines two person stages to be stages of one person?¹⁸ In recent times it has generally been held that this question can be answered without going into the problem of whether a person is a single, continuous substance; for most Western philosophers have taken for granted the (Buddhist) possibility that whatever relation between person stages makes them stages of one person could hold between entities that are distinct as substances. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the Western discussion of personal identity there was considerable debate about this issue, and it is this aspect of the discussion—which of course relates more directly to the Hindu-Buddhist debate about the self—on which I shall focus. We shall see that it indeed has bearing on the more recent discussion of personal identity.

John Locke is generally credited with being the first to have proposed the memory criterion of personal identity. According to this criterion two person stages are of the same person if one contains memories of experiences that belong to the other. (In recent times this position has been developed by Paul Grice and Anthony Quinton.)¹⁹ But, though most of what Locke writes is consistent with this view, it is important to see specifically why he held it. It does not appear that he held it because he believed in a version of the Nyāya argument from memory, that a memory and the past experience which is remembered require a single, continuous substratum from past to present which has both. Rather, Locke seems to have held the view that what makes an experience as of a certain person is that it is undergone with a consciousness of oneself as that person, and in cases of memory the present remembering and the past experience which is remembered are both experiences that, insofar as they are attributed to the same self, are undergone with the same awareness of self. “Wherever a man finds himself,” Locke writes, “there, I think, another may say is the same person.”²⁰ On the other hand,

in like manner, it will be in reference to any immaterial substance, which is void of that consciousness whereby I am myself to myself: if there be any part of its existence which I cannot upon recollection join with that present con-

sciousness, whereby I am now myself, it is in that part of its existence no more myself, than any other immaterial being. For whatsoever any substance has thought or done, which I cannot recollect, and by my consciousness make my own thought and action, it will no more belong to me . . . than if it had been thought or done by any other immaterial being anywhere existing.²¹

Thus, for Locke, it is not just that an experience of a previous person stage is *remembered* at the present stage that determines both to be stages of one person, but that the experience of the previous person stage is remembered as having been accompanied by the same self-consciousness as accompanies the present person stage.²² This should be kept in mind whenever the following passage, often cited as evidence that Locke subscribed to the memory criterion, is read:

. . . As far as any intelligent being can repeat the idea of any past action with the same consciousness it has of any present action; so far is it the same personal self. For it is by the consciousness it has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is self to itself now, and so will be the same self, as far as the same consciousness can extend to actions past or to come. . . .²³

Read consistently with his other statements, “the same consciousness” to which Locke refers is the same *self*-consciousness, the consciousness of the experience as being *mine*.

Thus, it would appear that Locke is putting forward a version of the doctrine of self-recognition in memory. But it is no more than are the Nyāya arguments which take note of the fact that we typically ascribe several experiences, past and present, to one subject. The recurrence of self-awareness Locke has in mind is not a self-recognition. Rather, it seems that for Locke two person stages are of one self only insofar as they are each accompanied by a consciousness which *imputes* them to one and the same subject—a feature of those experiences that need not correspond to any objective, physical or metaphysical, fact. Thus Locke, notoriously, was able to consider that this consciousness of self could be transferred from one substance to another. That two person stages are undergone with the same consciousness of oneself does not prove that they are of the same identical substance: “. . . It being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, personal identity depends on that only, whether it be annexed solely to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances.”²⁴

It was especially with regard to this point that Butler and Reid criticized Locke. They charged that he misconstrued the recurrence of “the same [self-] consciousness.” It is not just a matter of being aware of two experiences as occurring together with the same self-consciousness or as ascribed to one self, but of *recognizing* the subject of the remembered experience as the present rememberer, as one would recognize any other object. Hence, there can be no question that the person is a thing that continues from past to present—

that is, is a single substance. Joseph Butler attributes Locke's mistake to the fact that the *acts of self-consciousness* in different experiences are numerically distinct:

The ground of doubt, whether the same person be the same substance, is said to be this; that the consciousness of our own existence in youth and in old age, or in any two joint successive moments, is not *the same individual action*, i.e., not the same consciousness, but different successive consciousnesses. Now it is strange that this should have occasioned such perplexities. For it is surely conceivable, that a person may have a capacity of knowing some object or other to be the same now, which it was when he contemplated it formerly; yet in this case, where . . . the object is perceived to be the same, the same perception of it in any two moments cannot be one and the same perception.

And that is precisely what we have in the case of memory— two perceptions, one in the past and one now, of one self as the subject of certain experiences then and now:

. . . Though the successive consciousnesses which we have of our own existence are not the same, yet they are consciousnesses of one and the same thing or object; of the same person, self, or living agent. The person, of whose existence the consciousness is felt now, and was felt an hour or year ago, is discerned to be, not two persons, but one and the same person; and therefore is one and the same person.²⁵

Here, at last, we really do have the doctrine of self-recognition in a philosopher other than a Mīmāṃsaka. Even more explicit is the presentation of Thomas Reid, who claims only to be following Butler. "How do you know," Reid asks, "that there is such a permanent self which has a claim to all the thoughts, actions, and feelings, which you call yours?" He replies:

. . . The proper evidence I have of all this is remembrance. I remember that twenty years ago I conversed with such a person; I remember several things that passed in that conversation; my memory testifies not only that this was done, but that it was done by me who now remembers it. If it was done by me, I must have existed at the time, and continued to exist from that time to the present. . . . Every man in his senses believes what he distinctly remembers, and every thing he remembers convinces him that he existed at the time he remembered it.²⁶

We need not be misled by Reid's choice of the word 'remembrance' instead of 'recognition'. To identify a thing as a thing that one is already acquainted with is, technically, in Indian philosophy, to recognize (*praty abhi √jñā*) that thing, and that is what Reid is talking about (identifying the subject of a remembered experience as the present remembering self). His statement here is remarkably close to that of Śābara quoted in the first part of this article. As a final piece of evidence that the doctrine of recognition was held by these philosophers, I present another passage from Butler where he, too, explains how one arrives at the permanence of the self from the fact of self-recognition:

Every person is conscious, that he is now the same person or self he was, as far back as his remembrance reaches; since, when any one reflects upon a past action of his own, he is just as certain of the person who did that action, namely himself, the person who now reflects upon it, as he is certain that the action was at all done. . . . And this he, person, or self, must either be a substance, or the property of some substance. If he, if person, be a substance; then consciousness that he is the same person, is consciousness that he is the same substance. If the person, or he, be the property of a substance; still consciousness that he is the same property, is as certain a proof that his substance remains the same, as consciousness that he remains the same substance would be; since the same property cannot be transferred from one substance to another.²⁷

Both Butler and Reid emphasize that my remembering that I did something does not *make* me the one who did it (a view they attribute to Locke); rather, I am able to remember it because I was indeed the subject that did it in the past. Self-recognition does not constitute self-identity objectively; it is only the criterion for *ascertaining* whether two person stages are of one person.²⁸ Butler and Reid also stress that our awareness, by this means, of our identity with our past selves is more complete than for other objects. We recognize ourselves, as subjects of past experiences, always as precisely identical to ourselves now, not more or less identical as, say, a tree is to the sprout from which it grew. Reid attributes this to a person being a “monad,” not divisible into parts, whereas other things change by parts being added, subtracted, or replaced. Hence, they suggest that the general concept of identity is actually based on the more specific notion of self-identity, as true identity does not pertain to other kinds of things.

In the passage from Reid cited above we find him asserting that “every man in his senses believes what he distinctly remembers.” Here, another parallel to the Mīmāṃsā view emerges. Reid’s statement relates to an obvious objection to the doctrine of self-recognition: Granted that one has a sense of self-recognition when one remembers oneself doing something in the past, how does one know that one has not made a mistake, that what one takes to be precisely oneself (then) is but some other entity closely resembling oneself (now)? (that is, one could have to do with two qualitatively indistinguishable entities which are able to cause, one in the other, states which give rise to memory experiences). This is similar to the question: How does one know that the bird one sees now sitting on a branch is the same bird one saw there a moment ago, not another bird with identical markings? Reid’s answer to this, based on his general discussion of memory, is that we are generally incapable of disbelieving what we distinctly remember, so that in an actual case, where one remembers that it was *oneself*, not someone else, who did such and such, the skeptical doubt simply does not come up. And that is as much as to say that our whole system of knowledge is based on accepting what memory presents to us definitively, without asking for further evidence—otherwise we would get caught up in a regress. Butler puts the matter quite cogently:

Every person is conscious, that he is now the same person or self he was, as far back as his remembrance reaches; since, when any one reflects upon a past action of his own, he is just as certain of the person who did that action, namely himself, the person who now reflects upon it, as he is certain that the action was at all done. . . . But though we are thus certain that we are the same agents, living beings, or substances, now, which we were as far back as our remembrance reaches; yet it is asked, whether we may not possibly be deceived in it? And this question may be asked at the end of any demonstration whatever; because it is a question concerning the truth of perception by memory. And he who can doubt, whether perception by memory can in this case be depended upon, may doubt also, whether perception by deduction and reasoning, which also include memory, or, indeed, whether intuitive perception can. Here then we can go no further. For it is ridiculous to attempt to prove the truth of those perceptions, whose truth we can not otherwise prove, than by other perceptions of exactly the same kind with them, and which there is just the same ground to suspect; or to attempt to prove the truth of our faculties, which can not otherwise be proved, than by the use or means of those very suspected faculties by themselves.²⁹

All this is parallel to Kumāṛila's discussion. Anticipating the Buddhist objection that the notion 'I' in self-recognition is without any basis, Kumāṛila asserts—rather dubiously—that it cannot be erroneous insofar as it is produced by a memory impression (*vāsanā*); for a memory impression always gives rise to an idea faithful to the experience that caused it (*ŚV* 124–125).³⁰ But, more cogently, he goes on to point out that the notion 'I' (in general, or specifically as it occurs in self-recognition?) is not overturned by a subsequent cognition (*ŚV* 125–126). (That is, applied specifically to self-recognition, one does not, subsequent to believing that one has recognized oneself as the subject of a previous experience, come to believe that the subject of that experience was not oneself but, say, merely something similar to oneself.) According to Mīmāṃsā epistemology, to consider a cognition invalid one must realize either that it does not present things as they really are, by having another cognition that contradicts it, or else that the faculty of knowledge that gave rise to it is defective. In short, the position of Butler and Reid harmonizes with the Mīmāṃsā theory of the intrinsic validity (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*) of cognitions. According to that theory, every cognition presents itself to us initially as true without requiring the evidential support of another cognition. Were the application of another means of knowledge required to establish the truth of any cognition, one would have a regress: the confirming cognition itself would require confirmation, and so on ad infinitum.³¹ This is quite similar to the basic principle of Reid's general theory of knowledge, given expression by Butler in the passage above, that a belief grounded in perception (which for him includes memory) is innocent until proven guilty.³²

The ideas of Butler and Reid about the self have not been completely lost in Western philosophy. Various contemporary philosophers have made use of them in various ways in the discussion of personal identity. Thus, Sydney Shoemaker has argued—explicitly acknowledging a debt to Butler and

Reid—that our identifications of ourselves as agents of past actions or the subjects of past experiences are “non-criterial.” In saying, for example, “I broke the front window yesterday,” one does not employ criteria in identifying oneself as the one who broke the window. If criteria were employed—if one consulted certain facts in a process of judgment leading to the conclusion that it was, indeed, oneself who broke the window—then it would also be possible *not* to come to that conclusion. And that, especially in a case where no one else is remembered as being present, would be absurd. Rather, Shoemaker suggests, one knows directly that it was oneself who broke the window without appeal to any criteria; for one remembers *oneself* breaking the window. With regard to another example, Shoemaker writes,

The sentence “I remember having a headache yesterday” [which, again, might suggest to some that I can first remember an experience and then meaningfully ask *who* underwent it, which question would then be answered by consulting criteria] does not differ in meaning from the sentence “I remember my having a headache yesterday.” But if what I remember when I remember a past headache is *my having* a headache, or that *I had* a headache, my statement “I had a headache” is [just] a memory statement, not a conclusion *from* what I remember, and cannot be grounded on any criterion of identity.³³

Shoemaker also specifically denies that one adduces the fact that *one remembers* the experience in question as a basis for judging that it was undergone by oneself, on the principle that one can only remember what oneself has experienced. For that one remembers a past experience is not, from the first-person point of view, something contingent—a possible distinguishing feature of an experience which one can determine to belong to the experience by scrutinizing it. If that were the case, it would also be possible to determine of a past experience that one does *not* remember it, which would be absurd! So there is no room for employment of the fact that one remembers an experience as a criterion that it was undergone by oneself. Rather, one simply remembers oneself undergoing it. Thus, Shoemaker rejects the “memory criterion” of personal identity, as originated by Locke and revised by Grice: the fact that one person stage contains a memory of an experience occurring in another person stage is not something we appeal to as a *criterion* of their being the same person.³⁴

Nevertheless, Shoemaker’s position, in the end, is a far cry from the doctrine of self-recognition. For he denies that we ever have direct self-acquaintance or self-knowledge, which is clearly entailed by that doctrine. To *recognize* oneself one must be directly acquainted with oneself now and have been in the past.³⁵ Shoemaker believes, rather—influenced here by Wittgenstein—that we make statements about ourselves—ascibe perception and memory experiences to ourselves—noncriterially simply as a result of having been trained to make certain utterances in certain circumstances.³⁶ Thus, conversely, the doctrine of self-recognition represents a certain criti-

cism of Shoemaker's position. If we do actually recognize ourselves in memory, then our use of 'I' is, although non-criterial, still in some way the expression of an act of self-apprehension.

More faithful to Butler and Reid is Geoffrey Madell, who in a recent book has called for the "vindication of the Reid/Butler view of personal identity."³⁷ Among other things Madell, building on important work by Hector-Neri Castañeda, argues that the word 'I' is a true referring expression—clearly a presupposition of any theory of self-recognition.³⁸ Madell, too, however, ultimately diverges significantly from Butler and Reid. He does not pick up on their self-recognition thesis; in any case, it appears that he would not go along with it. Although he agrees that "personal identity through time is unanalysable; [that] what unites my experiences [makes them as of one person], whether they are simultaneous or spread over time, is just their being mine," he claims that this does not entail that there is a substantial ego.³⁹ But, as we saw Butler argue above, if there is self-recognition, then there is an *enduring* (substantial) self.

Perhaps closest to the ideas of Butler and Reid are the views of Roderick Chisholm. In his book *Person and Object*, Chisholm goes against Shoemaker in claiming that the use of the word 'I' does involve real self-knowledge, a direct acquaintance with one's individual essence or *haecceity*. Attributing something to oneself (for example, some mental state), according to Chisholm, involves being aware of one's own individual essence and seeing that the thing that has that essence (oneself) has a certain property (the state one is attributing to it). "I would conclude," he writes, "that I am able to individuate myself *per se*. I do so in virtue of my awareness of being this particular person. This awareness is a knowledge of propositions implying my individual essence or *haecceity* and is implicit in each of my self-presenting states [such as *my feeling a pain*]. Every such state is necessarily such that, if it obtains, then I am certain of my being this particular person."⁴⁰ Thus, Chisholm approaches a substance theory. But he, too, is unaware of the thesis of self-recognition as developed by Butler and Reid, which provides support for his view.

I have not attempted to defend the doctrine of self-recognition in this article, except to suggest that it is not patently untenable. My purpose has been merely to recover the idea, which today remains largely obscured, from the history of philosophy. For even those who have recently worked out positions that are related to this doctrine seem not to have fully understood or appreciated it. I hope that its significance has in some measure been illumined by the comparison with Indian philosophy. At the same time, I hope that the references to Butler and Reid provide more to go by in understanding philosophically this doctrine as it is presented in the Indian texts.

Although, as I have brought out, the original thrust of the doctrine of self-recognition was to establish the permanent, substantial nature of the self or

soul, its relevance to the contemporary debate about *personal identity*, as carried out in abstraction from the issue of substantiality, should be clear. In general, if there is a way of determining that there is a single, continuously existing self, then it ought to translate into a criterion for personal identity. Thus, if the doctrine of self-recognition is true—if we really do re-identify ourselves as the subjects of past actions and experiences—then my remembering *myself* to have done X in the past is a criterion (qua sufficient condition) for knowing that the person who did X was myself; and my identity over time would consist just in the experiences of my various person stages being experiences that *I* underwent. Moreover, if there is such a thing as self-recognition which identifies the self existing now as *strictly identical* with a self that existed before now, then we have reason to believe that a person is not a body or a mind (aggregate of psychological states), since those are things which undergo change over time. A body or mind existing now will not be strictly identical with any body or mind existing before now. Rather, a person must be some other, distinct kind of thing that persists essentially without change over time.

ABBREVIATIONS

- MSBh** *Mtmāmsāsūtrabhāṣya* of Śabaravāmin, ed. E. Frauwallner, in *Materialien zur ältesten Erkenntnislehre der Karmamīmāṃsā*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, vol. 259, Abhandlung 2 (Vienna, 1968).
- NM** *Nyāyamañjari* of Jayantabhaṭṭa, ed. K. S. Varadacharya (Mysore: Oriental Research Institute, 1983).
- NSBh** *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya* of Vātsyāyana, in *Nyāya Darśana*, ed. Taranatha Nyaya-Tarkatirtha and A. Tarkatirtha (Calcutta: Metropolitan Publishing House, 1936).
- NV** *Nyāyavārttika* of Uddyotakara, in *Nyāya Darśana*, ed. Taranatha Nyaya-Tarkatirtha and A. Tarkatirtha (Calcutta: Metropolitan Publishing House, 1936).
- NVTT** *Nyāyavārttikatātparyāṅkā* of Vācaspatimiśra, in *Nyāya Darśana*, ed. Taranatha Nyaya-Tarkatirtha and A. Tarkatirtha (Calcutta: Metropolitan Publishing House, 1936).
- ŚV** *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārilabhaṭṭa, ed. Svāmī Dvārikadāsa Śāstri, Prāchyabhāratī Series, no. 10 (Varanasi: Tārā Publications, 1978) (*ātmavāda-adhikaraṇa* unless otherwise noted).
- TS** *Tattvasaṅgraha* of Śāntarākṣita, ed. Svāmī Dvārikadāsa Śāstri (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 1961).

NOTES

1. Besides expounding at considerable length the interpretation I am about to consider via Śabara, Uddyotakara also mentions that the *sūtra* can be interpreted to mean that desire, etc., constitute the middle term (*liṅga*) in an inference to the existence of the self insofar as they are qualities which require a self as their substratum (NV, pp. 192, l. 10–193, l. 9). (See in this regard Arindam Chakravati, “The Nyāya Proofs for the Existence of the Soul,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 10 (1982): 211–238, and Klaus Oetke, “Ich” und das Ich: analytische Untersuchungen zur buddhistisch-brahmanischen Atmankontroverse, *Alt und Neu-Indische Studien*, no. 33 (Wies-

baden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1988), pp. 359–361. The latter work will be the definitive treatment of the Buddhist-Hindu debate about the self for some time to come.) A third interpretation mentioned by Uddyotakara (p. 192, ll. 5–9) is as follows: the inner states of desire, etc., point to a single causal factor (= the self) that is involved in the occurrence of each of them. For they are all connected together (in one consciousness) by virtue of the memory of having been experienced “by me.” Similarly, ideas or feelings arising in the minds of various spectators of a dance indicate a single factor in their origination—a particular gesture of the dancer—insofar as they are each accompanied by an awareness of the gesture. (Cf. Śāntarakṣita’s discussion of Uddyotakara’s position, *TS, kārikās* 180 ff.) Vācaspatimiśra points out that this third interpretation renders the *hetu* of the argument an *anvayavyatireki hetu*, whereas the favored first interpretation, which I consider here, involves a *kevalavyatireki hetu*. Cf. Oetke, “*Ich*” und *das Ich*, pp. 355–359.

2. *MSBh*, pp. 52–54, and *ŚV, śloka*s 107–110.

3. Neither the *sūtra* nor Vātsyāyana in his *bhāṣya* refers explicitly to memory. Vātsyāyana talks only about the “connecting up” (*pratisandhāna*) of numerous experiences, which he believes indicates a single entity which connects them (*ekam anekadarśinaṃ pratisandhātaram*). (Jha’s translation of *pratisandhāna* as ‘recollection’ seems too specific; cf. Ganganatha Jha, *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gautama, with the Bhāṣya of Vātsyāyana and the Vārttika of Uddyotakara* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 217–218. For Kamalaśīla, commenting on *TS* 180, notes that *pratisandhāna* is simply the combining of various cognitions as a result of their having a common cause: *pratisandhānam ucyate yad ekam arthaṃ nimittikṛtya pratyayānām sambandhanam*. This cause may be simply the experience object. Thus, the cognitions of various spectators of a dance are “connected” (*pratisandhiyante*) through their common experienced object, the dance. See note 1 above; see also Vācaspatimiśra, *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavaiśārādī* 4.15: *abhedaś cārthasya jñānabhede ’pi pramāṇnām parasparaprasandhānam avastiyate. asti hi raktadviṣṭavimūḍhamadhyasthānām ekasyām yoṣīti pratyamānāyām pratisandhānam yā tvayā drśyate, saiva mayāpti.*) But Uddyotakara clarifies, at the outset of his *Vārttika* on 1.1.10, that desire, etc., indicate a substantial self insofar as they occur as “having a single object, together with memory”: *yasmād evēcchādayaḥ smṛtyā sahaikaviṣayaḥ bhavanti tasmād ekakarṭṛkatvaṃ pratipādayanti* (*NV*, p. 185, ll. 8–9). That is to say, my present desire and a certain past experience are united not just insofar as they concern the same object, but insofar as *I remember* that the thing I desire now is of the sort I experienced to be a cause of pleasure in the past. This formulation is designed to obviate the Buddhist objection that one has to do here merely with a relation of cause and effect between discontinuous, selfless entities: an experience gives rise, as it were, mechanically, to a desire having the same content, as a seed eventually gives rise to a similar seed (via the growth of a fruit-bearing tree). But the Naiyāyika thinks that memory necessarily brings a single, continuous self into the picture: I cannot *remember* something that someone (or something) else has experienced (see *NV* and Vācaspati’s *NVTṬ*, pp. 187–189). Śābara and Kumārila, interestingly, try to do justice to an argument from desire that is logically distinct from an argument from memory, but their efforts are unconvincing (see *MSBh*, p. 54, and *ŚV* 103–105).

Note that if one approaches *NS* 1.1.10 from this angle—i.e., as indicating the self as the element that connects several interrelated states over time—the order of the terms in the compound (still a *dvandva*) may be significant. That is, the compound could be referring to a single series of connected experiences which characterize human action: *desire* or *aversion* towards certain things experienced in the past give rise to the *effort* to obtain or avoid them, which is followed by the *experience of pleasure* (*sukha-jñāna*) or the *experience of pain* (*duḥkhajñāna*) from obtaining the desired or unwanted thing (or else: the *pleasure* and *pain* resulting from *effort* are followed in turn by recognition (*jñāna* = *pratyabhijñāna*) of the thing). Vātsyāyana, however, does not consider the compound as referring to one series in this way. He separates off *jñāna* as referring back to something one was previously curious about, not something desired or unwanted.

4. In Buddhist texts we encounter this theory, e.g., in essence, in the *Abhidharmakośa* discussion of the *pudgalavāda* (ed. P. Pradhan (Patna: Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975), pp. 472–473). The alternative Buddhist theory of memory is mentioned by Kumārila (*ŚV* 104–105). Śābara’s rejection of the memory argument is actually much cruder, to wit (in essence): “Who says memories cannot take place without a permanent self? For we observe memories to occur. What we do not observe, on the other hand, is a self. How can you say that what we observe is impossible, but what we do not observe must exist?” (*MSBh*, p. 54). This is certainly very thin!

Since Kumārila recognized the Buddhist rejection of the argument from memory to be based on an alternative account of memory in terms of *vāsanās*, it is puzzling why he does not discuss the strenuous efforts of the Naiyāyikas to refute the theory of *vāsanās* in this connection. (Certainly Kumārila was not merely deferring to the Bhāṣyakāra; he has no qualms about correcting him elsewhere.) Thus, Uddyotakara (ad *NS* 1.1.10) criticizes the Buddhist view on the basis of the impossibility of a *vāsyā-vāsaka* relationship between momentary entities (see Oetke’s critical evaluation of Uddyotakara’s argument here, “*Ich*” und *das Ich*, pp. 347–352). Kumārila himself appeals to this same idea in his *nirālambana-adhikaraṇa* (*śloka*s 178 ff.) and, with respect to the problem of the continuity of *karman* and the fruit of *karman*, even in the *ātmavāda-adhikaraṇa* (44 ff.). But he never applies it to salvaging the Brahmanical theory of memory.

5. ŚV 92.

6. *MSBh*, p. 56: *anyedyur dṛṣṭe ’paredyur “aham idam adarśam” iti bhavati pratyayaḥ. pratya-gātmani caitad bhavati, na paratra. paro hy asau yo ’nyedyur dṛṣṭavān. tasmāt tadvyatirikto ’nyo ’sit, yatrāyam ahaṃśabdah . . . na vayam “aham” itīmaṃ śabdaṃ prayujyamānam anyasmin arthe hetutvena vyapadiśāmaḥ, kiṃ tarhi śabdād vyatiriktaṃ pratyabhijñāpratyayam. pratīmo hi vayam imam arthaṃ “vayam evānyedyur upalabhāmahe, vayam evādyā smarāma” iti. tasmād vayam imam artham avagacchāmo “vayam eva hyo, vayam evādyā” iti. ye cāmī hyo ’dya ca, na te vinaśtāh.*

7. I have tried consistently to interpret this self-recognition as having as its object the subject of the remembered experience. That is, in this recognition, the (past) subject of the remembered experience is identified or ‘recognized’ as one’s present self. This is in harmony with the formulations of Śabara—*anyedyur dṛṣṭe ’paredyur “aham idam adarśam” iti bhavati pratyayaḥ* (passage cited in previous note)—and Kumārila (ŚV 115):

*yadi syād jñānamātram ca kṣanikaṃ jñātr tatra vah |
na bhavet pratyabhijñānam pūrvajñātari samprati ||*

However, this is also somewhat problematic in that recognition is usually defined as the identification of a presently existing thing as something previously experienced (*pūrvajñānaviśiṣṭār-thagrāhītvam pratyabhijñāyāh*, *NM*, vol. 2, p. 310, l. 9; *atītāvasthāvachinnavastugrahaṇam*, *Tar-kabhāṣā*, etc., cited in M. Bhimacarya Jhalakikar, *Nyāyakośa* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1978), p. 543). Thus, *pratyabhijñā* is usually formulated: *sa eva ayam ghaṭah*, “This pot is indeed *that* one [which I saw before].” Apparently the Mīmāṃsakas were not particularly concerned about whether self-recognition in memory fits precisely the definition of recognition. What they stress is that in self-recognition (however it is to be analyzed) we become aware that “I existed then and I exist now.” Thus Śabara in the passage above (note 6) and Kumārila, ŚV 116: *jñātavān aham evedaṃ pūredāntīn ca vedmyaham.*

8. See *NV* ad *NS* 3.1.1, pp. 706–707.

9. In this way, too, Mīmāṃsā parallels Nyāya; for the latter generally argues that the use of the word ‘I’ corresponds to a self-perception. See *NV* 3.1.1, pp. 704–705.

The Nyāya author Jayantabhaṭṭa, however, rejects this view, which he identifies as held both by Mīmāṃsakas (*aupavarsāh*) and some other Naiyāyikas (*sāyuthyāh*) (*NM*, vol. 2, pp. 268–278). The true Nyāya position, according to Jayanta, is that the existence of the self is only inferred. His basic objection to the view that ‘I’ refers to the self is that it implies that the self is both agent and object in an act of knowledge (*naikasyāṃ pratītv ātmanah kartrīā karmatā ca syātām*, p. 271). If ‘I’ refers to anything, he argues, it refers only to the body. (He also considers the possibility that it is a mere word referring to nothing (*śabdāmātroccāraṇam*).) Jayanta also rejects the view—perhaps known to him more from the writings of the Kāśhmīrī Śaiva philosophers than the Advaita Vedāntins—that the self is self-luminous consciousness (*citīśaktiś-vabhāvam aparasādhanaṃ*), for he denies that the self is essentially conscious:

*sacetanaś citā yogāt, tadyogena vinā jadah |
nārthāvabhāśād anyad dhi caitanyaṃ nāma manmahe ||*

(“[The self] is conscious due to connection with consciousness; without such connection it is insentient. For we do not conceive of any consciousness that is not the manifestation of an object” (p. 275)).

Jayanta characterizes the Nyāya position he opposes as the view that the self would already have to be known by perception in order to be inferred—and then any inference would be unnecessary. That the self thus becomes an object of knowledge for itself should pose no problem:

*tatrānumānajñānasya yathātmā yāti karmatām |
tathāhampratyayasyaiśaḥ pratyakṣasyāpi gacchatu ||
dehādīvyatiriktaś ca yathā līngena gamyate |
tathāhampratyayenāpi gamyatām tadvilakṣaṇaḥ ||*

(“Just as the self becomes the object of inferential knowledge, let it be the object of perceptual knowledge in the form of the ‘I’ concept! As something distinct from the body, etc., is known via an inferential mark, let the self be known as distinct from the body, etc., via the ‘I’ concept!” (p. 276)). Also, the opponent asks, how could present and past experiences be assigned to one knower—which is the basis of the Nyāya inference to the existence of the self—if one did not have awareness of the self as the subject of thought throughout those experiences? But, then, the self is already given; it need not be inferred:

*jñāneccāsukhaduḥkhādi khiledam līngam ātmanah |
ekāśrayatayā jñātam anusandhātrbodhakam ||
tathātvena ca tadjñānam āśrayajñānapūrvakam |
jñāte tatrāphalaṃ līngam, ajñāte tu na līngatā ||
tasmāt pratyakṣa evātmā varam abhyupagamyatām |
vrddhāgamānusāreṇa samvidālokanena ca || (pp. 277–278)*

In answer to this, Jayanta proceeds to show how the self is inferred by the classic Nyāya *kevalav-yatīreki anumāna*—without prior acquaintance with the self. A study of Jayanta’s treatment of the self would be of much merit.

10. My thanks to B. K. Matilal for drawing this to my attention.

11. *NSBh*, pp. 710–712.

12. See Vātsyāyana’s bizarre discussion of *NS* 3.1.7 concerning the distinctness of the right and left eyes as faculties.

13. *NSBh*, p. 734.

14. *NSBh*, pp. 734–735.

15. The difference between the Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā positions that I have sought to develop here is contained, essentially, in Kumārila’s *śloka* 109:

*smaraṇapratyabhijñāne bhavetām vāsanāvaśāt |
anyārthaviśaye, jñātuḥ pratyabhijñā tu durlabhā ||*

This asserts that recognition and memory can be explained in terms of *vāsanās*, without appeal to a self, when it is some other object which is remembered or recognized, but not when it is the self that is recognized.

16. Technically, Śāntarākṣita refers back to the formulation of the Mīmāṃsā argument, in *TS* 238–239 (= *ŚV* 136–137), as follows: “The knower (*jñātr*) apprehended in a past ‘I’ awareness (*vyattīhāmṅkṛtigrāhya*) continues in the present, since it is comprehended by the [same] notion ‘I’, like the present knower (*idāntītanabodhrvat*).” I.e., we know that the cognizer of a past experience exists now, because it is referred to by the word ‘I,’ just as the present cognizer. But, Śāntarākṣita argues, this argument is without a valid *drṣṭānta*. No present cognizer is referred to by the word ‘I’, for the word has no basis! Hence the argument fails. See especially *TS* 283–284, together with Kamalaśīla’s commentary.

17. This is, of course, a simplification. Some Western philosophers take the expressions ‘person’ and ‘soul’ to be synonymous (e.g., Anthony Quinton, “The Soul,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 49 (1962): 393–409).

In Indian philosophy an important secondary consideration is the nature of the self: is it individual or universal—i.e., are there multiple selves or only one; is it essentially conscious or not or, indeed, is it consciousness itself?

18. A ‘person stage’ is defined by John Perry as a set containing all person-events—whether physical or mental or both—which are held to comprise a given person at a given time (see his *Personal Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 9). A ‘criterion’ in the

discussion of personal identity is either the ground by which we judge two person stages to be one person or else the feature that objectively constitutes their being such. Perry likens a person stage to the inning of a baseball game. The question, what criterion or criteria establish two person stages to be of one person, is analogous to the question of what criteria establish two baseball game innings to be innings of the same baseball game.

19. H. P. Grice, "Personal Identity," *Mind* 50 (1941), reprinted in Perry, *Personal Identity*, and Anthony Quinton, "The Soul," also reprinted in Perry.

20. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. A. C. Fraser (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894), vol. 1, pp. 466–467; see the rest of sec. 26.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 465.

22. This ties in with Locke's definition of a person as "a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and, as it seems to me, essential to it: it being impossible for any one to perceive without perceiving that he does perceive" (*ibid.*, pp. 448–449).

23. *Ibid.*, p. 451.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 450–451.

25. Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of Religion* (New York: Carter and Brothers, 1936), pp. 299–300. Howard M. Ducharme has recently demonstrated that the position I discuss here in relation to Butler and Reid was first set out by Samuel Clarke: "Personal Identity in Samuel Clarke," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 24 (1986): 359–383.

26. Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1969), p. 341. Cf. also p. 326: "The remembrance of a past event is necessarily accompanied with the conviction of our own existence at the time the event happened. I cannot remember a thing that happened a year ago, without a conviction as strong as memory can give, that I, the same identical person who now remember that event, did then exist."

27. Butler, *Analogy of Religion*, pp. 302–303.

28. Cf. Reid, *Essays*, p. 359: "It is very true, that my remembrance that I did such a thing is the evidence I have that I am the identical person who did it. And this, I am apt to think, Mr. Locke meant: but to say that my remembrance that I did such a thing, or my consciousness, makes me the person who did it, is, in my apprehension, an absurdity too gross to be entertained by any man who attends to the meaning of it: for it is to attribute to memory or consciousness, a strange magical power of producing its object, though that object must have existed before the memory or consciousness which produced it."

29. Butler, *Analogy of Religion*, pp. 302–303. In view of this and other passages it is puzzling that Butler and Reid have been considered critics of the memory criterion of personal identity *on the grounds that it is epistemically circular*—i.e., that memory is evidence for an event only if it is veracious, whereas our confidence that memory in a particular case is veracious must be based on our already knowing by some other means that the event actually occurred. Terence Penelhum, "Personal Identity," in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), vol. 6, p. 98, mentions Butler as the originator of this argument, referring to the oft-cited passage (Butler, *Analogy of Religion*, p. 298): ". . . consciousness of personal identity presupposes, and therefore cannot constitute, personal identity, any more than knowledge, can constitute truth, which it presupposes." Here, however, Butler is merely making the same point as Reid in the passage cited in the previous note, that memory does not *make* someone the same person. For both Reid and Butler, memory—i.e., self-recognition—provides indisputable evidence of personal identity (one's identity with a previous person stage), but it cannot constitute personal identity. The latter must already exist as a fact for memory to enable us to ascertain it.

30. The Buddhist response to this is, first, to imply that a memory impression (*vāsanā*) can indeed be a cause of error: Kumārila himself, Śāntarākṣita charges, holds that the various notions about God—that he is creator of everything, omniscient, etc.—conceived by devotees of God are merely errors rooted in *vāsanās* (?; *TS* 282; I am unable to locate anywhere in the *ŚV* where Kumārila makes such a claim). Of more consequence is a general critique of *pratyabhijñā* as a *pramāṇa*, presented in *TS* 444–460, in the context of the discussion of the theory of the momentary existence of entities. The Mīmāṃsaka holds that the recognition of objects from the past

directly refutes the *kṣaṇabhāṅgavāda*. Śāntarakṣita defends it by charging that *pratyabhijñā*, recognition, cannot be considered a *pramāṇa* qua perception, for it is conceptual (TS 446) (whereas according to the Buddhist definition of perception it must be void of concept, *kalpanāpodha*, the reality of things being inexpressible), and it is (sometimes) erroneous: e.g., people believe they ‘recognize’ hair or grass that is actually new hair or grass that has grown back after being cut (TS 447, 450; see *Pramāṇavārttika, pratyakṣapariccheda* 503–505 (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 1968)). Moreover, *pratyabhijñā* simply re-cognizes an object that was previously known by another means of knowledge, as does memory. Thus, it does not function as the most effective factor in the cognition of the thing, and so is not a *pramāṇa* (TS 451; Kamalaśīla clarifies that this argument appeals to the notion of a *pramāṇa* as the *sādhakatama-kāraka* in the production of a cognition; cf. *Pramāṇavārttika, pratyakṣa* 506). The reader is invited to peruse for him- or herself Kumārila’s response, TS 452–456 (again, these *kārikās* are not identifiably from the ŚV), and Śāntarakṣita’s reply, TS 457–460. In essence, Kumārila argues that *pratyabhijñā* is a valid means of knowledge, a *pramāṇa*, qua perception. The debate about *pratyabhijñā* is also carried on in the *Nyāyamañjarī*. Contra Mīmāṃsā, Jayanta does not believe that recognition establishes the permanence of letters and words (NM, vol. 1, pp. 554–557), but, now with the Mīmāṃsaka but against the Buddhist, he believes that other kinds of objects are indeed recognized (NM, vol. 2, pp. 307–314, 328–335).

31. Another interpretation of this idea (that of Umbeka, an early commentator on the ŚV) is that the validity of a cognition is produced just by the factors—object, sense faculty, etc.—that produce the cognition: “the causes of the cognition bring about validity” (*tasya [prāmānyasya] jñānahetava evotpādakāḥ, Ślokovārttikavyākhyātāparyāṭikā*, ed. S. K. Ramanatha Sastri (Madras: University of Madras, 1971), p. 53, ll. 25–26). If, explains Pārthasāthimīśra in his discussion of this view in his *Nyāyaratnamālā* (ed. Ramanatha Sastri, Gaekwad Oriental Series, no. 75 (Baroda: 1937), p. 48), the faculty of cognition, etc., could produce a valid cognition only if endowed with some excellence (*guṇa*) (the Nyāya view), then there would be no validity at all to cognitions arising from defective faculties, etc. But even the cognition of a yellow conch produced by a jaundiced eye has a correct aspect—the ‘conch’ aspect. Thus, every cognition, insofar as it merely arises from “its own cause” (*svīyāt kāraṇāt*), i.e., from the factors that produce the cognition itself, has some truth to it. And a cognition that arises from factors that are free of defects will be completely true. (Pārthasārathi, however, goes on to dispute that this is a correct interpretation of Kumārila’s statements on *svataḥ prāmānya*).

32. A definitive study of the *svataḥ prāmānya* doctrine has yet to be written, but much useful information about it is contained in L. Schmithausen, *Maṇḍanamīśra’s Vibhramaviveka*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, vol. 247, Abhandlung 1 (Vienna, 1965). See, e.g., pp. 189–201. This doctrine is of great relevance to contemporary epistemology. See, e.g., the attempt by Nicholas Wolterstorff to revive Reid’s epistemology in the service of the anti-evidentialist defence of theistic belief: “Can Belief in God Be Rational?” in *Faith and Rationality*, ed. A. Plantinga and N. Wolterstorff (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983).

33. “Personal Identity and Memory,” in Perry, *Personal Identity*, p. 126.

34. Sydney Shoemaker, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1963), pp. 162–164.

35. On self-acquaintance see *MSBh*, pp. 56–58; ŚV 142. The Mīmāṃsā position is that the self is known or revealed by itself (*svasamvedya; ātmanā prakāśya*). This poses a certain problem for the Mīmāṃsaka, however. He wishes to deny, against the Buddhist idealist, that cognitions (*jñāna*) can experience themselves; for one thing cannot function both as subject and object (*karman*) in the same act. Thus, one thing cannot be both perceiver (*grāhaka*) and perceived (*grāhya*) in an act of cognition. But then how can the *self* know itself without violating this principle? Kumārila’s answer, offered at ŚV, *sūnyavāda* 68–71, is obscure. I decipher it as follows: The cognition (*jñāna*) by which the self knows itself is a property (*dharma*) of the self, while the self is known as “substance, etc.” (*dravyādi*). Thus, we do not really have a case of the same thing knowing itself. Rather, we have one aspect of a thing knowing another aspect of the thing. But even if one assumes that in the case of the awareness ‘I’ one has to do with a cognition knowing itself (*jñānasyaiva. . . samvittih. . . ātmakarṛkā*), that would be permissible here, since

the consciousness of 'I' arises with respect to an agent factor (*kartari bhavanti*); i.e., it has as its content the knower (*jñātr*), which conceivably could be the cognition (s. 70, according to Pārthasārathi's commentary). But that is not permissible for any other kind of cognition—a cognition of blue, e.g., since one is only aware of the object 'blue'. In other cognitions one is not aware of the knower.

36. Shoemaker, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*, pp. 239–243. Note, however, that Shoemaker develops a rather different account of the non-criterial nature of self-identification in his later article, "Persons and Their Pasts," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 7 (1970): 269–285.

37. Geoffrey Madell, *The Identity of the Self* (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1981); see especially pp. 122–127.

38. *Ibid*, chap. 2, pp. 23–48.

39. *Ibid*, pp. 124, 134–138.

40. Roderick Chisholm, *Person and Object* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Co., 1976), p. 37.