A Possibility of the Argument from Analogy to Existence of Other Minds in Sāṁkhya Philosophy

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Abstract: Sāṁkhya philosophy is the oldest philosophical school. Sāṁkhya philosophy explains the universe accepting only two fundamental categories which are prakṛti and puruṣa- where prakṛti is unconsciously active and puruṣa is consciously inactive. Similarly, Sāṁkhya philosophy discusses the mind-body relation in terms of puruṣa and prakṛti. Sāṁkhya also talks about the subjective identity as well as objective world. Although Sāṁkhya discusses about manyness of selves (bahu-puruṣa), but there is an argument that Sāṁkhya philosophy would not establish the existence of other minds. So, the argument of Sāṁkhya for other minds seems to stop midway. In this paper, I purport to discuss Sāṁkhya perspective and existence of other minds presented in Sāṁkhya philosophy. The paper also critically examines the Sāṁkhya Sūtras of Īswarakṛṣṇa to bring out the possibility of epistemological argument of the other minds.

Keywords: Puruṣa, Bahu-Puruṣa, Mana, Other Minds, Sāṁkhya Sūtras, Argument from Analogy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Oxford dictionary define ‘Mind’ as “the element of a person that enables them to be aware of the world and their experience, to think, and to feel; the faculty of consciousness and thought”. In Sanskrit, mind is accepted as ‘manas’. In Vedas, there are no clear notion of mind, although concept of mind is enunciated with many terms like, awareness (saññā), comprehension (jñānam), understanding (vijñānam), insight (dṛṣṭi), reflection (manas), will (saṁkalpa) etc. In Upaṇiṣada we found prajñā, citta with Vedas concept of mind. Indian Philosophy try to bring out a clear cut notion of the concept of mind in every philosophical school. It is very easy to understand about our own mind existent. We can easily feel or infer about our mind throughout our experience. The philosophical problem is, how we can reach a certain truth about other person which is same as mine? This problem is found very often in philosophy not only in recent era. From ancient period, Rṣis have discussed about this problem with a standard view. Indian philosophical tradition like, the Buddhist Yogācharavāda, Advaita Vedānta and Sāṁkhya discusses this problem with their own style. What is the problem of other minds? This question can be understood with two dimensions, metaphysically or conceptually and epistemologically. Metaphysics has to try to establish the existence of other minds or try to solve problem, like, how can I extend my concept of pain beyond my own pain? But, epistemology tries to gather the knowledge about other minds. The epistemological problem that, my knowledge, when it can be directly then there is no doubt about it, I can understand my direct knowledge. Then, I can say that my mind exists. But, is there any change to gather direct knowledge about other minds? The answer is definitely not. Nobody can says that he or she has direct knowledge about other minds. This paper analytically examine the “Sāṁkhya Sūtras” and bring out a possibly argument to prove the existence of other minds which is inferable.

2. MILL’S CONCEPT OF OTHER MINDS AND HIS ARGUMENT FROM ANALOGY

John Stuart Mill makes experience the sole source of knowledge, rejecting a-priori and intuitive element of every sort. He defines matter as a “permanent possibility of sensation”, mind is resolved into “a series of feeling with a background of possibilities of feelings”, even though Mill is not unaware of the difficulty involved in the question how a series of feeling can be made aware of itself as a series. Mill attacks the skeptic and solipsist who argue that it is not possible to establish the existence of other minds. Mill sets an argument from analogy which solves this problem that how we can know about other minds. Here is the argument given bellow:

1. I have a mind.
2. I know from experience that my mental state causes my behavior.

1 Falckenberg, Richard. History of Modern Philosophy, p-566
3. Other people have bodies similar to mine and behave similar to me in similar situations.

4. Therefore, by analogy, their behavior has the same type of cause as my behavior like mental states.

5. Therefore, other people have minds.

This analogy is formed by observation of behaviors on other people with a relation of causal connection. Behaviors are accepted as effect and mental states as cause, this analogy also can be formulated as-

1. This behavior has a mental cause.

2. That behavior has a mental cause.

3. That third behavior has a mental cause.

4. Etc.

5. Therefore, many behaviors have a mental cause (I know this from my own experience).

6. Other people exhibit the same types of behavior as cited above.

7. Therefore, those behaviors also have mental cause.

8. Therefore, other people have minds.

Ryle says “the problem of other minds is compounded by even more serious difficulties given certain assumptions about the way language works”\(^2\). Michael Lacewing argue that this analogy is not sufficient to prove the existence of other minds. He states:

“Can we object that the argument still relies on analogy, on the contentious claim that like effects (behavior) have like causes (mental states)? For example, even if behavior in my case is caused by (my) mental states, that doesn't mean that the behavior of other people could not be caused by something entirely different (say, brain states without mental states)”\(^3\).

He also states

"First, the behavior picked out in the first premises of the argument is not picked out as mine, but as a type of behavior, e.g. raising an arm, walking to the shops, etc. The claim is that we have experience of many instances of such behavior being caused by mental states. Now, in science, we generalize from the cases we have observed. 'Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius' (at sea level) – we haven't measured the temperature in every case of boiling water, but each time we do, we get the same result, so we make the general claim. We can do the same with behavior. On this understanding, the argument is not from analogy at all. It is simply a causal inference"\(^4\).

Second critique is

"Of course the skeptical claim that these instances are exceptional, that the behavior of other people has a different cause, remains possible (just as it is possible that water doesn't always boil at 100 degrees Celsius). But the argument is only intended to make belief in other minds justified. We can think of it as an inference to the best explanation"\(^5\).

Some of the points which were given by Mill make the argument week. Although, this is enough for an enquiry, and it is to make one rethink about the concept of the other minds as well as the existence of other minds. Next three portion of this paper try to establish an epistemological argument of the other minds within the Sāṃkhya philosophy with the reference to Mill’s argument from analogy.

\(^2\) Ryle, Gilbert, The Concept of Mind, p-xvi

\(^3\) Michael Lacewing. The problem of other minds, Routledge

\(^4\) ibid

\(^5\) ibid
3. FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPT OF SĀNKHYA PHILOSOPHY

According to Gopinath Kaviraj, Sāńkhya "is not one of the systems of Indian philosophy. Samkhya is the philosophy of India". Sāńkhya has not only influenced Indian philosophy, but also every phase of Indian culture and learning. Mythology, theology, law, medicine, art and the various traditions of Yoga and Tantra have all been touched by the categories and basic notions of the Samkhya. Vijñāna Bhikṣu says, Sāńkhya means knowledge of self through right discrimination. Jadhunath Sinha says:

"The Sāṁkhya system derives its name from the word ‘sāṁkhya’, meaning number, since it enumerates the metaphysical principle of reality. Or word sāṁkhya may mean perfect knowledge (sam-khyā). The system is called Sāṁkhya, since it gives perfect knowledge of the self or puruṣa as quite distinct from prakṛti and its evolutes, body, sense-organs, mind (manas), intellect (buddhi), and egoism (ahaṁkāra), which annihilates all kinds of suffering".

Swami Virupakshananda said that ‘Sāṁkhya forms one of the most important pillars continuing the six systems (ṣaḍdarśana) of Indian Philosophy. Its contribution to our knowledge of reality and world seminal’. According to Acharya Sankara, ‘Sāṁkhya to be the knowledge of the true of self’. According to Gopinath Kaviraj, Sāṁkhya is the philosophy. After Īswarakṛṣṇa, the pupil of Kapil, wrote in about 400AD that “Sāṁkhakārikā” is the available authentic text for Sāṁkhya philosophy. After Īswarakṛṣṇa, Pāramartha, Gauḍapāda, Vacaspati Misra, Vijñāna Vihṣu wrote excellent commentary on “Sāṁkhakārikā”. Else, Yuktidīpikā, Jayamangalā have also written important commentaries on “Sāṁkhakārikā”. Sāṁkhya philosophy is well known for its doctrine of “tattvas” (category). It explains the universe with only twenty five tattvas (category). These tattvas (category) are four types. Īswarakṛṣṇa says:

“mūlaprakṛṭīḥ avikṛṭīḥ mahādaīḍyāḥ prakṛṭivikṛṭayaḥ saṃpta,
śoḍāśaṅkas tu vikāro na prakṛṭir na vikṛṭiḥ puruṣa”12.

Four types of tattvas (category) are prakṛti (cause in this kārikā), prakṛṭi-vikṛti (both cause and effect), vikṛti (effect), and napakṛti na vikṛti (neither cause nor effect). Vacaspati Miṣra explains this stanza in his excellent commentary “Sāṁkhyaṭattvakaumudī”. He says, prakṛti is called mūlaprakṛti (primal nature) which is the root every material things. Everything depends on prakṛti (primal cause) but prakṛti (primal cause) has no cause. Prakṛti (primal cause) is the only single cause in this sense. Second tattvas are prakṛti-vikṛti, which means some tattvas have power of causality and as well as they are effective also. According to “Sāṁkhakārikā” and its commentary mahat (the great one or intellectual), ahaṁkāra (I or ego) and five subtle element (rūp, ras, gandha, sparśa and sabda) are the both cause and effect. Again, Vacaspati explain the nature of vikṛti (only effect), pañca jñānendriyo-five sense organs viz. cakṣuṣa (eye), kārtuṣa (ear), nāsikā (nose), ḫaṃśa (tongue) and tak (skin or touch), i. Pañca karmendriya-five motor organs viz.mukha (mouth), pāṇi (hand), pāda (feet), pāyu (rectum or anus) and upostha (sex organ), pañcamahabhūta viz. ksiti (earth), ap (water), tej (fire), marut (air) and voym (eather) these fifteen and including mana (mind) are only effects. Another category is neither cause nor effect (napakṛti na vikṛti) is puruṣa. Puruṣa is naturally jñā (knowledge).

6Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy (v-IV), p-xi
7 Ibid
8 Indian philosophy, p-1
9 Sāṁkhya kārikā, p-ii
10 Origin and Development of the Samkhya of thought-P.B.Chakravorti, p-1
11 Classical Samkhy, p-1
12 III- “Sāṁkhya-kārikā”
After that, Īswarākṛṣṇa says that “from the primordial matter evolves the great principle (mahat); from this evolves the I-principle (Ahaṅkāra); from this evolves the set of sixteen; from the five of the sixteen, evolves the five elements.” It happens only when disturbance of equilibrium of guṇas. After this couplet we find in “Sāṃkhya-kārikā” the states by Īswarākṛṣṇa, the functions of Buddha, āhaṃkāra, and sixteen evolves, but Īswarākṛṣṇa did not give explanations about how evolutes are emergence from Praṇṛti. Although in Kārikā IX-XI Īswarākṛṣṇa states the doctrine of Satkārya15 and accepts Praṇṛti is the root cause of everything, where Buddha-Āhaṃkāra-Manas (internal psychic parts) emerges when Praṇṛti interacts or associate with Puruṣa. Here interaction or association just helps each other according to Īswarākṛṣṇa. Like a lame and blind man help each other to escape from fire or from the forest. Īswarākṛṣṇa states the emergence and functioning of basic principle from couplet XXII to XXXVIII16 which is expressed usually in term of psychologically rather than cosmologically. First evolutes is Buddha, according to Kārikā XXIII, Buddha has psychological part, its ascertainment or determination (adhyāvasāya17), virtue (dharma), knowledge (jñāna), non-attachment (virāga), and possession of power (aśvarya), are svattvika form. Its tāmasa form is the opposite (of the four). The second evolute or emergent which appears because of the presence of Puruṣa is Āhaṃkāra. Īswarākṛṣṇa wrote in Kārikā XXIV that “self-awareness (Āhaṃkāra or ego) is self-conceit (abhimāna18). From it a twofold creation emerges, the group of eleven and five subtle elements (tannāṭraś19).” This psychological process ended with generate five gross elements. G.J. Larson says “when we say, however, that the Kārikā analyzes the principle or tattvas in term of psychology categories, we do not mean experimental investigation or scientific research of the psyche, we mean, rather, that the world is understood primarily from the point of view the individual, witnessing Puruṣa20”. Here Puruṣa21 is not part of Praṇṛti. It is an independent principle along with Praṇṛti according to Īswarākṛṣṇa. A natural outcome from the above discussion is Parināmavāda or theory of transformation. It is the doctrine that, all effects are contained in their causes in an un-manifested form, the “production” of an effect is merely transformation of the cause22.

4. CONCEPT OF OTHER MINDS AND ARGUMENT FROM ANALOGY IN SĀMJHYA PHILOSOPHY

Īswarākṛṣṇa describes mind in “Sāṃkhya-kārikā” as

“Uḥbhayātmakamanah saṁkalpakam...” (SK-XXVII)

Its function is saṁkalpa—arranging (literally 'fitting together’) or coordinating the indriya-s. It functions partly to make auñḍī picture from sense data, provided by the senses, and partly to translate the commands from the intellect to actual, separate actions of the organs. Of these (sense organs), the Mind possesses the nature of both (the sensory and motor organs). It is the deliberating principle, and it is also called a sense organ since it possesses properties common to the sense organs. Its multifariousness and also its external diversities are owing to special modifications of the attributes23. Among the eleven sense organs, the mind possesses both the characteristic, it is an

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13 Manas, five sense, five organs of action and five subtle elements.
14 SK-XXII trans by Swami Virupakshananda
15 Satkārya means that effect is existent even before the operation of the cause
16 Larson, G.J. Classical Sāṃkhya, p-179-188
17 Its meaning “to bind”, it can be mean “attempt”, “effort”, “exertion”, “perseverance” and also “intelligence”, “awareness”, “will” etc.
18 Ahaṁ=I, kāra= making, doing, working. It has usually been translated “ego”, “conception of one’s individuality”
19 Non-specific, sound, touch, form, taste and smell.
20 Ibid, p-178
21 It is characterized as being, a witness, possessed of isolation, indifferent, a spectator or one who sees and Inactive. Kārikā- XIX
22 Sinha, Nandalal. Samkhya philosophy. P-iv
23 SK-XXVII trans by Swami Virupakshananda
organ of knowledge, and also it is an organ of action inasmuch as sensory organs like eye and the rest. And the motor organs like speech and the rest operate on their respective object only when the mind cooperates with them. The mind for its part internally constructs a representation of objects of the external world with the data supplied by the senses. The ego (ahaṁkāra) contributes personal perspective to knowledge claims. The intellect (buddhi or mahat) contributes to the understanding of knowledge. The puruṣa adds consciousness to the result: it is the mere witness of the intellectual processes. According to a simile, the puruṣa is the lord of the house, the tripartite psyche is the door-keeper and the senses are the doors. Intellec, ego and mind together constitute the antah-karana (internal organ), or the material psyche, while the other indriya-s (powers) collectively are called the external organ. Īswarākrśṇa describes antah-karana (internal organ) in “Sāṁkhya-kārikā” as- “antahkaranam trividham...” (SK-XXXIII), buddhi, ahaṁkāra and manas.

The internal organ as is inseparable unit and it is the principle of life (prāṇa). In cognition the internal organ’s activity follows upon that of the external, but they are continuously active, so their activity is also simultaneous. The external organ is strictly bound to the presence of mind, while the psyche is active in the past and future as well (memory, planning, and the grasping of timeless truths).

While, “Sāṁkhya-kārikā” is the only authentic available text for Sāṁkhya philosophy, but in “Sāṁkhya-kārikā” Īswarākrśṇa does not bring the concept of other minds. For this reason some scholars argue that it is not possible to establish the concept of other mind within the Sāṁkhya philosophy. Although, concept of plurality of selves (bahu-puruṣa) gives an abstract concept about other minds. Ramesh Kumar Sharma and others in recent days are trying to prove that the existence of other mind is possible by the Sāṁkhya philosophy. Ramesh Kumar Sharma says:

“We have observe that Sāṁkhya argument for the plurality of selves or what is called ‘other minds’ naturally requires supplementation by the analogical argument as it is traditionally conceived. And we so observed, first, because the Sāṁkhya argument seems to stop midway, even though it regards other‘ bodies as a primary datum as require under the terms, and, second, because it apparently suffers from the defect of starting by assuming as fact what it sets out to prove, namely that there are selves animating other bodies.”

Sāṁkhya adduce three arguments to prove that there is a separate puruṣa for each individual. The argument given by Īswarākrśṇa to establish the existence of manyness of selves is mentioned in “Sāṁkhya-kārikā” as:-

“janaṇamaṇaṇakarananānaṃ pratiniyamād ayugapatpravṛtteś ca
puruṣabahutvam siddham traiguṇyaviparyayāc caiva”

The plurality of puruṣas is established,

- Birth, death and the personal history of everybody is different (it is determined by the law of karma, according to our merits collected in previous lives). If there were one puruṣa only, all bodies should be identical or at least indistinguishable for the function of the self or puruṣa is to be the supervisor of the body. But this is clearly not so. Hence, there must be a plurality of distinct puruṣa-s.

- If there were only one puruṣa, everyone would act simultaneously alike, for the puruṣa is the supervisor of the body. But this is clearly not so. Hence, there must be a plurality of distinct puruṣa-s.

- If there were only one puruṣa, we would all experience the same things. However, it is evident that the opposite is true: our experiences are inherently diverse and private, and they cannot be directly shared. Hence, there must be a separate puruṣa for us all.

If there were only one puruṣa, birth and deathshould be one for the whole universe. So, too, if one person be blind or deaf, all others should be blind or deaf, and when one engages in activity, all others should engage in the same activity. We do not see like this. The arguments mentioned above, clearly indicates the concept of plurality of selves with adherence to the concept of other minds also. It is not alike argument by analogy given by Mill, but we can

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25 Sāṁkhya-kārikā-XVIII
easily draw an analogical argument by these three concrete inference to prove the existence of other minds within the Sāṁkhya School. Here the probable argument by analogy:-

1. Human body has puruṣa,
2. And human body has mind,
3. Mind is doing action for knowledge for the sake of puruṣa,
4. Puruṣa are many,
5. Therefore, minds are many.

This argument is not same like Mill’s analogy, but this is a probable argument from analogy is made from the concept of bahu- puruṣa in Sāṁkhya philosophy. First premise is based on the existence of the puruṣa in the SāṁkhyaKārikā-XVII, second premise is based on the SāṁkhyaKārikā-XXVII, third premise is taken from SāṁkhyaKārikā-XVII, and fourth premise is manyness of spirits from SāṁkhyaKārikā-XVIII. Basically, if we do not accept the existence of the other minds, we face big trouble in our daily life. It is necessary to accept not only the concept of other minds, but also we have to believe that other minds exist same as mine.

5. CONCLUSION

With the Mill’s argument on analogy, the paper proves the existence of other minds within the Sāṁkhya philosophy, with special reference to SāṁkhyaKārikā. It is clear in Sāṁkhya that it accepts the separate body alike other. And puruṣa which is the conscious part of the universe is not one, it is many. Reflection of puruṣa in buddhi (intellect), ahāṃkāra is manifested from buddhi then manas (mind) is manifested from ahāṃkāra. So, in that way, we can say puruṣa also reflected in mind. And this is happened only when the knowledge of discrimination arise between prakṛṭi and puruṣa. This is called kaivalya. However, many mind or concept of others mind in Sāṁkhya is accepted in way of discussing the selves and plurality of selves. For this reason they did not give any argument or no discussion on this topic. Sāṁkhya admits a plurality of pure selves or puruṣas. The plurality is also taken to be inferred from the circumstance of the birth, death, organ, willing and feeling differing in different embodied selves. A prior enquiry, however, is how a body of other than mine is known to be of another self, for such knowledge it is obviously assumed in the above mentioned inference. We cannot say that where there is puruṣa there is mind but we can obviously say that where there is mind there is puruṣa (from third premise), Mind are many and other minds exist.

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**AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

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