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RENUNCIATION, PLEASURE, AND THE GOOD LIFE IN THE SAṂNYĀSA UPANIṢADS



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Introduction

The Saṁnyāsa Upaniṣads characterize the life of the *saṁnyāsin* (renunciate) as devoid of earthly pleasures. At the same time, these and other texts record confusion and suspicion toward those who would pursue such a life, and disbelief that such severe austerity could be required. To many, the *saṁnyāsin* seems to forsake the good life in forsaking earthly pleasures. I call this the 'Precluded Pleasures Objection' to the *saṁnyāsin* ideal.

A number of replies to the Precluded Pleasures Objection might be drawn from the Saṁnyāsa Upaniṣads themselves. The first points out that the *saṁnyāsin* ideal is typically reserved for members of the twice-born classes, and perhaps only *brāhmaṇa* men, who have reached relative old age. Whether the ideal is attractive to anyone outside this small group, then, seems irrelevant. The problem with this reply is that the ideal remains unattractive to most members of that small group for whom it is intended for the same reasons that it is unattractive to the broader community.

The second reply explains the relative unpopularity of the *saṁnyāsin* ideal in terms of the shortcomings of those who fail to see its appeal. Most people are excessively attached to things that are unworthy of enjoyment. This is hardly a shortcoming in the *saṁnyāsin* ideal itself. The problem with this reply is that not all of the things that most people enjoy are obviously unworthy of enjoyment. If the *saṁnyāsin* does not take pleasure in earthly things, then he does not enjoy a visit from a friend, the beauty of a sunset, or the sight of children playing. Pleasures such as these, however, seem essential to the good life.

A third reply admits that the life of the *saṁnyāsin* is not especially good for him, but insists that this sacrifice is required in order to attain *mokṣa*. This reply characterizes the pursuit of the *saṁnyāsin* ideal as overly grim. In order to attain *mokṣa*, the typical *saṁnyāsin* must give up the good life for a long series of lives. This sacrifice seems excessive. It also seems inconsistent with the characterization of the *saṁnyāsin* as taking immense and constant pleasure in the *ātman* (true self) and/or *brahman* (God).

The claim that the *saṁnyāsin* takes immense and constant pleasure in the *ātman* and/or *brahman* points toward a fourth reply to the Precluded Pleasures Objection. While the *saṁnyāsin* forsakes earthly pleasures, he is more than compensated by the pleasure he takes in the *ātman* and/or *brahman*. The problem with this reply is that

pleasures do not seem to be interchangeable in this way. The life of the *saṃnyāsin* might be deficient, despite his great pleasure in the *ātman* and/or *brahman*, because it is devoid of so many other important pleasures.

A fifth reply states that earthly pleasures invariably produce earthly desires. Earthly desires, in turn, lead to suffering—in the form of rebirth and so on—that outweighs the value of any earthly pleasure. It is false that earthly pleasures invariably produce earthly desires.

Finally, I argue that the Precluded Pleasures Objection can be avoided, but only by revising the *saṃnyāsin* ideal so that it is consistent with the *saṃnyāsin* enjoying the world. If it is possible to enjoy earthly things without desiring them, this account seems more plausible. Indeed, a minority of passages from the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads themselves suggests that at least the advanced *saṃnyāsin* does just this.

I. Some Preliminary Notes

The Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads contain some of the most detailed descriptions of the beliefs, intentions, and actions of the *saṃnyāsin* in all of Indian literature. It is hard to see how any study of the *saṃnyāsin* ideal could ignore the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads.

At the same time, any analysis of the *saṃnyāsin* in these texts as a whole might seem problematic. The Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads were composed over the course of over 1,200 years, from the first few centuries of the Common Era until the fifteenth century (Olivelle 1992, p. 9). So it might seem naïve to assume that their descriptions of the *saṃnyāsin* are invariably uniform.

Despite this range in dates of composition, however, Patrick Olivelle and others count the descriptions of the *saṃnyāsin* in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads as sufficiently uniform to warrant analyzing them as a group. While Olivelle cites specific texts throughout his long introduction to his translation of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads, he takes his analysis of the *saṃnyāsin* to apply to the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads as a whole (Olivelle 1992).¹

This suggests a shared conception of the *saṃnyāsin* among these texts. This is not to say that there is no variation in the conceptions of the *saṃnyāsin* in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads. Their similarities have been taken to warrant a more general treatment. I work under this assumption in this essay.

At the same time, the objection and replies that I advance are less speculative insofar as they can be applied to a single text. As a means to this, I emphasize the longest and most comprehensive of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads, the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* in particular. I cite at least one passage from the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* in support of each of the central claims that constitute the objection that I develop in the next two sections. I also cite passages from the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* in developing most of the replies that I consider in subsequent sections.

I include extensive references to the other Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads as well for a number of reasons. In some cases, citations of other Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads serve to demonstrate the early origins of claims found in the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad*. The *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* was composed in the twelfth century C.E. The

earliest of these texts, however, such as the *Āruṇi Upaniṣad* and *Kaṭhaśruti Upaniṣad*, are from the first few centuries of the Common Era (Olivelle 1992, pp. 9–10). It is noteworthy, then, that some of the central claims that constitute the description of the *saṃnyāsin* in the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* can be traced to the earliest texts in the collection.

At other times, citations of other Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads show how widely accepted certain elements of the description of the life of the *saṃnyāsin* in the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* are. In some cases they indicate that certain claims, which might occur only once in the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* itself, are common in the broader literature, and hence not anomalous.

These additional citations from other Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads also serve to expand the range of texts from which replies to such objections might be derived. Indeed, the final reply that I consider here—and the one that I argue is most convincing—is drawn primarily from texts other than the *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad*.

Another challenge in the analysis that follows has to do with the accessibility of these texts to a contemporary, (primarily) Western readership. Given the centrality of the notion of pleasure in the objection that follows, a fundamental question might be: “did the authors of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads think about pleasure as we do?”²

As a means of addressing this concern, in section II below I offer detailed arguments for the claim that the distinction between sensory pleasure and attitudinal pleasure is at least implicit in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads themselves. Rather than review these arguments in detail here, and rather than offer nothing but a promissory note at this point for the arguments that follow, I want to offer a preliminary reply to this worry now, with the understanding that the arguments below supplement the preliminary reply.

As long as it is kept in mind that sensory pleasure is simply a bodily feeling of pleasure, it seems implausible that the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads are devoid of such a concept. Similarly, as long as it is kept in mind that attitudinal pleasure is simply an object-directed attitude of pleasure, like enjoyment or contentment, it seems implausible that the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads are devoid of this concept. It might be that translations of words like *bhoja* as ‘enjoyment’ are mistaken or unreliable, but this level of skepticism might be applied to any work that involves the translation of Sanskrit terms.

A related worry has to do with the applicability of common contemporary intuitions about the good life to the example of the *saṃnyāsin*. Why think that such considerations have any application to texts that were composed in an environment that is so distant from our own?³

As a means of addressing this concern, I have offered a number of examples that suggest that similar concerns about the good life were raised against the *saṃnyāsin* ideal in the ancient Indian context as well. One of these examples is from the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads themselves. Indeed, questions about the good life seem to have motivated much more philosophical thinking in the Indian context than it might seem. As Matthew Dasti notes, even the Naiyāyikas, known for their rigorous logic

and epistemology, insist that the fundamental goal of philosophical activity is living well (Dasti 2015, sec. 1).⁴

Lastly, given the antiquity of these questions in the Indian context, and given the resurgent interest in the good life among contemporary philosophers writing in English, a cross-cultural study seems timely. Analyses of the good life in the Buddhist contexts have already begun to appear (Harris 2014a, 2014b; Goodman 2015). Something should be said about the good life in the Hindu contexts as well. The work that both Buddhist and Hindu traditions have done on the problems implicit in pleasure and desire, in particular, might serve as a challenge to popular Western accounts of the good life, many of which take pleasure or satisfaction of desire to be the only thing that makes a life go well.

II. The *Samnyāsin* and Earthly Pleasures

A number of *Samnyāsa* Upaniṣads characterize the life of the *saṃnyāsin* as devoid of earthly pleasures. Earthly pleasures include sensory pleasures. Sensory pleasures are pleasurable bodily sensations or feelings (Feldman 2004, p. 54).⁵ The pleasant feel of warm sunshine, the pleasant taste of good food, or the pleasing sound of running water are examples of sensory pleasures. They can be contrasted with sensory pains—painful bodily sensations or feelings such as the pain of a headache, or the painful screech of fingernails on a chalkboard.

The claim that the life of the *saṃnyāsin* is devoid of sensory pleasure seems relatively uncontroversial. It is supported by the extensive restrictions placed on the *saṃnyāsin* with regard to food (*NpU* 174; *LSU* and *KU* 18; *KśU* 33; *MU* 117), shelter (*NpU* 154, 158, 181, 202), clothing (*NpU* 153, 155, 168; *TaU* 242), women (*NpU* 196; *MU* 115, 200; *PpU* 283, 285), and so on, all of which are traditionally understood as especially rich sources of sensory pleasure and/or especially crucial means to the avoidance of sensory pain.

The claim also seems supported by the repeated description of the *saṃnyāsin* as *nirdvandva*—impartial to the opposites. Foremost among the opposites toward which the *saṃnyāsin* is impartial are pleasure and pain. *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* 220, for example, says that the *saṃnyāsin* “has overcome pleasure and pain (*sukhaduḥkhātītaḥ*).” *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* 153 says that the *saṃnyāsin* “has done away with (*nirvartito*) pleasure and pain (*sukhaduḥkha*).” *Paramahamsaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* 288 says that the *saṃnyāsin* “has conquered (*jitāḥ*) pleasure and pain (*sukhaduḥkha*).”

The fact that these texts also describe the *saṃnyāsin* as “overcoming the senses” suggests that the *saṃnyāsin* is impartial toward sensory pleasure and pain in particular. *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* 142 says, “with attachment of the senses (*indriyāṇām prasaṅgena*), [a person] certainly attains fault (*doṣam ṛcchaty asaṃśayam*). Having subdued [the senses] (*saṃniyamya*), however, [he] thereby attains perfection (*siddhiṃ nigacchati*)” (cf. *NpU* 140, 149, 156, 192, 196; *PhU* 54; *MU* 110). It then describes the “conqueror of the senses (*jitendriyaḥ*)” as “the one who, having heard (*śrutvā*), having touched (*spr̥ṣṭvā*), having tasted (*bhuktvā*), having seen (*dr̥ṣṭvā*), or

having smelled (*ghrātvā*), neither rejoices nor dislikes (*na hr̥ṣyati glāyati vā*)" (*NpU* 142).⁶ If the *saṃnyāsin* is impartial toward sensory input, then he is impartial toward sensory pleasure and pain.

Monier-Williams' definition of *nirvandva* as "indifferent to the alternatives or opposite pairs (of feelings, [such] as pleasure and pain)" (Monier-Williams 1960, p. 541) also supports this conclusion.⁷ If the pleasures and pains toward which the *saṃnyāsin* is impartial are "feelings," then they are sensory pleasures and pains in particular. Sensory pleasures and pains are just feelings of pleasure and pain.⁸

If the *saṃnyāsin* is impartial toward sensory pleasure and pain, then presumably he does not pursue sensory pleasure, and hence does not experience much sensory pleasure. This is clear in those descriptions of the *saṃnyāsin* as simply "without pleasure and pain." *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* 140 describes the *saṃnyāsin* as someone who "even [when] alive (*prāṇayukto*), finds neither pleasure nor pain (*sukhaduḥkhaṃ na vindati*)." *Paramahaṃsa Upaniṣad* 47–48 reads: "A *paramahaṃsa* (the most advanced *saṃnyāsin*) acts (*carati*) . . . without pleasure or pain (*na sukhaṃ na duḥkhaṃ*)." Indeed, the word *nirvandva* literally translates simply as "without opposites," and hence without sensory pleasure and pain (among other opposites) altogether. The life of the *saṃnyāsin*, then, is characterized as devoid of sensory pleasure.

What might be less obvious is that the *saṃnyāsin* forsakes a second type of earthly pleasure as well, namely attitudinal pleasure in earthly things. Attitudinal pleasures are a class of object-directed mental states that include enjoyments, satisfactions, likings, and so on. Attitudinal pains are a class of object-directed mental states that include disenjoyments, dissatisfactions, dislikings, and so on (Feldman 2004, p. 56). Examples of attitudinal pleasures include my enjoyment of a baseball game, or my contentment that I am going to sleep. Examples of attitudinal pains include my dislike of the outcome of an election, or my dissatisfaction with the weather.⁹

That such states are properly categorized as pleasures and pains is supported by the fact that they can be described as pleasures and pains. To say that I enjoy a baseball game, for example, is to say that I am pleased with it, or that I take pleasure in it. To say that I dislike the outcome of an election is to say that I am pained by it, or that I am displeased with it.¹⁰

And yet, the translation of terms like 'enjoyment', 'satisfaction', and so on into talk of pleasure should not obscure the distinction between sensory pleasures and attitudinal pleasures. To say that I am pleased with a baseball game is not simply equivalent to saying that I feel pleasant sensations as a result of (or amidst) the baseball game. I might enjoy a baseball game—or the fact that my team won—without having any such sensations of pleasure.

Fred Feldman makes this point with the example of a person involved in a serious motorcycle accident. The motorcyclist wakes up in the hospital entirely anaesthetized, and hence incapable of sensory pleasure and pain, and yet he is glad that he survived the accident (Feldman 2004, pp. 56–57). He experiences attitudinal pleasure (he is glad), but no sensory pleasure (or pain). Attitudinal pleasures and pains,

then, are distinct from sensory pleasures and pains. Additionally, no phenomenological “feel” need accompany attitudinal pleasures or pains, even if they often do.

As I mentioned already, a number of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads characterize the *saṃnyāsin* as *nirdvandva*—impartial to the opposites. His impartiality toward the opposites entails that he takes neither attitudinal pleasure nor attitudinal pain in earthly things quite broadly.

The full passage from the *Paramahaṃsa Upaniṣad* that I mentioned above says that “there is neither cold nor heat (*na śītaṃ na coṣṇaṃ*), neither pleasure nor pain (*na sukhaṃ na duḥkhaṃ*), neither respect nor disrespect (*na mānāpamānaṃ ca*)” in the life of the *saṃnyāsin* (*PhU* 47–48). Other lists include the opposites of friend and enemy (*mitrādīṣu*) (*NpU* 195),¹¹ good and bad (*śubhāśubha*) (*BSU* 261), pure and impure (*śuddhāśuddha*) (*BhU* 235), knowledge and ignorance (*jñānājñāna*) (*NpU* 220), and even the pleasure or pain of one’s wife, brother, child, and so on (*jāyābhrāṭṛ-sutādināṃ bandhūnāṃ ca śubhāśubham*) (*NpU* 157).

When these texts elaborate the opposites toward which the *saṃnyāsin* is impartial in terms of these common pairs, they intend for these examples to represent opposites more generally. As *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* 145 says, the description of the *saṃnyāsin* as impartial to the opposites amounts to a description of the *saṃnyāsin* as impartial toward “all of the opposites (*sarvadvandva*).”

The opposites, in turn, include everything earthly. This is not to say that every earthly thing¹² has its opposite. It is just to say that every earthly thing falls on a spectrum (or spectra), on the ends of which are opposites. Impartiality toward the opposites amounts to an impartiality toward the opposites and all that lies between them. The *saṃnyāsin* is impartial toward the opposites of cold and heat. He is also impartial toward cool, tepid, and warm.¹³ If the *saṃnyāsin*’s impartiality toward the opposites amounts to an impartiality toward the opposites and all that falls between the opposites, and if every earthly thing falls on a spectrum between some pair of opposites (either as an opposite or as some point between the opposites), then the *saṃnyāsin*’s impartiality amounts to impartiality toward everything earthly.

Some passages state this conclusion straightforwardly. *Bṛhat-Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣad* 249, for example, says that the *saṃnyāsin* is “impartial toward everything (*sarvato viraktaś*)” (cf. *NpU* 129). *Laghu-Avadhūta Upaniṣad* 337 says that the *saṃnyāsin* is “impartial toward all objects (*sarvavastuny udāsīnabhāva*).” *Kuṇḍika Upaniṣad* 26 says, “the qualities of the sensible (*sākṣyadharmāḥ*) do not affect (*na saṃsprṣānti*) the sensing witness (*vilakṣaṇaṃ sākṣiṇaṃ*).”

Those descriptions that I already mentioned of the *saṃnyāsin* having conquered or overcome his senses also support the conclusion that he is impartial toward earthly things quite broadly. If the *saṃnyāsin*, “having heard, having touched, having tasted, having seen, or having smelled, neither rejoices nor dislikes” (*NpU* 142; cf. *NpU* 135), then presumably he is impartial not only toward sensory pleasure and pain, but toward all earthly things. He does not enjoy those things he hears, touches, and so on.

To say that the *saṃnyāsin* is impartial toward earthly things is to say that he takes no attitudinal pleasure or pain in earthly things. The quotation above from the *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad*, for example, says that the *saṃnyāsin* neither rejoices in

nor dislikes earthly things. To say that the *saṃnyāsin* neither rejoices in nor dislikes earthly things is to say that he takes no attitudinal pleasure or pain in earthly things. Attitudinal pleasures are just states such as these.

A number of texts explain the impartiality of the *saṃnyāsin* in this way. *Kaṭhaśruti Upaniṣad* 42, for example, explains his impartiality toward praise and blame in the following way: the *saṃnyāsin*, “being praised, should not be glad (*tuṣyeta*) [and] being blamed, should not be upset (*śapet*)” (*KśU* 42). If the *saṃnyāsin* is neither glad nor upset with praise and blame, then he takes no attitudinal pleasure or pain in praise or blame. His impartiality toward these opposites, then, implies an absence of attitudinal pleasure and pain toward them.

Other passages describe the *saṃnyāsin*’s impartiality toward pleasure and pain in terms of an absence of any enjoyment in pleasure and dislike of pain. *Paramahaṃsa Upaniṣad* 54, for example, says, “the *saṃnyāsin* is neither averse to pain (*duḥkhe nodvegah*), nor attracted to pleasure (*sukhe nasprahā*). . . . [I]n no case does he care for (*abhisneho*) pleasure or pain (*śubhāśubhāyor*). He neither dislikes [pain] nor enjoys [pleasure] (*na dveṣṭi na modaṃ*).” *Nārada-parivṛāja Upaniṣad* 140 says, “he who would not enjoy (*abhinandet*) pleasures (*bhogān*) . . . dwells in the stage of life [aimed at] liberation.” The impartiality of the *saṃnyāsin* toward the opposites, then, amounts to an absence of attitudinal pleasure and pain toward the opposites.

Monier-Williams’ definition of *nirdvandva*, which I cited above, supports this analysis as well. The broader definition reads, “indifferent to the alternatives or opposite pairs (of feelings, [such] as pleasure and pain), neither glad nor sorry etc.” (Monier-Williams 1960, p. 541).¹⁴ If the *saṃnyāsin*’s impartiality toward the opposites means that he is “neither glad nor sorry, etc.,” toward the opposites, then his impartiality entails that he takes neither attitudinal pleasure nor pain in the opposites. To be glad that it is warm, after all, is to take attitudinal pleasure in the fact that it is warm, and to be sorry that it is cold is to take attitudinal pain in the fact that it is cold. The seemingly technical terms ‘attitudinal pleasure’ and ‘attitudinal pain’ can be analyzed in terms of states such as these.¹⁵

If the impartiality of the *saṃnyāsin* toward the opposites amounts to an absence of attitudinal pleasure and pain toward the opposites, and if the opposites include every earthly thing, then the *saṃnyāsin* takes neither attitudinal pleasure nor attitudinal pain in any earthly thing. The life of the *saṃnyāsin*, then, is generally devoid of two distinct kinds of pleasure. It is devoid of both sensory pleasure and attitudinal pleasure in earthly things. His impartiality toward pleasure in particular entails that his life is devoid of sensory pleasure. His more general impartiality toward earthly things entails that he does not take attitudinal pleasure in earthly things quite broadly. So the life of the *saṃnyāsin* is generally devoid of earthly pleasures broadly construed, to include both sensory pleasure and attitudinal pleasure in earthly things.

III. Earthly Pleasures and the Good Life

The life of the *saṃnyāsin* is generally devoid of earthly pleasures. It isn’t surprising that many people find this aspect of the *saṃnyāsin* ideal unappealing. Indeed,

there is extensive evidence that many in the ancient Indian environment found the *saṃnyāsin* ideal unappealing for just this reason.¹⁶

The Cārvākas, of course, are the most vociferous opponents of asceticism in general. Their primary objection, however, is based on their assumption that the intrinsic value of a life for the person whose life it is derives exclusively from the intrinsic values of earthly pleasures and pains within that life. In other words, the good life is just the life full of those pleasures that the *saṃnyāsin* gives up:

The enjoyment of heaven lies in eating delicious food, keeping company of young women, using fine clothes, perfumes, garlands, sandal paste, etc. The pain of hell lies in the troubles that arise from enemies, weapons, diseases; while liberation (*mokṣa*) is death which is the cessation of life-breath. The wise therefore ought not to take pains on account of that (SSS 9–11).¹⁷

In abandoning earthly pleasures, then, the *saṃnyāsin* forsakes the good life. Call this the ‘Precluded Pleasures Objection’.

The Precluded Pleasures Objection is by no means limited to the materialist Cārvākas. The Buddhist *Alagaddūpama Sutta* (The Sutta on the Simile of the Snake), for example, describes the Buddhist monk Ariṭṭha, who “denies that the Buddha’s assertion that pleasure is always an obstruction should be taken at face value” (Ganeri 2007, p. 41). Sure the Buddha says that all earthly pleasures should be abandoned, but he cannot really mean it! In this case, it is not just the vulgar hedonist who thinks that the abandonment of earthly pleasure is too demanding, but someone who already lives a life of rather severe austerity.

Indeed, even passages from the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads themselves reflect a version of the Precluded Pleasures Objection. Both *Laghu-Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣad* and *Kuṇḍika Upaniṣad* 19–20,¹⁸ for example, say that

the self-controlled [person] goes from the world to the forest, accompanied by [his] wife. Abandoning desires (*tyaktā kāmān*), he renounces (*saṃnyasati*). What fear accompanies [him]? On account of what pain (*duḥkham*) [does he] abandon [such] great pleasures (*bhogām . . . ucchritān*)?

The question, put simply, is: “Why would anyone forsake the vast pleasures of the world to become a renunciate?”¹⁹ The lay person finds the motives of the *saṃnyāsin* puzzling. In forsaking earthly pleasures, the *saṃnyāsin* seems to forsake the good life.

IV. Saṃnyāsins as a Select Class

A number of replies to the Precluded Pleasures Objection might be drawn from the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads themselves. First, it might be pointed out that renunciation of the sort described in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads is not meant for everyone. Patrick Olivelle notes that the descriptions of the rite of renunciation in the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads imply that it is intended only for twice-born males, since it requires the

abandonment of the sacred fire and the implements used in Vedic rituals. He adds that there is even “some uncertainty as to whether persons from all three upper classes or only Brahmins could perform this rite” (Olivelle 1992, p. 83).

Additionally, the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads tend to require that a person pass through the three earlier life stages—which are only in the later Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads referred to as the *āśramas*—of student, householder, and forest dweller before becoming a *saṃnyāsin* (LSU and KU 17–18 and 19–20; KśU 37–38; JU 64; NpU 140 and 175; and PhU 278).²⁰ This means that the *saṃnyāsin* ideal is generally reserved for those who have reached relative old age.

This suggests that the *saṃnyāsin* ideal is meant for only a subset—and perhaps a very small subset—of the general population. And since renunciation is not meant for everyone, it is hardly surprising, and certainly not a serious problem, that more people do not find it attractive.

The problem with this reply is that those people for whom the *saṃnyāsin* ideal is intended have all of the same reasons to find the *saṃnyāsin* ideal unappealing. The abandonment of all earthly pleasures, after all, is unattractive to the privileged and the underprivileged, the young and the old.

This must be at least part of the explanation of the extraordinary rarity of the *saṃnyāsin* of the most austere—and ideal—sort. *Paramahaṃsaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* 287–288, for example, admits that “in this world, the *paramahaṃsaparivṛājaka* (the highest type of renunciate) is very rare. If there is one [of them], he alone is always pure. He alone is a man of the Vedas.”

V. Unworthy Enjoyments

A second reply to the objection concedes that most people find the *saṃnyāsin* ideal unattractive, but insists that the fault lies not in the *saṃnyāsin* ideal itself, but in those who fail to find it appealing. The texts under consideration claim that most people are ignorant of the true nature of things, and overly attached to the material world. Much of what people enjoy is not worthy of enjoyment. Maitreya Upaniṣad 110, for example, says, “[tangible] objects (*artha*) such as [those relating to] sound, touch, and so on (*śabdasparsādāyo*) are certainly worthless (*anartha iva*).” It is hardly a shortcoming in the *saṃnyāsin* ideal that it demands that people abandon what is of little value to begin with.

The Precluded Pleasures Objection is not so easily dismissed. Even if popular conceptions of the good life overvalue a wide range of earthly pleasures, there are still other earthly pleasures that seem genuinely valuable.

If the *saṃnyāsin* takes no pleasure in the world, then he does not enjoy a visit from a friend or the beauty of a sunset. He takes no pleasure in the sound of a sparrow’s song or the sight of children playing. Pleasures such as these seem genuinely valuable. It might even be that pleasures such as these are essential to the good life. If they are, then the *saṃnyāsin* forsakes the good life in forsaking earthly pleasures.

VI. The Means to Mokṣa

A third reply to the Precluded Pleasures Objection concedes that the current life of the *saṃnyāsin* is not especially good for him. Few people doubt that spending some years in training for a job or some competitive event like the Olympics is worthwhile, even if the person is pretty miserable in the meanwhile, forsaking the good life while toiling away at writing a dissertation, or working out at the track day and night. In the end, the success—or even the wholehearted attempt at success itself—seems to justify such sacrifices. The case of the *saṃnyāsin* might parallel these cases. He abandons earthly pleasure in this life, but this sacrifice is a means to attaining *mokṣa*.²¹

This strategy ought to be one of last resort, however, for a number of reasons. First, it would be better, all other things being equal, if the current life of the *saṃnyāsin* were sufficiently good for him than if it were not, in just the same way that it would be better, all other things being equal, if each year of a person's life were sufficiently good for him than if it were not. A life is not for naught just because of one bad year, and a series of lifetimes might not be for naught just because of one bad lifetime, but one bad year is a significant cost, and one bad lifetime is more significant still.

Another reason to resist this strategy is that once it is admitted that the current life of the *saṃnyāsin* is not intrinsically good for him, there is little reason to think that the current life will be the only one that is not intrinsically good for him. If the *saṃnyāsin* fails to live the good life because his life is devoid of earthly pleasure, then it makes sense to expect that the *saṃnyāsin* will continue to fail to live the good life until something significant changes. If one bad lifetime is a significant detriment, a series of bad lifetimes is much worse.

A final reason to resist admitting that the life of the *saṃnyāsin* is not sufficiently good for him is that many of the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads repeatedly describe the *saṃnyāsin* as taking immense and constant pleasure²² in the *ātman* and/or *brahman*—not only in future lives, but in his current life as well. *Kuṇḍika Upaniṣad* 27, for example, says that “the wise sage (*vidvān . . . muniḥ*) always rejoices in the self (*ātmārāmaḥ sadā*).” *Maitreya Upaniṣad* 110 says that the *saṃnyāsin*, “[his] self tranquil (*prasanna*), having remained [fixed] in the self, attains imperishable pleasure (*sukham avyayam*).” The *Maitreya Upaniṣad* also says that the *saṃnyāsin* experiences “unsurpassed and infinite bliss (*saukhyatame . . . anante*)” (MU 112), and “complete bliss (*akhaṇḍānanda*)” (MU 121). *Bṛhad-Avadhūta Upaniṣad* 309 describes the *saṃnyāsin* saying, “let [my] mind dissolve in the bliss of *brahman* (*brahmānande*).”

VII. Enjoying the Ātman and/or Brahman

Descriptions of the *saṃnyāsin* as taking immense and constant pleasure in the *ātman* and/or *brahman* point toward a fourth reply to the Precluded Pleasures Objection. While the *saṃnyāsin* forsakes earthly pleasures, he is more than compensated by the pleasure he takes in the *ātman* and/or *brahman*. Furthermore, this pleasure is

available to him in his current life, even before he attains *mokṣa*. This means that he need not forsake the good life as a means to *mokṣa*.

This fourth reply assumes that any pleasure might be substituted with another pleasure of sufficient quantity without diminishing the prudential value of the life of the person whose pleasures they are. Certain examples put this assumption into question.

Imagine two people—Henry and Charlie. Both spend most of their waking hours engaged in ordinary sorts of activities: working, reading, exercising, commuting, hanging out with family and friends, watching television, texting, volunteering in their communities, and so on, and the amount of time that each spends engaged in each activity is roughly equivalent. Henry moderately enjoys all of these activities, and enjoys them all equally. As a result, his life is sufficiently good for him. Henry lives the good life.

Charlie, in contrast, only enjoys watching television. He neither likes nor dislikes any of the other activities in which both Henry and he engage. He is simply impartial to them. The total quantity of Charlie's pleasure is still equal to that of Henry's, because Charlie enjoys watching television so much more than Henry enjoys any of his activities. Even though Charlie spends many fewer hours doing what he enjoys than Henry does, the intensity of his enjoyment in watching television makes up for any deficiency in duration.

In every other way, the two lives are relevantly equivalent. Both experience the same amount of pain—an amount that is well outweighed by pleasure. If any pleasure might be substituted with another pleasure of sufficient quantity without diminishing the prudential value of the life of the person whose pleasure it is, then Charlie's life is just as good as Henry's life, and Charlie's life is sufficiently good. Charlie, too, lives the good life.

It seems hardly controversial to say both that Charlie's life is significantly less good than Henry's and that Charlie's life is not sufficiently good. Charlie's life seems deficient because it is devoid of so many worthwhile pleasures. It seems a shame that he takes no pleasure in work, that he takes no pleasure in family and friends, and so on. It seems implausible that his pleasure in television makes up for these deficiencies. Most of us would not want a life like Charlie's for ourselves. Most of us would not choose a life like Charlie's for ourselves or for our children—and with good reason.²³

This suggests that it is not the case that any pleasure might be substituted with another pleasure of sufficient quantity without diminishing the prudential value of the life of the person whose pleasure it is. If pleasures are not straightforwardly interchangeable in this way, however, then there is some reason to doubt the claim that the *saṃnyāsin* is compensated for the earthly pleasures he forsakes by his pleasures in the *ātman* and/or *brahman*.

Of course, there are seemingly relevant differences between the life of Charlie and the life of the *saṃnyāsin*. One difference is that the *saṃnyāsin* takes constant and immense pleasure in the *ātman* and/or *brahman*. Charlie's pleasure in watching television, in contrast, is presumably more limited.

Even if Charlie's pleasures are made to resemble those of the *saṃnyāsin*, his life still seems deficient. Imagine that the intensity of Charlie's pleasure in watching television is twenty, fifty, or even a hundred times greater than the pleasures that most people experience. Imagine also that Charlie quits his job and cuts himself off from family, friends, and community in order to spend all of his time watching television. Now Charlie takes immense and constant pleasure in watching television, just as the *saṃnyāsin* takes immense and constant pleasure in the *ātman* and/or *brahman*. And yet, the intuition remains quite strong—and perhaps just as strong—that Charlie's life is deficient. Charlie's life still seems less good for him than Henry's life is for Henry.

Another difference between the life of the *saṃnyāsin* and the life of Charlie is that Charlie enjoys something that is not very pleasure-worthy. The *saṃnyāsin*, in contrast, seems to enjoy the most pleasure-worthy thing(s). Feldman considers a version of attitudinal hedonism that adjusts the intrinsic value that an episode of attitudinal pleasure contributes to the intrinsic value of a life for the "pleasure-worthiness" of the object of pleasure:

the intrinsic value of an attitudinal pleasure is determined not simply by the intensity and duration of that pleasure, but by these in combination with the extent to which the object of that pleasure deserves to have pleasure taken in it. (Feldman 2004, p. 120).

Taking this view, a life that contains many episodes of attitudinal pleasure in something that is not especially pleasure-worthy might be deficient, even if the episodes are long and intense.

Perhaps this is why Charlie's life seems deficient in comparison to Henry's life. Watching television, after all, seems much less pleasure-worthy than most of the things that Henry enjoys but that Charlie fails to enjoy. The *ātman* and/or *brahman*, in contrast, is presumably much more pleasure-worthy than those earthly things that the *saṃnyāsin* fails to enjoy. Indeed, the *ātman* and/or *brahman* is typically characterized as the highest (*uttama*, *parama*, *para*, and so on) state attainable. Hence, the life of the *saṃnyāsin* is not deficient for the reason that Charlie's life is deficient.

The example of Charlie can again be modified to accommodate this reply. Suppose that instead of only enjoying watching television, Charlie only enjoys gazing at the Canadian Rockies. Gazing at the Canadian Rockies is certainly highly pleasure-worthy. Many people count the intrinsic value that such pleasure contributes to a life as sufficient reason to relocate to where they can gaze at the Rockies more easily. Many people save their money for many years in order to spend one week gazing at the Rockies. The life of a person who enjoys gazing at the Rockies to the complete exclusion of everything else still seems deficient. We would prefer a life like Henry's to a life like Charlie's for ourselves or for our loved ones even in this revised scenario.

If Charlie's life is still less good for him than Henry's is for Henry, however, then Charlie's immense and constant pleasure in a highly pleasure-worthy thing does not compensate him for all of the pleasures he forsakes. If Charlie's immense and

constant pleasure in a highly pleasure-worthy thing does not compensate him for all of the pleasures he forsakes, however, then there is reason to think that the immense and constant pleasure that the *saṃnyāsīn* takes in the *ātman* and/or *brahman* does not compensate him for all of the earthly pleasures he forsakes.

Now, of course it might be that the intensity of the pleasure that the *saṃnyāsīn* takes in the *ātman* and/or *brahman* is still greater than Charlie's pleasure in watching television, and/or that the pleasure-worthiness of the *ātman* and/or *brahman* is still greater than the pleasure-worthiness of gazing at the Canadian Rockies. If Charlie's life remains deficient, however, despite a significant increase in the intensity of his pleasure, and despite a significant increase in the pleasure-worthiness of his object of pleasure, then there is little reason to think that the deficiency will not remain after still greater increases.

VIII. The Disvalue of Earthly Pleasure

A fifth reply to the Precluded Pleasures Objection states that the positive intrinsic value of earthly pleasures is invariably outweighed by the negative intrinsic value of the pains they eventually cause. The primary way that earthly pleasures produce pain is by producing earthly desires.

Nārada-parivṛājaka Upaniṣad 142 attests to the connection between pleasure and desire in the following passage: "desire (*kāmaḥ*) is never pacified (*na jātu śāmyati*) by the enjoyment (*upabhogena*) of what is desired (*kāmānām*). It [only] grows (*abhivardhate*), as a fire only grows (*kṛṣṇavartma . . . bhūya eva*) from an oblation." In other words, earthly pleasures produce and/or strengthen desires for those things that produce pleasure.²⁴ If the *saṃnyāsīn* enjoys a visit from a friend, for example, he comes to desire to see the friend again.

These desires, in turn, cause pain. One way they do this is by disposing the agent toward pain when the desire is frustrated. When the friend does not return, the *saṃnyāsīn* is disappointed. He takes attitudinal pain in the absence of the friend, but only because he desires to see the friend again. If he had not taken pleasure in the visit in the first place, he would not have desired to see the friend again and hence would not have experienced pain when the friend did not visit. So his initial pleasure in the visit of a friend has the eventual consequence of pain.

The main way that desire leads to pain is by prolonging rebirth. *Bṛhad-Avadhūta Upaniṣad* 305, citing *Bhagavadgītā* 2.70, reads: "As the waters enter the ocean that [yet] remains unmoving [despite] filling, likewise, all desires (*kāmā . . . sarve*) enter him. He attains peace, not the one who desires desirable things (*kāmakāmī*)." If a person is devoid of earthly desires, he attains liberation. If he is not devoid of earthly desires, he remains in the cycle of rebirth.

Śātyāyanīya Upaniṣad 329 says the same thing: "When all those desires (*sarve . . . kāmā*) which lie in his heart are let go, then the mortal becomes immortal. He attains *brahman* in this world." Only the person who abandons all earthly desires attains liberation. The person who continues to desire earthly things, in contrast, persists in the painful cycle of births.

If earthly pleasures invariably lead to earthly desires, and if earthly desires invariably prolong rebirth, which is painful, then whatever intrinsic value earthly pleasures might contribute toward the intrinsic value of a life is outweighed by the intrinsic disvalue of the pain that results. If this is right, then a person is better off avoiding earthly pleasures. And if a person is better off avoiding earthly pleasures, then the fact that a life is devoid of earthly pleasures cannot constitute a deficiency in that life.

The problem with this reply is that attitudinal pleasure does not invariably produce desire. Consider some examples. Suppose a person tastes an artichoke for the first time, and enjoys it, but only because she has never tasted anything quite like it. She knows that the taste of the artichoke will not be novel in the future, and hence does not desire to taste another artichoke, despite having just enjoyed one. (It might be that she did not especially enjoy the taste of the artichoke—only its novelty.) Her attitudinal pleasure in the artichoke does not produce a desire for artichokes. Similarly, a person might fully enjoy living in the dormitory in his first year in university, but have no desire at all to live in the dormitory after this, counting the experience unsuitable for all but freshmen.

In other cases, an agent enjoys something but does not come to desire it because she believes it is bad. A parent might take pleasure in hearing that the school bully was beaten up by an older child, for example, and yet not want the child to be beaten up again. Someone might take pleasure in seeing a person trip and fall in a comical way, but wish no such thing upon anyone. Some people take pleasure in tasteless jokes, without wanting them to be repeated. They might even say, “please stop telling that joke.”

In other cases, an agent takes pleasure in some aspect of something, while taking pain in the thing as a whole. A person takes pleasure in seeing the Eiffel Tower, but dislikes the crowded Paris streets, and hence does not desire to see the Eiffel Tower again, knowing that this would require enduring the crowded Paris streets. A person enjoys the intoxication of cocaine, but does not desire to use cocaine again because of the painful withdrawal or side effects.

If it is possible to enjoy earthly things without desiring them, however, then earthly pleasures might make a significant positive net contribution to the intrinsic value of a life. If the life of the *saṃnyāsin* is devoid of such pleasures, then his life might be deficient as a result. It certainly seems uncontroversial to say that his life would be better for him if he could enjoy earthly things.

IX. The Saṃnyāsin and Earthly Pleasures Reconsidered

The Precluded Pursuits Objection can be avoided, but only by revising the *saṃnyāsin* ideal so that it is consistent with the *saṃnyāsin* enjoying the world. If it is possible to enjoy earthly things without desiring them, as I argued in the last section, then this revision to the *saṃnyāsin* ideal might be rather minor. The *saṃnyāsin* might just be one of those people who are able to enjoy earthly things without desiring them.

Indeed, the example of the *saṃnyāsin* fits well with many of the examples that I cited in the last section. In each of these cases, the agent enjoys something but does

not come to desire it on the basis of good reasons. The person who eats the artichoke does not desire to eat another artichoke because she knows that the novelty has worn off. The parent does not desire to see the bully beaten up again, because she knows that harm to children is bad. The tourist does not desire to see the Eiffel Tower because he knows that it entails enduring crowded Paris streets.

Likewise, the *saṃnyāsin* who has just enjoyed a visit from a friend does not desire another visit from his friend because he knows that the desire itself produces pain in the form of disappointment and rebirth. For this reason, he enjoys the visit from a friend, but does not desire another visit. He might enjoy other earthly things in the same way, and yet remain devoid of desires for earthly things more generally.

Indeed, a minority of passages from the Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads describe the *saṃnyāsin* as enjoying earthly things. *Maitreya Upaniṣad* 123, for example, says that the *saṃnyāsin* takes pleasure in the Vedāntas (that is, the Upaniṣads). *Maitreya Upaniṣad* 124 says that he enjoys being naked (*digambarasukho*). *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* 145 and 149 and *Nirvāṇa Upaniṣad* 226 and 228 say that the *saṃnyāsin* enjoys solitude (*ekārāmaḥ*) and deserted places (*viviktadeśa*). *Nāradaparivṛājaka Upaniṣad* 129 says that the *saṃnyāsin* takes joy in restraint (*niyamānanda*). Presumably the *saṃnyāsin* enjoys these earthly things without desiring them, and hence without postponing his attainment of *mokṣa*. If he can enjoy these things without desiring them, however, then there is little reason to think that he cannot enjoy other earthly things as well.

Other passages go much further, and say that the *saṃnyāsin* takes pleasure in everything that he encounters. *Nāradaparivṛājaka* 154, for example, says that the sage “is satisfied with what he attains by chance (*yadṛcchālābhasaṃtuṣṭa*).” *Bṛhad-Avadhūta Upaniṣad* 305 echoes this sentiment: “The yogin enjoys objects (*yogi viṣayān prabhūkte*), but is not defiled by merit or demerit (*na lipyate puṇapāpaiś*). [He remains] pure.” If the yogin enjoys things, but does not accrue merit or demerit, then he must enjoy things without desiring them. This means that he takes attitudinal pleasure in things without desiring them and, hence, without postponing his liberation. If he does this, then his life is not deficient because it is devoid of earthly pleasures.

One lingering question has to do with reconciling the conclusion that the *saṃnyāsin* enjoys earthly things with the repeated claims that he does not. One seemingly plausible explanation is that only a relatively experienced *saṃnyāsin* is able to enjoy things without desiring them. So it might be that the less experienced *saṃnyāsin* must go through a temporary period of avoiding pleasure altogether.

Those passages that claim that the *saṃnyāsin* takes no pleasure in earthly things, then, might be taken as directed toward the novice *saṃnyāsin*. A *saṃnyāsin* of this sort might avoid earthly pleasures without forsaking the good life, so long as he does not spend his entire life this way—that is, so long as he learns to enjoy earthly things without desiring them. The life of the more advanced *saṃnyāsin*, in turn, is intrinsically valuable for him at least in part because it includes earthly pleasures.²⁵ And if the *saṃnyāsin* enjoys earthly things, then the *saṃnyāsin* ideal is not subject to the Precluded Pleasures Objection.

Conclusion

The Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads characterize the life of the *saṃnyāsin* as devoid of earthly pleasures. A person who forsakes every earthly pleasure, however, seems to forsake the good life. There seem to be a number of promising replies to this objection. The most convincing reply insists that the *saṃnyāsin* does indeed enjoy earthly things, since he is able to enjoy earthly things without desiring them and, hence, without prolonging the painful cycle of rebirth.

Notes

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- 1 – Olivelle says, “the main features of the renunciatory life are by and large uniform across all the traditions”—and here he has Indian ascetic traditions more broadly in mind, including Buddhist and Jain (Olivelle 1992, p. 12).
- 2 – I quote an anonymous reviewer for *Philosophy East and West* here.
- 3 – I paraphrase an anonymous reviewer for *Philosophy East and West* here.
- 4 – Dasti focuses on Vātsyāyana’s *Nyāyabhāṣya*, but Udyottakara and others make the same point early in their commentaries to *Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.
- 5 – Feldman eventually rejects this standard conception of sensory pleasures, and defines sensory pleasures as attitudinal pleasures that take sensations as their objects (Feldman 2004, pp. 79–90). For the sake of simplicity in what follows, I adopt the more standard analysis.
- 6 – As I point out below, passages like these also seem to imply that the *saṃnyāsin* takes no attitudinal pleasure in earthly things.
- 7 – I consider the broader definition below.
- 8 – Apte’s definition is nearly identical. See note 14 below.
- 9 – The objects of attitudinal pleasure and pain (and other intentional mental states) are usually taken to be states of affairs. For the sake of simplicity and fluidity, many authors talk as if the objects of attitudinal pleasure and pain are things—like baseball games, elections, and so on. I follow this convention. Any such talk seems easily converted into talk of states of affairs.

- 10 – In each example, the preposition indicates the object-directed nature of the attitudinal pleasure and pain. I take pleasure *in* the baseball game. I am displeased *with* the election.
- 11 – Olivelle takes the claim here that the *saṃnyāsīn* is impartial toward “friends, and so on (*mitrādiṣu*)” to mean that he is impartial toward friend and enemy (Olivelle 1992, p. 212 n. 90). Compare *Bhagavadgītā* 6.9, which describes the *karmayogīn* (disciplined agent) as “impartial toward friend, acquaintance, and enemy (*suhṛnmitrāryudāsīna-madhyastha*).”
- 12 – I use the word ‘thing’ here in its broadest sense, to include objects, qualities, states of affairs, and so on.
- 13 – As I mentioned in note 11 above, *Bhagavadgītā* 6.9 elaborates the *karmayogīn*’s impartiality toward friend and enemy in terms of impartiality toward friend, acquaintance, and enemy. In other words, the *karmayogīn* is impartial to the opposites of friend and enemy and all that lies between these opposites.
- 14 – Apte’s definition is nearly identical: “indifferent in regard to opposite pairs of feelings (pleasure or pain), neither glad nor sorry” (Apte 2000, p. 554).
- 15 – The definition also implies that the distinction between sensory pleasure and pain and attitudinal pleasure and pain is at least implicit in the characterization of the *saṃnyāsīn* as *nīrdvandva*. The pleasure and pain toward which the *saṃnyāsīn* is impartial are sensory pleasures and pains, and his impartiality itself is the absence of attitudinal pleasure and pain toward the opposites. Apte’s definition of *nīrdvandva* has both implications as well (see note 14 above).
- 16 – If Brian K. Smith is at least partly right that the so-called “Post-Vedic” worldview, which counts the *saṃnyāsīn* in pursuit of *mokṣa* as the highest ideal, constitutes an inversion of the Vedic worldview, which counts the householder in pursuit of worldly prosperity as the highest ideal (Smith 1990), then it should hardly be surprising that texts written within the context of this tension reflect some skepticism about the rejection of earthly pleasure—the most basic form that the worldly prosperity of the householder takes.
- 17 – Roy Perrett cites this passage in reviewing the Cārvāka objection to ascetic ideals as well (Perrett 1998, p. 37). The translation is from Radhakrishnan and Moore 1973, p. 235.
- 18 – The sections from which these passages are drawn are identical in the two texts.
- 19 – This passage speaks of the *vanaprasthīn* (forest dweller) in particular, but the same question might be raised in the context of the *saṃnyāsīn*.
- 20 – Many make exceptions in cases of people who face life-threatening circumstances (*JU* 68–69; *NpU* 137–138, 162, 173, 175, 177; *BSU* 251, 263; *PpU* 280; *ŚU* 331–332), in the cases of people who have already attained desirelessness (*vairāgya*) (*NpU* 139, 149, 173; *PpU* 278), and so on.

- 21 – Perrett considers this reply to a similar objection (Perrett 1998, p. 40).
- 22 – The pleasure of the *saṃnyāsin* seems to be attitudinal pleasure, for at least two reasons. First, some of these verses clearly describe the *saṃnyāsin*'s pleasure in the *ātman* and/or *brahman* as object-directed. The *saṃnyāsin* takes pleasure *in* the *ātman* and/or *brahman*. Since attitudinal pleasure is object-directed, but sensory pleasure is not, this pleasure must be attitudinal pleasure. Second, the *saṃnyāsin* continues to experience this pleasure after he has left the body. If the pleasure of *ātman* and/or *brahman* is sensory pleasure, however, then the *saṃnyāsin* would not experience it without a body.
- 23 – On the so-called “crib test,” see Feldman 2004, pp. 9–10.
- 24 – Compare *Manusmṛti* 2.94, the source for *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* 142, and *Yogaśāstra* 2.7 and 2.8.
- 25 – For a similar suggestion in the Buddhist context, see Ganeri 2007, pp. 40–55.

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- *Āruṇi Upaniṣad* (see Schrader 1912)
- *Bhagavadgītā* (in Sadhale 2000)
- BhU *Bhikṣuka Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- *Bṛhad-Avadhūta Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- BSU *Bṛhat-Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- JU *Jābāla Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- KśU *Kaṭhaśruti Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- KU *Kuṇḍika Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- LSU *Laghu-Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- MU *Maitreya Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- NpU *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- *Nirvāṇa Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- PhU *Paramahaṃsa Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- PpU *Paramahaṃsaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- ŚU *Śāṭyāyanīya Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)
- SSS *Sarvasiddhāntasaṃgraha* (in Radhakrishnan and Moore 1973)

TaU *Turiyātītādvadhūta Upaniṣad* (in Schrader 1912)

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