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The *Vajracchedikā*, the Self, and the Path. Kamalaśīla on Logic and Scriptures

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Abstract: In the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, while commenting on a specific passage of the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Kamalaśīla presents a refutation of the Self (*ātman*). As is well known, the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* is one of the most important *sūtras* of the Buddhist Mahāyāna tradition and concerns the correct practice for those who proceed in the path of a Bodhisattva. In this article, I shall analyze a portion of Kamalaśīla’s refutation, based on a new critical edition and English translation of the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*. I will show how he takes the opportunity, while commenting on scriptures, to combine logic/epistemology and soteriology. He does this by including philosophical arguments in his explanation of the cultivation of insight, and accordingly within the spiritual path of a Bodhisattva. In the process, I shall also investigate sources containing disputes between Buddhists and Naiyāyikas (as well as Vaiśeṣikas) regarding the Self. These are evidently the background of Kamalaśīla’s refutation. In particular, he defends the so-called Buddhist non-apprehension argument against Uddyotakara’s doctrine of the perceptibility of the Self.

Keywords: Buddhist philosophy; Kamalaśīla; *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*; Self; scriptural commentary

1 Introduction

The refutation of a permanent Self (*ātman*), a unitary entity that constitutes the true nature of each individual and exists beyond his/her constituent parts, is a key subject in the Buddhist literature. Some of the arguments that are employed for this

I would like to thank Vincent Eltschinger, the discussant of my paper during the symposium “Kamalaśīla’s Significance in the Intellectual History of Buddhism”, and all the participants in it for their invaluable comments and feedback. My thanks go also to Hiroko Matsuoka for editing it with much care and attention and Francesco Sferra for his suggestions on some points. Needless to say, I gratefully acknowledge the contributions made to this paper by the two anonymous reviewers.

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purpose were, as was often the case, introduced at a certain point in the history of Buddhist thought and then elaborated on and adaptively reused in the following tradition.

In the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, Kamalaśīla¹ presents such a refutation while commenting on a specific passage of the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*.² As is well known, the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* is an influential work within the *Prajñāpāramitā* (“Perfection of Insight”) corpus and one of the most important *sūtras* of the Buddhist Mahāyāna tradition.³ The work is shaped as a dialogue between the Bhagavat and Subhūti regarding the correct practice for those who proceed in the Bodhisattva path. In particular, the passage under scrutiny here suggests that a Bodhisattva should get rid of the notions (*saṃjñā*) of being (*sattva*), soul (*jīva*), *puḍgala*, and Self.⁴

As we shall see, Kamalaśīla provides his audience an outline of (some of the) arguments to this aim that are (already)⁵ found, and discussed in greater detail, in his *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*. The related chapter there is the “Examination of the Self that is Conceived of by the Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas” (*Naiyāyikavaiśeṣikaparikalpītātmaparīkṣā*), where he and Śāntarakṣita address and criticize those Brahmanical traditions. Unless otherwise indicated, when I mention the *Tattvasaṃgraha* or the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* here, I am referring to that chapter.

In the following, I shall analyze a portion of Kamalaśīla’s refutation, based on a new critical edition and English translation of the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*.⁶ In this

1 For general information on Kamalaśīla’s life and works, see the Introduction to this volume and bibliography therein.

2 With reference to the commentaries on the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* by Asaṅga, Vasubandhu and Kamalaśīla as well as the question of the reliance of the latter on the other two, see the pioneering work by Tucci (1956: 5–171).

3 For a general account of the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* and the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature in general, see Zacchetti 2015; 2021.

4 Even though the notion of Self is listed with the others elsewhere in the *sūtra* (and can be regarded as implied when they are referred to), of the several versions of the text, the reading *ātmasaṃjñā* in this specific passage is found only in Pargiter 1916 (as well as in Conze 1957, see n. 14). The commentary appears to suggest that the version of the *sūtra* commented upon by Kamalaśīla did not contain this reading, see § 2.

5 On a relative chronology of individual works by Kamalaśīla, see Kellner’s article in this volume.

6 The **Vajracchedikāṭīkā* has already been edited once by Tenzin (1994). Here, I propose a new critical edition of the relevant sections, based on all the available editions and an English translation. This is arguably the first scholarly annotated English translation of the text that is based on a critical edition. Since the edition is my original work, I shall present it in the text body and provide significant variants in the footnotes. As for other Sanskrit or Tibetan passages, whose editions are not mine, or not entirely mine, I will refer to the original text in the footnotes only. I shall use the asterisk to signal my reconstruction of Sanskrit words as well as portions of the text. Depending on the circumstances, I shall refer to the Sanskrit words either with the lemmas or in their declined/conjugated form.

analysis, I will show how he takes the opportunity, while commenting on scriptures, to combine logic/epistemology and soteriology. He does this by including philosophical arguments in his explanation of the cultivation of insight (*prajñā*) (and in particular those associated with the insight born of reflection [*cintāmayī prajñā*]⁷) and accordingly within the spiritual path of a Bodhisattva. Most of those argumentations are also found in the *Pañjikā*.

In the process, I shall also investigate sources containing disputes between Buddhists and Naiyāyikas (as well as Vaiśeṣikas) regarding the Self. These are evidently the background of Kamalaśīla's refutation of the Self. In particular, he defends the Buddhist non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*) argument⁸ against Uddyotakara's doctrine of the perceptibility of the Self. This proves to be a rather central argument in the medieval debate on the *ātman*, being echoed in works by coeval and subsequent authors such as Samantabhadra (ca. mid-9th century) and Jitāri (ca. 940–1000 or late 10th to early 11th cent.).⁹

7 On the role of the *cintāmayī prajñā* in Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākramas*, see Kellner 2020. For a general review of *cintāmayī prajñā*, see Eltschinger 2010; Eltschinger 2014: 318–328. On the characterization of *cintāmayī prajñā* in *Bhāvanākrama* I, see *tataś cintāmayyā prajñayā nītaneyārthatayā nirvedhayati | tataś tayā niścītya bhūtam arthaṃ bhāvayen nābhūtam | anyathā hi viparītasīyāpi bhāvanād vicikītsāyās cāvyaṣṭāgamāt samyagjñānodayo na syāt | tataś ca vyarthaiva bhāvanā syāt | yathā tīrthikānām | uktaṃ ca bhagavatā – nairātmyadharmān yaśi pratyavekṣate tān pratyavekṣya yaśi bhāvayeta | sa hetu nirvāṇaphalasya prāptaye yo anyahetu na sa bhōti sāntaye* [*Samādhīrājasūtra* 9. 37] || *iti | tasmāc cintāmayyā prajñayā yuktyāgamābhyām pratyavekṣya bhūtameva vastusvarūpaṃ bhāvanīyam* | (*Bhāvanākrama* I, ed. pp. 9, 17–10, 6) “Afterwards, through the insight born of reflection, he penetrates [the meaning of the scriptures] as being explicit or implicit. Then, having ascertained through that, he can meditate on the real meaning, not the false one. For, otherwise, because one also meditates on what is false and the doubt is not removed, there cannot be the arising of correct knowledge. And, therefore, the mental cultivation would be completely purposeless, like [that] of the non-Buddhists. And this is said by the Bhagavat [in the *Samādhīrājasūtra*]: ‘If he considers the selfless *dharma*s, if, having considered them, he meditates on them, this is the cause for the attainment of the fruit that is *nirvāṇa*; another cause does not [lead] to peace.’ Therefore, having investigated by means of the wisdom born of insight through reasoning and scriptures, one must mentally cultivate verily the real nature of things.”

8 In general terms, here we are talking about an argument that is used to establish that a thing is not there because one does not apprehend any evidence of it. In this case, I am referring specifically to Vasubandhu's use of absence of perception of the Self as proof of its inexistence in the Pudgalavādapratīṣedha of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Taber (2012: 106–111) discusses this and calls it an *anupalabdhi* argument and an *argumentum ex silentio*. It is called also an *argumentum ad ignorantiam* by Kellner/Taber (2014: 721), who discuss the entire argumentative strategy of the chapter (2014: 719–727). Given the fact that both Latin terms are associated with a logical fallacy, I prefer a less loaded definition such as “non-apprehension argument.” Taber (2012: 107) calls this also the *anupalabdhi* argument.

9 On this, see Saccone/Szántó 2023: 69–89. Among other scholars, Kellner/Taber (2014: 727) mention the case of the *Yuktīdīpikā*.

2 The *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*

The portion of the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*¹⁰ commented on by Kamalaśīla reads as follows:

And, having led countless beings to the *parinirvāṇa*¹¹ in this way,¹² there is no being that has been led to the *parinirvāṇa* [by me, a Bodhisattva]. What is the reason for that? If, O Subhūti, the notion of being occurs for a Bodhisattva, he cannot be called a “Bodhisattva.” What is the reason for that? O Subhūti, that very Bodhisattva for whom the notion of being, or the notion of soul, or the notion of *pudgala* would occur cannot be called a Bodhisattva.¹³

The mention of the Self in the list of types of notions that should not occur for a Bodhisattva is found only in Pargiter 1916 (ed. p. 180, 9), where one finds the variant *ātmasaṃjñā* as the first item.¹⁴ This is missing from the Tibetan translation (D 122a, 1),

¹⁰ The text presented in the edition by Harrison/Watanabe (2006), which combines the manuscript from the Bamiyan area (Afghanistan) found in the Schøyen collection and the Gilgit manuscript, gives an overall picture of the *Vajracchedikā* as it was circulating around the 6th cent. in the Greater Gandhāra (Pakistan/Afghanistan). Of all the versions, this could be, even though only chronologically, the version of the text closest to that available to Kamalaśīla. This is, however, very difficult to determine at this stage of the research. I have found it also useful to refer to Pargiter 1916, which is an edition of a manuscript that was found in Eastern Turkestan (1900), dating to perhaps between the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th and fairly close to the Chinese translation by Kumārajīva (ca. 401 CE).

¹¹ I am translating according to (what I believe it is) the most likely meaning of the sentence. I am aware that the gerund and the main passive clause do not have the same subject. At this stage, I shall not suggest possible other variants for/emendations to the text.

¹² I am translating based on the assumption that the *ca* is out of sequence (*bhinnakrama*). Another possibility could be seeing it as *evamaparimāṇāṃś ca* “and [having led beings] that are countless in such a way [to the *parinirvāṇa*].” The Tibetan translation does not seem to confirm it.

¹³ See *evam aparimāṇāṃś ca satvān parinirvāpayitvā* [*parinirvāpayitvā* Pargiter 1916; *parinirvāpya* Conze 1957, Max Müller 1881; *parinirvāpayitavyāḥ* Harrison/Watanabe 2006] *na* [*na* Pargiter 1916, Conze 1957, Max Müller 1881; *na ca* Harrison/Watanabe 2006] *kaścit satvaḥ parinirvāpito bhavati | tat kasmād dhetoḥ | sacet subhūte bodhisatvasya satvasaṃjñā pravartate na sa bodhisatva iti vaktavyaḥ | tat kasya hetoḥ | na sa subhūte bodhisatvo vaktavyo yasya satvasaṃjñā pravarteta jīvasaṃjñā vā pudgalasaṃjñā vā pravarteta |* (*Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, ed. Harrison/Watanabe 2006 p. 114, 4–8). The text presented here is the one found in Harrison/Watanabe 2006 with slight changes based on the variants of other editions; only the latter are indicated.

¹⁴ It is also found in Conze 1957, where it is presented as based on Pargiter 1916 and other sources (see Conze 1957: 29 n. c). Conze’s is not the edition of a specific manuscript, but has Max Müller 1881 as its basis and compares that edition mostly with the Tibetan translation (the same used by Max Müller) as found in the bilingual block-print kept at the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London (Conze 1957: 1–6; Harrison/Watanabe 2006: 92). At times, Conze also makes emendations based on earlier editions, Pargiter 1916 being one of them. Matsuoka (2022 personal communication) notes that *ātmasaṃjñā* 我想 appears in the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*

which was arguably based on a text closer to the one circulating in Kamalaśīla's time and environment.¹⁵ Moreover, in his commentary on the *sūtra*, our author himself does not mention **ātmasaṃjñā* as the first item and refers only to the three notions of being, soul, and *pudgala* (which is alluded to by *la sogs pa*), with the three in this precise order.

dgongs pa ni 'di yin te | blo gros ngan pa dag gis¹⁶ phung¹⁷ po¹⁸ las gzhan pa nang na¹⁹ bya ba dang²⁰ longs spyod²¹ gzhi²² bo²³ byed pa'i skyes bu zhig yod par yongs su brtags nas sems can dang srog la²⁴ sogs²⁵ pa'i sgrar tha snyad 'dogs pa [...] | (**Vajracchedikāṭikā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

The following is the intended meaning: Unintelligent (**kumati*) people²⁶ imagine that a person (**puruṣa*), distinct from the five *skandhas* and the locus of internal activities and experiences exists. Therefore, [they] verbally use [this] with the words: being (**sattva*), soul (**jīva*), and [*pudgala*].

Accordingly, I have chosen not to consider “*ātmasaṃjñā*” part of the original text of the *sūtra* as known to Kamalaśīla. Regardless, lists including the term are found elsewhere in the *Vajracchedikā* (in its different versions),²⁷ and a reference to the *ātman* is implied by Kamalaśīla when he talks about a person who is the locus of internal activities and who experiences the fruit of past actions. Arguably, Kamalaśīla did have in mind the notion of *ātman* as included in the list.

translations by Kumārajīva, Paramārtha, and Yijings. See Kumārajīva, T. 235 749a10–11 須菩提，若菩薩有 [1] 我相、[4] 人相、[2] 眾生相、[3] 壽者相，即非菩薩；Paramārtha, T. 236b 757b26–27 = T. 237 762b8–9 何以故？須菩提，一切菩薩無 [1] 我想、[2] 眾生想、[4] 壽者想、[3] 受者想；Yijing, T. 239 772a19–20 所以者何？由有 [1] 我想、[2] 眾生想、[3] 壽者想，更求 [4] 趣想故。

15 The *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* and the **Vajracchedikāṭikā* were translated in Tibet under the guidance of the same translator at about the beginning of the 9th century. The *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* was translated by Śilendrabodhi and Ye śes sde (D 132b, 7). The **Vajracchedikāṭikā* was translated by Jinamitra, Mañjuśrī, and Ye śes sde (D 267a, 7). According to the tradition, Kamalaśīla lived and died in Tibet around that time. The version of the *sūtra* that was translated into Tibetan was arguably very close to (if not the same as) the one known by him.

16 *gis* P N G T] *gi* D.

17 *phung* P N G T] *yang de ni phung* D.

18 *po* P N G T] *por* D.

19 *na* D T] *na* | P N G.

20 *dang* P N G] *dang* | D T.

21 *spyod* P D N G] *spyod kyi* T.

22 *gzhi* P N G] *bzhi* D T.

23 *bo* em.] *po* P D N G T.

24 *srog la* P D N T] *srog la srog la* G.

25 *sogs* P D N G] *stsogs* T.

26 T has here a gloss: *mu stegs glang po che*.

27 See, for example, Harrison/Watanabe 2006: 116, 11–12.

3 Kamalaśīla's **Vajracchedikāṭikā* on the Refutation of the Self

In commenting on the first part of this passage of the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Kamalaśīla connects it (and what he is about to say) to his intention of showing that the investigation of the ultimate unreality of all beings is an essential part of the Bodhisattva path.

*da 'dir*²⁸ *rnal 'byor la*²⁹ *snyoms par 'jug pas ji ltar bsgrub*³⁰ *par bya ba de bstan pa'i phyir | de ltar zhes bya ba la sogs*³¹ *pa gsungs so || de ltar kun rdzob tu sems can thams cad*³² *yongs su mya ngan las 'das*³³ *kyang byang chub sems dpa' ji ltar don dam par sems can gang yang dmigs par mi 'gyur te | de med pa'i phyir ro zhes bya*³⁴ *de ltar rnal 'byor la snyoms par 'jug pas so sor brtag*³⁵ *par bya'o*³⁶ *|| langs nas*³⁷ *'di snyam du don dam par bdag gis sems can gang yang yongs su mya ngan las 'das*³⁸ *par gyur pa med do snyam du sems bskyed pa gang yin pa*³⁹ *'dis ni zab pa bstan la | don dam pa'i byang chub kyi sems kyang bstan to || snga mas*⁴⁰ *ni kun rdzob bo || (*Vajracchedikāṭikā, ed. Saccone forthcoming)*

Now, in order to teach how [a Bodhisattva] should practice (*bsgrub par bya ba*/**pratipattavyam*) in this regard according to the complete yogic attainment (**yogasamāpatti*),⁴¹ [the Bhagavat] says: “[And, having led countless beings to the *parinirvāṇa*] in this way” and so on. How is it that, even though, according to conventional truth, all beings are [led] to perfect awakening in this way, ultimately, a Bodhisattva cannot perceive beings at all? “Because [beings] do not exist” (**iti*) like this it should be investigated according to the complete yogic attainment. Having emerged [from meditation (*samādheḥ*)] (*langs nas*/**vyutthāya*), through this (**anena*) that is the arising of the thought [of the awakening] (*sems bskyed pa*/**cittotpāda*) thinking (*snyam du*) “in this way (*'di snyam du*/**evam*), ultimately, there is no being whatsoever that I led to perfect awakening (*yongs su mya ngan las 'das par gyur pa*/**parinirvṛta 'parinirvāpita*)”, the profound

28 'dir T] ni ji ltar P D N G.

29 rnal 'byor la D T] rnal 'byor P N G.

30 bsgrub P D N G] bgrubs T.

31 la sogs P D N G] las stsogs T.

32 thams cad P D N G] tshang myed pa T.

33 'das P D N G] bzlas T.

34 bya P N G T] bya | D.

35 brtag P D N G] brtags T.

36 bya'o P D N G] bya ste T

37 langs nas P D N G] des na langs nas T.

38 'das P D N G] bzlas T.

39 gang yin pa P D N G] deest T.

40 mas P D N G] ma T.

41 While summarizing Vasubandhu's commentary, Tucci (1956: 132) states that *pratipattavyam*, intending what should be practiced, refers to *yogasamāpatti*. After that (1956: 133), *yogasamāpatti* is defined as *nirvikalpasamādhi*.

[Dharma] is taught and also the absolute thought of the awakening (*don dam pa'i byang chub kyis sems/*paramārbodhicitta*) is taught. However, the conventional [thought of the awakening (**saṃvṛtibodhicitta*)] [arises] before (*snga mas/*pūrveṇa*) [that].

Kamalaśīla's first target are the Vātsīputrīyas and their view of the *pudgala*,⁴² which he briefly refutes:

[...] *dang | gang dag yang gang zag brjod du mi rung bar 'dod pa de dag gi yang de ni⁴³ phung por gtogs pa'i chos dang mtshan nyid mi⁴⁴ 'dra bar khas blangs pa'i phyir shugs kyis⁴⁵ don gzhan pa⁴⁶ kho nar khas blangs pa yin⁴⁷ te | thams cad kyang brjod du mi rung bar thal bar 'gyur ba'i phyir dngos po ni nam yang⁴⁸ brjod du mi⁴⁹ rung ba mi srid do || de ni sgrub par byed⁵⁰ pa'i tshad ma med pa'i phyir⁵¹ dang | gnod pa can⁵² yod pa'i phyir der lta⁵³ ba'i byang chub sems dpa' ni phyin ci log la mngon par zhen pas phyin ci log kho nar⁵⁴ 'gyur ro || gang phyin ci log tu gyur⁵⁵ pa de don dam⁵⁶ par⁵⁷ byang chub sems dpa⁵⁸ ji ltar 'gyur |* (**Vajracchedikāṭikā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

[...] Moreover, also those who admit the *pudgala* as inexpressible acknowledge that as not the same (*mtshan nyid mi 'dra ba/*vilakṣaṇa*) as the *dharmas* which are related to the *skandhas*. Therefore, by implication (*shugs kyis/*sāmarthyāt*), they [must] accept it as indeed another object [different from the *skandhas*]. [And] never can an entity (**vastu*) be [admitted as] inexpressible, because of the undesirable consequence that also every single thing would be inexpressible. As for this [**pudgala*], due to the lack of positive proof (**sādhakapramāṇa*) and the presence of negative proof (**bādhaka[pramāṇa]*), a Bodhisattva who has wrong views (*lta ba/*drṣṭi*) regarding it must be mistaken indeed, due to the attachment to erroneous notions. And how can he who is mistaken ultimately be a Bodhisattva?

42 For a comprehensive contribution on the *pudgalavāda*, see Priestley 1999. Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla devote entire chapters in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* to the analysis of the views of the Vātsīputrīyas. For a new edition and translation of the Vātsīputrīyātmaparīkṣā, see Sferra 2023.

43 *de ni* P D N G] *de'i mthus* T.

44 *mtshan nyid mi* P D N G] *mi (myi)* T.

45 *pa'i phyir shugs kyis* P D N G] *pas* T.

46 *pa* P D N G] *deest* T.

47 *khas blangs pa yin* P D N G] *rtogs* T.

48 *dngos po ni nam yang* P D N G] *deest* T.

49 *mi* P D N G] *ni* T.

50 *ni sgrub par byed* P D N G] *yang bsgrub* T.

51 *med pa'i phyir* P D N G] *myed (med) pa* T.

52 *can* em.] *can yang* P D N G; *deest* T.

53 *der lta* P D N G] *ro // de ltar* T.

54 *kho nar* P D N G] *nyid du* T.

55 *tu gyur* P D N G] *deest* T.

56 *dam* P D N G] *dam pa* T.

57 *par* em.] *pa'i* P D N G T.

58 *dpa' D]* *dpar* P N G.

Following this, Kamalaśīla engages in criticism of the Self (*ātman*). He starts by denying the validity of inference as positive proof (*sādhakapramāṇa*) for its existence. The opponents argue that bondage, liberation, connection between action and its fruits, memory, and recognition, all involve the logical necessity of being related to one and the same subject.⁵⁹ Kamalaśīla's response to this is that all those things can be explained simply by admitting a single *saṃtāna*, which is a chain of instants causing each other and thus connected as a single locus of properties. However, one never needs to admit an entity with the characteristics that the Naiyāyikas attribute to the Self, which they consider unitary and eternal.

*'di ltar – gang gi tshe rgyud gang la ma rig pa la sogs⁶⁰ pa rgyu dang 'bras bur gyur pa dag rgyun mi 'chad par rgyun du 'byung ba de'i tshe na ni⁶¹ de la bcings pa zhes 'dogs | yang de⁶² nyid la thos pa⁶³ la sogs pa'i rim gyis 'phags pa'i lam skyes⁶⁴ nas⁶⁵ ma rig pa la sogs pa 'gags pas gnas gyur pa la thar pa zhes 'dogs kyi | de gnyis don dam par⁶⁶ rtag pa gcig pu'i dngos po'i yul can⁶⁷ du grub pa ni med de | 'jig rten pa'i⁶⁸ bcings pa dang thar pa yang de dang⁶⁹ 'dra ba'i phyir ro || (*Vajracchedikāṭīkā, ed. Saccone forthcoming)*

To explain: When, and for that mental continuum in which, nescience and the other [causes (*nidāna*) of the *pratītyasamutpāda*] – which are cause and effect (*rgyu dang 'bras bur gyur pa dag/*kāryakāraṇabhūtaḥ*), one of the other, and] occur uninterruptedly (*rgyun mi 'chad par*) and continuously (*rgyun du*) – arise, there is the conventional designation (*'dogs/*prajñapti*) “bondage.” Moreover, precisely regarding that very [mental continuum] there is the conventional designation “liberation” when there is the fundamental transformation (*gnas gyur pa/*āśrayaparivṛtti*) due to the cessation of nescience and the other [causes of the *pratītyasamutpāda*], because of the arising of the noble path through the succession of [insight born of] listening, etc. However, ultimately, both of these two[, bondage and liberation,] do not exist as being established as having a locus (*yu*) that is an entity which is an eternal and single [Self], since also the mundane bondage and liberation are similar to those[, that is, they are not established as having that kind of locus].

Similar statements are found in the *Karmaphalasambandhaparīkṣā* of the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*:

59 On this portion of the text, see Saccone (forthcoming).

60 *la sogs* P D N G] *las stsogs* T.

61 *na ni* P D N G] | T.

62 | *yang de* P D N G] *pa yang 'di* T.

63 *thos pa* P N G T] *thob pa* D.

64 *skyes* P N G] *skye* D T.

65 *nas* D T] *na* P N G.

66 *par* em.] *pa* P D N G T.

67 *can* P D N G] *deest* T.

68 *pa'i* P D N G] *gyi* T.

69 *dang* P D N G] *deest* T.

In no cases for us are bondage and liberation established as having a unitary Self (*puruṣa*) as [their] locus, because [for us] no one is proved as being bound and being liberated; it is only the karmic factors[, which are the causes belonging to the *pratīyasamutpāda*,] starting with nescience and ending with oldness and death, insofar as they are the cause of the arising of suffering, that are commonly designated and conceived of (*vyavahriyante*) as “bondage.” [...] And when, due to the knowledge of true reality, those [causes belonging to the *pratīyasamutpāda*], starting with nescience, cease, that purity of cognition [arising at that point] is called “liberation.”⁷⁰

4 Kamalaśīla’s Opponent in the **Vajracchedikāṭikā*

Following this, Kamalaśīla discusses the possibility of direct perception being positive proof for establishing the Self. In order to do so, he introduces an opponent (most likely Uddyotakara) who maintains that the Self is perceived through the mental perception that is the cognition “I.” He says:

*rjes su dpag pas bdag de ma grub tu chug*⁷¹ *kyang* | *'on kyang*⁷² *ngar*⁷³ *shes pa'i mngon sum gyi yul yin pa'i phyir*⁷⁴ *mngon sum gyis bdag grub po zhe na*⁷⁵ | (**Vajracchedikāṭikā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

[Objection by Uddyotakara:] Let this Self not be established through inference. However, the Self is established through direct perception, because it is the object of the [mental] perception that is the cognition “I” (*ngar shes pa/*ahaṃ [iti] [vi]jñānam*).

This passage is very similar to one found in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*. There, it is presented as the thought of Uddyotakara, Bhāvivikta and other Naiyāyikas:⁷⁶

For they say as follows: “The Self is established indeed through direct perception. To explain: The cognition ‘I’ that is independent from the memory of a relationship between logical reason (*liṅga*) and *probandum* (*liṅgin*) [(i.e., inference)] is directly perceived like the cognition of visual

⁷⁰ *na hi kvacid asmākam ekapuruṣādhikaraṇau bandhamokṣau prasiddhau, kasyacid badhyamānasya mucyamānasya cāsiddheḥ | kevalam avidyādayaḥ saṃskārā jarāmaraṇaparyantā duḥkhotpādahetutayā “bandhaḥ” iti vyavahriyante | [...] teṣāṃ cāvidyādīnāṃ tattvajñānād vigatau satyāṃ yā nirmalatā dhiyaḥ sā nirmuktir ity ucyate | (Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha 543, ed. p. 229, 21–24, p. 230, 6–7).*

⁷¹ *chug* P D N G] *zin* T.

⁷² *'on kyang* P D N G] *deest* T.

⁷³ *ngar* P N G T] *sngar* D.

⁷⁴ *pa'i phyir* P D N G] *pas* T.

⁷⁵ *zhe na* P D N G] *bya ba* T.

⁷⁶ See [...] *punar apy uddyotakarabhāviviktāder matam āsaṅkate | (Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha 212, ed. p. 115, 17).*

forms, etc. However, this [cognition] does not have visual forms, etc., as [its] object, since it has a distinct image from those [sense] cognitions. Therefore, [its] object is indeed [something] different.”⁷⁷

5 Uddyotakara’s Original Quotation and Its Context

In the above two works, Kamalaśīla is arguably referring to a passage by Uddyotakara in the *Nyāyavārttika*:

If [it is argued that] there is no Self, since it is not apprehended, [it will be answered that] in this case, too, there is a defect in the thesis and in the example, as before. That [logical reason, i.e.,] “since it is not apprehended[,]” is also illogical. That non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*), too, is unestablished, because the Self is the object of *pramāṇas*, such as direct perception. First of all, the Self is apprehended through direct perception. How [is it apprehended] through direct perception? The cognition “I” that is independent of a recollection of a relationship between the inferential mark and the *probandum* [i.e., inference] and conforms to the different natures of the objects is direct perception, exactly like the cognition of visual forms, etc.⁷⁸

In this passage, Uddyotakara (who elsewhere follows also the common standpoint of the Self as being inferred)⁷⁹ argues for the *ātman*’s perceptibility through the cognition “I.” He aims to counter the Buddhist non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*)

77 [Jp 49r3] *te hy evam āhuḥ – pratyakṣata evātmā siddhaḥ | tathā hi – liṅgaliṅgi-saṃbandhasmṛtyanapekṣam aham iti jñānaṃ rūpādijñānavat pratyakṣam | asya ca na rūpādir viṣayaḥ, tadvijñānabhinnapratiḥāsavāt* (Jp] °*pratiḥāsavāt* ed.) | *tasmād anya eva viṣaya iti ||* (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 212, ed. p. 115, 17–20).

78 *nāsty ātmānupalabdher iti cet | atrāpi pratijñādoṣo dṛṣṭāntadoṣaś ca pūrvavat | yad apy anupalabdher iti tad apy ayuktam | sāpy anupalabdhir asiddhā pratyakṣādipramāṇaviṣayatvād ātmanaḥ | pratyakṣeṇa tāvad ātmopalabhyate | katham pratyakṣeṇa? liṅgaliṅgisambandhasmṛtyanapekṣam viṣayasvabhāvabhedānuvidhāy aham iti vijñānaṃ rūpādivijñānavat pratyakṣam |* (*Nyāyavārttika ad* 3.1.1, ed. p. 323, 12–15).

79 The Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas generally (but not always) admit that the Self cannot be perceived; it must be inferred. While Uddyotakara and Udayana (who followed him) can be considered upholders of the view of the perceptibility of the Self, this cannot be stated (except for the yogins) with regards to thinkers like Vātsyāyana and Vācaspati Mīśra. See, for example, *tatrātmā tāvat pratyakṣato na grhyate | sa kim āptopadeśamātrād eva pratipadyata iti? nety ucyate | anumānā ca pratipattavya iti | katham? icchādveṣaprayatnasukhaduḥkhajñānāny ātmano liṅgam iti ||* (*Nyāyabhāṣya ad Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.10, ed. p. 16, 1–3). “Among these, first of all, the Self is not apprehended through direct perception. Is it cognized based merely on the teaching of an authoritative person? It will be responded ‘no’. ‘And it must be cognized also based on an inference.’ How? Desire, aversion, effort, pleasure, pain and cognition are the inferential mark of the Self.” A similar concept is expressed in *Nyāyavārttika ad* 1.1.10. With regard to this subject, see Watson 2006: 131–132, n. 25.

argument, namely, that the Self does not exist because it is not apprehended (*anupalabdeḥ*). The *anupalabdhi* argument is the main argument against the Self with which Uddyotakara takes issue, so perhaps it was one of the most relevant at his time (Taber 2012: 107). Moreover, as Uddyotakara adds, the Self is the only feasible object of this sense of “I” (*ahaṃkāra*), because this cannot possibly have something unreal such as the aggregates (*rūpādi*) as its object.⁸⁰ The latter is an explicit attack directed towards the Buddhists.

6 The Non-Apprehension Argument

The argument to which Uddyotakara is referring (and that we called non-apprehension argument) is arguably the one upheld by Vasubandhu in the *Pudgalavādapraṭiśedha* of his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. There, Vasubandhu introduces an opponent, likely a Vaiśeṣika, who argues that the *ātman* is established as the locus of those qualities that are memory and so on.⁸¹ Later, the same opponent asks about the aim of actions, if there is no Self.⁸² Vasubandhu answers that the aim includes aspirations such as “may I achieve happiness,”⁸³ and that with “I” people mean the object of the sense of “I” (*ahaṃkāra*). Moreover, he argues, the aggregates (*skandhas*) are the real object (*viśaya*) of the notion of individuality, since people think of their

⁸⁰ *atha manyase – asty ayam ahaṃpratyayaḥ, na punar asyātmā viśayaḥ, hanta tarhi nirdiśyatām viśayaḥ | rūpādir viśaya iti cet | atha manyase – rūpādaya evāhaṃkārasya viśayaḥ | tathā cuktam ahaṃkāralambanotpattinimittatvād ātmety ucyata iti | tan na, praṭiśedhād asattvāc ca |* (*Nyāyavārttika ad 3.1.1*, ed. p. 323, 17–20). “If you think that there is indeed this cognition ‘I,’ but that its object is not the Self, then, pray, show [its] object! If [it is argued that] the aggregates are the object, [then it will be answered as follows]. If you think that just the aggregates are the object of the sense of ‘I’ – and as it is said: ‘[They are] called the Self because they are the cause of the arising of the object-support of the sense of “I” – [it will be responded:] It is not possible. This is because [they] are denied and are not real.” Following the *Tātparyāṭīkā*, Watson (2006: 127–128 n. 14) translates *ālambana* in *ahaṃkāralambanotpattinimittatvāt* as “cognition [of the notion ‘I’].”

⁸¹ See *avaśyam ātmābhyupagantavyaḥ, smṛtyādīnām guṇapadārthatvāt, tasya cāvaśyaṃ dravyāśritatvāt, teṣāṃ cānyāśrayāyogād iti cet | na |* (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* *Pudgalavādapraṭiśedha*, ed. p. 148, 11–16). “[An opponent could argue:] (*iti ced*) ‘The Self must be necessarily admitted, (i) because memory and so on are [included in] the category of qualities, (ii) because that [category of qualities] necessarily depends on a substance, and (iii) because for those [(i.e., memory and so on)] another substratum[, different from the Self, would] be illogical.’ [It would be answered:] ‘No.’”

⁸² See *ātmany asati kimarthaḥ karmārambhaḥ |* (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* *Pudgalavādapraṭiśedha*, ed. p. 150, 1).

⁸³ See *ahaṃ sukhī syām ahaṃ duḥkhī na syām ity evamarthaḥ |* (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* *Pudgalavādapraṭiśedha*, ed. p. 150, 2).

selves as identical with them. They think “I am fat,” “I am thin,” etc., and these attributes do not relate to the Self. Accordingly, the notion of individuality has only the aggregates as its object:

What is this “I”? [That] which is the object of this sense of “I.” What is the object of this sense of “I”? [It] has the aggregates as its object. How does one know? Due to the attachment to those [i.e., the aggregates] and the co-referentiality with cognitions, such as “fair.” This sense of “I” is [commonly] observed as being co-referent with cognitions such as “fair” [in the following way:] “I am fair,” “I am dark,” “I am fat,” “I am thin,” “I am old,” “I am young.” And these are not admitted as aspects of the Self. For this reason, too, one knows this [sense of “I”] with reference to the aggregates[, not the Self].⁸⁴

Therefore, when thinking “I,” one does not perceive the Self, but the aggregates. There is a non-perception of the Self when apprehending the aggregates. Accordingly, (for Vasubandhu, at least)⁸⁵ it follows that there is no Self.

7 Kamalaśīla’s Immediate Answer to Uddyotakara (i): the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*

In response to the objection advanced by the opponent in the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, Kamalaśīla says:

*de yang rigs pa ma yin te | der⁸⁶ 'khrul pa'i phyir⁸⁷ dang | rnam par rtog pa dang bcas pa'i phyir
ngar⁸⁸ shes pa mngon sum nyid du mi 'grub pa'i phyir ro || ngar shes pa la⁸⁹ snang ba na gang gis
na mngon sum du 'gyur ba ji ltar⁹⁰ *na⁹¹ rang gi grub pa'i mtha' las brtags pa lta bu⁹² bdag⁹³ gcig⁹⁴*

84 *ko 'sāv ahaṃ nāma | yadvīṣayo 'yam ahaṃkāraḥ | kiṃvīṣayo 'yam ahaṃkāraḥ | skandhaviṣayaḥ | kathaṃ jñāyate | teṣu snehād gaurādibuddhibhiḥ sāmānādhikarāṇyāc ca | gauro 'ham ahaṃ śyāmaḥ, sthūlo 'ham ahaṃ kṛśaḥ, jīrṇo 'ham ahaṃ yuveti gaurādibuddhibhiḥ sāmānādhikaraṇo 'yam ahaṃkāro dṛśyate | na cātmana ete prakārā iśyante | tasmād api skandheṣv ayam iti gamyate | (Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, Puḍgalavādapraṭiśedha, ed. p. 150, 3–11).*

85 As noted in Kellner/Taber (2014, 729–732), Dharmakīrti would never consider the *anupalabdhi* argument as proof of the non-existence of the Self in all cases and without any doubt.

86 *te | der P D N G] no | de la ni ngar shes pa'i mngon sum mi (myi) 'grub ste | T.*

87 *pa'i phyir P D N G] pa T.*

88 *ngar P N G] ro || ngar T; dang D.*

89 *mngon sum nyid du mi 'grub pa'i phyir ro || ngar shes pa la P D N G] deest T.*

90 *gang gis na mngon sum du 'gyur ba ji ltar P D N G] deest T.*

91 *na D] dang P N G; deest T.*

92 *lta bu P D N G] ji lta bu T.*

93 *bdag P D N G] bzhin du bdag T.*

94 *gcig D] cig P N G T.*

*pu*⁹⁵ *rtag pa khyab pa ni mi dmigs so*⁹⁶ || *gdon mi za bar de ltar shes par bya'o* || (**Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

This is also not tenable, because the cognition “I” is not established as being direct perception, since there is an error regarding the [*ātman*], and since it is conceptual. One should necessarily recognize that, if [the Self must] manifest in the cognition “I” (*ngar shes pa la snang ba na*), by virtue of which fact it could be [admitted as] direct perception, a Self such as [that which] is conceived based on their *siddhānta* [by the Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas, i.e.,] unitary, permanent, and all-pervading, is not perceived.

His answer is based on two arguments:

The cognition “I” cannot be admitted as a direct perception having the Self as its object:

- (i) Since it is erroneous (and this contradicts the definition of perception of both traditions), and
- (ii) since it is conceptual (but this – by principle – contradicts only the Buddhists’ view of perception,⁹⁷ not that of the Naiyāyikas).⁹⁸ Kamalaśīla expands on the latter point in the following.

In Kamalaśīla’s and Śāntarakṣita’s summary of their view, the Naiyāyikas and Vaiśeṣikas regard the Self as possessing specific characteristics, namely, being unitary, permanent, and all-pervading. A similar depiction is also introduced in the Naiyāyikavaiśeṣikaparikalpītmāparīkṣā of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* and the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*.⁹⁹ If the Self is admitted as the real object of a direct perception that is the cognition “I,” it should manifest in it with its true nature; but a Self endowed

95 *pu* D G T] *bu* P N.

96 *pa ni mi dmigs so* P D N G] *par shes pa ma yin na* | *gang gis mngon sum du gyur te* T.

97 The key definition of perception for the Dharmakīrtian tradition, which is also followed by Kamalaśīla, is that provided by Dharmakīrti in his *Pramāṇaviniścaya: pratyakṣaṃ kalpanāpoḍham abhrāntam* [...] (*Pramāṇaviniścaya* 1.4ab1). On Kamalaśīla’s theory on perception, see especially Funayama 1992.

98 The key definition of perception for the Naiyāyikas is the one provided in the *Nyāyasūtra: indriyārthasannikarṣotpannaṃ jñānam avyapadeśyam avyabhicāri vyavasāyātmakaṃ pratyakṣam* | (*Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.4).

99 In that chapter, the Self is admitted as: (1.) the agent of good and bad actions; (2.) the experiencer of their fruits; (3.) permanent; and (4.) all-pervading. See *anye punar ihātmānam icchādīnāṃ samāśrayam* | *svato cidrūpam icchanti nityaṃ sarvagataṃ tathā* || (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 171) *śubhāśubhānāṃ kartāraṃ karmaṇāṃ tatphalasya ca* | *bhoktāraṃ cetanāyogāc cetanaṃ na svarūpataḥ* || (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 172) [...] *nikāyena viśiṣṭābhir apūrvābhiś ca saṅgatiḥ* | *buddhibhir vedanābhiś ca janma tasyābhidhīyate* || (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 174). “In this regard, others [(i.e., the exponents of the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika)], for their part, regard the Self (*ātman*) as the basis (*samāśraya*) of desires and so on, having an insentient nature by itself, eternal as well as all-pervading; [they regard it as] the agent of positive and negative actions and as the experiencer of those [actions’] fruit, as conscious due

with such characteristics is never perceived. In this sense, the cognition “I” would be an erroneous cognition, since it does not have that Self as its object. Moreover, that cognition must be admitted as conceptual, because it is regarded as ascertaining a Self endowed with characteristics which are determined conceptually. However, according to the Buddhists, a perception cannot be conceptual.

8 Kamalaśīla’s Immediate Answer to Uddyotakara (ii): the *Tattvasaṃgrahaṇīkā*

As seen above, the same objection by Uddyotakara is introduced by Kamalaśīla in the *Tattvasaṃgrahaṇīkā*. As an immediate answer to it, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla analogously present the idea that the Self, as admitted by the Naiyāyikas, cannot truly be the object of the cognition “I.” The same idea underpins argument (i) in the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā* (see § 7). In the *Pañjikā*, Kamalaśīla says:

This [view] is illogical, since the nature of the [Self] does not appear in the sense of “I.” This is because the appearance of permanence, all-pervasiveness, etc., is not cognized in it.

With [the words] starting with “This [view] is illogical,” [Śāntarakṣita] is responding [to Uddyotakara’s possible objection]. The sense of “I” is not established as having the Self as its object, since it is devoid of the image of the [Self]. The proof statement is [as follows]: A [cognition] does not have as [its] object anything whose image it is devoid. [This is] like a visual cognition [that] does not have a sound as [its] object. And the cognition “I” is devoid of the image of the Self. Thus, there is the non-apprehension of the pervader. [With] “this is because,” moreover, he shows that the logical reason is not unestablished. To explain: The Self is admitted as being endowed with qualities such as permanence, all-pervasiveness, and consciousness. However, the appearance of permanence, etc., is “not cognized” in this cognition “I.”¹⁰⁰

In this passage, Kamalaśīla spells out the argument based on which the Self, having the qualities admitted by the opponents, cannot be logically treated as the true object of the sense “I.” The property of having something as its object for a cognition is

to the connection with consciousness, [but] not by its own nature. [...] Its association with a body, specific and hitherto not [experienced] cognitions, and feelings is called its birth.”

100 *tad ayuktam ahaṅkāre tadrūpānavabhāsanāt | na hi nityavibhutvādinirbhāsas tatra lakṣyate || (Tattvasaṃgraha 213) tad ayuktam ityādinā pratividhatte | asiddham ahaṅkārasyātmaniṣayatvaṃ tadākārasūnyatvāt | prayogaḥ – yad yadākārasūnyaṃ na tat tadviśayam | yathā cakṣurjñānaṃ na śabdaviśayam | ātmākārasūnyaṃ cāham iti jñānam iti vyāpakānupalabdhiḥ | na cāyam asiddho hetur iti darśayati – na hītyādi | tathā hi – nityavibhutvacetanatvādiguṇopeta ātmesyate | na cātrāham-pratyaye nityatvādipratibhāso lakṣyate | (Tattvasaṃgrahaṇīkā ad Tattvasaṃgraha 213, ed. p. 115, 21–116, 7).*

pervaded by the property of having an image of it; however, a Self endowed with the characteristics conceived of by the Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas is not perceived in the sense of “I.” Accordingly, if there is a non-apprehension of the pervader in that particular case, also the pervaded is not found.

9 The Self Cannot Be Admitted as Directly Perceived

Following this, Kamalaśīla brings forward yet another point in the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*. If the Self were directly perceived, then it would be commonly established for everyone and there would be no dispute regarding it. He says:

*de lta ma yin te*¹⁰¹ *gal te ngar shes pa mngon sum du gyur na ni de'i tshe bdag yul du gyur pa la rab tu smra ba rnams rtsod par mi 'gyur te | rnam par rtog pa dang bcas pa*¹⁰² *ngar 'dzin pa*¹⁰³ *nges pa'i bdag nyid can*¹⁰⁴ *du gyur pa'i phyir ro || nges pas yul du byas pa la ni sgro 'dogs pa med pa'i phyir ro ||* (**Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

Were it not so,¹⁰⁵ if the cognition “I” were a direct perception, then, there would not be a dispute among the philosophers (*rab tu smra ba/*pravādin*) regarding [its] having the Self as [its] object. This is because the apprehension of “I,” being conceptual, would have the nature of an ascertainment (**niścaya*) [and] because there cannot be superimposition (*sgro 'dogs pa/*samāropa*) regarding something that has been made the object by/through ascertainment (**niścayena viśayīkṛte asamāropāt*).

If one were to admit the view that the cognition “I” is a direct perception of the Self, then it would be equivalent to other direct perceptions, which are (in the Naiyāyikas’ view) non-erroneous and conceptual, i.e., involving a correct ascertainment regarding which no doubt arises.¹⁰⁶ However, the Self is verily not such, as it is (and has been) the object of a dispute between philosophers. Therefore, it follows for the Naiyāyikas that it cannot be admitted as an object of direct perception.

As before, Kamalaśīla introduces a similar argument, in greater detail, in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*, commenting on the same point by Śāntarakṣita:

Moreover, if the Self (*puruṣa*) were really cognizable through direct perception, then, why does this debate regarding its existence and so on occur? (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 215)

101 *te* P D N G] *la* T.

102 *pa* em.] *pas* P D N G T.

103 *pa* P D N G] *pa'i* T.

104 *can* P D N G] *deest* T.

105 Given the context, I take *de lta ma yin te* as a translation of *anyathā*.

106 On the classical definition of perception for the Naiyāyikas, see note n. 98.

“Regarding its,” i.e., the Self’s, “existence,” permanence, all-pervasiveness and so on. Let the following be [argued by an opponent]: “Just as, for you, even though an indigo [thing], ‘and so on,’ is made the object of direct perception, there occurs a debate regarding, for example, momentariness that is not distinct from its nature, similarly, it will be the case also regarding the Self.” (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 215). Therefore, [Śāntarakṣita] says [the words] beginning with “To explain.” [*Tattvasaṃgraha* 216]

A debate regarding momentariness, etc., as non-distinct from it is surely justified even though an indigo [thing], and so on, is perceived through direct perception. This is since momentariness, etc., [can]not be ascertained, due to the fact that that direct perception does not have the nature of an ascertainment, because it is non-conceptual. However, according to your position [i.e., the Naiyāyikas’], [the debate on the Self] is not justified because the Self [could] be ascertained, due to the fact that the cognition “I” has the nature of ascertainment, since it is conceptual. But, if a thing is made the object [= cognized] by an ascertainment, it is not the case that a superimpositional cognition that grasps an aspect contrary to that [= a wrong image] takes place, so that a debate would be possible. (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 216).¹⁰⁷

A Naiyāyika could object that Buddhists dispute aspects of the nature of real things that they admit as an object of direct perception. Such is the case with momentariness. The Buddhists’ answer is that, according to them, since direct perception is non-conceptual, it cannot ascertain conceptual aspects of things, and this is the case with momentariness. This is why a debate is justified, even though that thing is the object of a direct perception with its own nature. The Naiyāyikas, on the contrary, admit direct perception as conceptual and correctly ascertaining its object. As a consequence of their thesis on perception, then, if the Self were directly perceived, there would be no error possible and, hence, no debate about it would ever occur.

107 *yadi pratyakṣagamyāś ca satyataḥ puruṣo bhavet | tat kimarthaṃ vivādo ’yaṃ tatsattvādaḥ pravartate ||* (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 215) *ta[]p49v3[]syātmanaḥ sattvanityatvavibhutvādaḥ || syād etat – yathā bhavatāṃ pratyakṣikṛte ’pi nīlādaḥ tatsvabhāvavyatirikte kṣaṇikatvādaḥ vivādaḥ pravartate | tathātmāny api bhaviṣyati* (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 215, ed. p. 116, 24–25) *ity āha – tathā hītyādi |* [*Tattvasaṃgraha* 216] *yukto hi nīlādaḥ pratyakṣeṇa gṛhīte ’pi tadavyatirikte kṣaṇikatvādaḥ vivādaḥ, tasya pratyakṣasya nirvikalpatvenāniścayātmakatayā kṣaṇikatvāder aniścitatvāt | bhavatpakṣe tu na yukto ’hampratyayasya savikalpakatvena niścayātmakatayātmano [°ātmāno]p[] niścitatvāt | na ca niścayena viṣayikṛte vastuni tadviparītākāragrāhiṇaḥ samāropapratyayasya pravṛttir asti, yena vivādo bhavet.* (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 216, ed. p. 116, 25–117, 10) The sentence *bhavatpakṣe tu na yukto ’hampratyayasya savikalpakatvena niścayātmakatayātmano niścitatvāt* | is missing in Śāstrī’s edition.

10 The Cognition “I” has the Aggregates as Its Object

In the subsequent passage of the **Vajracchedikāṭikā*, Kamalaśīla explains how the cognition “I” arises while perceiving the aggregates:

de lta bas na 'dra ba gzhan dang gzhan¹⁰⁸ 'byung bas bslu ba¹⁰⁹ dang | thog ma med pa'i dus nas goms pa'i dbang gis gzugs la sogs pa phung po so sor nges pa nyid la gcig pur sgro btags nas pha rol rnam par spyad¹¹⁰ pa'i phyir nga'o snyam du shes te | shes pa de la gzugs la sogs pa de dag nyid snang ba'i phyir ro || (**Vajracchedikāṭikā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

Therefore, because one is deceived by the arising of similar subsequent [instants] (*'dra ba gzhan dang gzhan 'byung bas*/**tulyāparāparotpādāt*) and, by force of habituation (*goms pa*/**abhyāsa*) since a beginningless time, having superimposed [the concept of] one [separate individual] precisely on particular and different aggregates starting with material elements, discerns (*rnam par spyad pa*/**vicāra*) [something] other [than those aggregates], [then] the cognition “I” [arises]. This is because in the latter cognition only those aggregates appear.

The cognition “I” is an error. It originates because, when we perceive many similar subsequent *dharmas*, which are related to the aggregates, due to a beginningless habituation to conceiving of a Self,¹¹¹ our conceptual cognitions superimpose the notion of a unitary entity that is different from (and behind) the aggregates, namely a permanent ontological reality of its own. Ultimately, the cognition “I” has those aggregates as its object. This is also Vasubandhu’s point in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (see § 6).

On a similar note in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*:

On the contrary (*kiṃ tu*), [what is] cognized is an appearance characterized by “a fair colour, and other [physical/psychological attributes],” [which is] due to [its] arising in connection with the perception of conditions of the body, such as “I am fair,” “[I] have weak eyes,” “[I am] very

108 *gzhan* P N G T] *gzhan du D*.

109 *bslu ba em.] bslus pa P D N G T*.

110 *spyad D] bcad P N G; gcad T*.

111 The personalistic view (*satkāyadrsti*) is traditionally regarded as twofold: an innate (*sahaja*) view and a conceptually formed (*vikalpita/parikalpita*) view. This is found, for example, in Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and *Pañcaskandhaka*, in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, and in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. See, e.g., *sahajā satkāyadrṣṭir avyākṛtā | yā mṛgapakṣiṇām api vartate | vikalpitā tv akuśaleti pūrvācāryāḥ |* (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya ad 5.19c*, ed. p. 290, 20–21); *tatra mahāmate satkāyadrṣṭir dvividhā yaduta sahajā ca parikalpitā ca, paratantraparikalpitasvabhāvavat |* (*Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, ed. p. 117, 17–18). “In this respect, o Mahāmati, the personalistic view [can] be of two kinds, namely innate or conceptually formed, as in the case of dependent nature and conceptually formed nature.” On this topic, see, among others, Eltschinger/Ratié 2013: 16–36.

thin,” “[I am] shattered by violent sensations.” Therefore, the sense of “I” that has arisen due to the perception of bodily states, etc., is known as having only the body, etc., as [its] object-support. [It is known] “vividly”, i.e., evidently, since there is no erroneous occurrence.¹¹²

11 The Metaphorical Use of the Word “Self” (*ātmopacāra*)

In the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, the opponent immediately responds that we have the notion “my body.” Accordingly, the notion “I” cannot have the body as its object, since we think of two separate things in that case: “I” (in the form of possessive adjective “my”/genitive of the personal pronoun, i.e., “of me”) and “body.”

*gal te ngar ’dzin pa ’di lus kyi yul can zhig*¹¹³ *yin na ji ltar nga’i lus zhes tha dad pa tsam*¹¹⁴ *’dzin par ’gyur zhe na* | (**Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

If this sense of “I” (*ngar ’dzin pa/*ahaṃkāra*) has verily the body as [its] object [as you Buddhists maintain], how can there be the apprehension of nothing but a difference [when thinking:] “my body.”

A reference to such an objection is found also in the *Pañjikā*, but it is preceded by a chain of arguments that, once again, mirror the older debate on the Self as discussed in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the *Nyāyavārttika*. In particular, the argument is moved onto a linguistic level and put into relation with the idea of words’ referents.

As seen above, both Vasubandhu and Kamalaśīla talk about the fact that when we think/talk about our selves, we use notions/expressions such as “I am fair” or “I am dark.” Their point is that we never think of or talk about ourselves unless we think of or talk about our psychological or physical aggregates. When using the word “I,” the only referent is the aggregates. The two authors then introduce the opponent’s objections. In fact, in the *Pañjikā*, Kamalaśīla uses the same words as Vasubandhu’s opponent,¹¹⁵ but introduces them as being stated by Uddyotakara:

112 *kiṃ tu gauro ’haṃ mandalocanaḥ parikṛśas tīvravedanābhinna ityādidehāvasthāsaṃsparśe-notpatter gauravarṇādilakṣaṇaḥ pratibhāsaḥ pratiyate | tasmād dehādyavasthāsaṃsparśenotpa-dyamāno ’haṃkāro dehādyālambana eveti jñāyate | vyaktam iti spaṣṭam askhaladvṛttivāt |* (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 213–214, ed. p. 116, 7–11).

113 *’di lus kyi yul can zhig* P D N G] *’dī’i yul lus* T.

114 *pa tsam* D] *par* P N G; *du* T.

115 See *ātmana upakārake ’pi śārīra ātmopacāro yathā ya evāyaṃ sa evāham, sa evāyaṃ me bhṛtya iti* | (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* Pudgalavādapraṭiśedha, ed. p. 150, 12–13).

And therefore what is said by Uddyotakara and the other [Naiyāyikas] is discarded. [They say:] [There is] this metaphor[ical use] of the [word] “Self” (*ātmopacāra*) with regard to the body, [which is] the abode of the [activity of] experiencing. [This is] like [when], with regard to a faithful servant, the king says: “I am indeed this servant of mine.”¹¹⁶

The idea of the metaphorical [use] of the [word] “Self”, which is introduced by Vasubandhu’s opponent, likely a Vaiśeṣika, refers to the fact that we talk about our body or mind as our selves because we use them as instruments and end up identifying with them; this is exactly like a king who “uses” a faithful servant (those were different times!).

The original passage in the *Nyāyavārttika* reads as follows:

“[Objection:] There is [indeed the notion] “I am fair,” “I am dark.” We reply: “There is not [such a notion].” How so? [This is] because, for the [Self, who is the] seer, the notion “this physical form of mine that is fair is me” does not exist. Simply, having elided the possessive suffix *-mat*, [the notion] “I am fair” indicates the meaning of a genitive. This [must be intended] like that, not as ultimately true. [...] And this sense of “I” that has the same referent as the notion “my” is observed when there is [something] else [such as my body], because this is the assistant [of that Self]. With regard to something that is an assistant, the notion “I” is observed as having the same referent as the notion “my” [as in the following statement:] “That [assistant] is me.” And it is said in this respect – “The sense of ‘I’ regarding the aggregates, starting with material forms, is the notion of something regarding what is not that thing [namely, a mistake].” Therefore, since it is the object of the sense of “I” in this way, the Self is indeed directly perceived.”¹¹⁷

Indeed, in the *Nyāyavārttika*, Uddyotakara uses this relation of “assistance” between the body and the Self to explain the co-referentiality of the notion/word “I” and the body. This is due to the elision of the possessive suffix (*-mat*); one should more properly say something like “my body is fair” or “I possess a fair body” and so on. One can tenably say “I am fair,” because the concept of “my [body]” and “I” have the same referent, insofar as one identifies oneself with something that assists them, namely an instrument they use. Accordingly, the idea that the body is the real object of the notion of individuality is erroneous. I can think that I am my hand, but truly I am not. One perceives only the Self through the *ahaṃkāra*.

¹¹⁶ *tataś ca yad uktam uddyotakaraprabhṛtibhiḥ – upabhogāyatane śarīre ’yam ātmopacārah, yathānukūle bhṛtye rājā brūte – ya evāhaṃ sa evāyaṃ me bhṛtya iti tad apāstaṃ bhavati | (Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha 214, ed. p. 116, 11–13).*

¹¹⁷ *nanu bhavaty ahaṃ gauro ’haṃ kṛṣṇa iti | na bhavatīti brūmaḥ | katham | na hy etasya draṣṭur yad etan mama rūpaṃ gauram etad ahaṃ iti pratyayo bhavati | kevalaṃ matublopaṃ kṛtvā, ahaṃ gaura iti śaṣṭhyarthaṃ nirdīśati | evam etan na tattvata iti | [...] mama pratyayasamānādhikaraṇaś cāyam ahaṃkāro ’nyatve dṛṣṭa upakāratvāt | upakāra ke vastuni mama pratyayasamānādhikaraṇo ’haṃpratyayo dṛṣṭo yo ’yaṃ so ’haṃ iti | uktaṃ cātra rūpādīśandheṣv ahaṃkāro ’tasmīṃś tad itipratyaya iti | tad evam ahaṃkāra viśayatvād ātmā tāvat pratyakṣaḥ | (Nyāyavārttika ad 3.1.1, ed. p. 324, 1–3, 6–10).*

12 *Skhaladvṛtti/Skhaladgati*, the Stumbling Use of a Word

In the *Pañjikā*, Kamalaśīla's response to Uddyotakara's objection is as follows:

[...] This is discarded. To explain: If this [cognition "I" that is expressed with the pronoun "I"] were secondary [(i.e., metaphorical)] (*gauṇa*), then there would be a stumbling functioning [of the pronoun "I"]. This is because it is not commonly the case that a non-stumbling cognition refers to both of the two, a lion and a young Brahmin [zealous in study and debate], being[, respectively,] the direct [referent] and the indirect [one] (*āropita*).¹¹⁸

The stumbling functioning (*skhaladvṛtti*) of a word is a concept analogous to that of *skhaladgati*, which is found in Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* Pratyakṣa° 37.¹¹⁹

A word is used primarily with reference to an object according to an established convention; its secondary use is with reference to an object that is similar. However, in this case, the word has a stumbling (*skhalat*) use. Kamalaśīla uses the *topos* of the young Brahmin and the lion. In this case, there are clearly two objects (being similar and different at the same time): It is never the case that one uses the word "lion" primarily to indicate both of them. The word "I," however, does not satisfy that requirement. We do not have two objects, the Self and the aggregates – as being different and similar at the same time – by which we would have the Self as the primary referent of the word "I" and the aggregates as the figurative referent. When talking about "I," the only referent is the aggregates.

At this point, in the *Pañjikā*, Kamalaśīla introduces an objection that is found very similarly in the **Vajracchedikāṭikā*:

[Objection:] If [it is argued that,] based on the observation of a distinction [in cognitions/statements, such as] "my body," etc., [there] the sense of "I" has a stumbling employment regarding the body, etc. [...].¹²⁰

118 [...] *tad apāstaṃ bhavati | tathā* [Jp49v1 yathā ed.] *hi-yady ayaṃ gauṇaḥ syāt tadā skhaladvṛttir bhavet | na hi loke siṃhamāṇavakayor mukhyāropitayor dvayor api siṃha ity askhalitā buddhir bhavati* | (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 214, ed. p. 116, 13–15).

119 *yatra rūḍhyāsadartho 'pi janaiḥ śabdo niveśitaḥ | sa mukhyas tatra tatsāmyād gauṇo 'nyatra skhaladgatiḥ* || (*Pramāṇavārttika* Pratyakṣa 37). On this, see Franco/Notake 2014: 108–110.

120 *madīyāḥ śarīrādaya iti vyatirekadarśanāt skhaladvṛttir ahaṃkāraḥ śarīrādiṣv iti cet* | (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 214, ed. p. 116, 15–16).

13 How Can We Say “My Self” Then?

In the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, Kamalaśīla responds to this objection by stating that, by the same principle, when we say “my self,” we are intending a distinction between “I” and “Self.” As he argues:

*de ni*¹²¹ *bdag gi*¹²² *dmigs pa can la yang*¹²³ *mtshungs te | gal te ngar 'dzin pa 'di bdag*¹²⁴ *gi yul can zhiḡ*¹²⁵ *yin na de'i tshe ji ltar nga'i bdag*¹²⁶ *ces sems par 'gyur | ci*¹²⁷ *ste dngos po nyid du*¹²⁸ *tha dad pa med kyang tha dad pa gzhan spangs pas*¹²⁹ *de tsam shes par 'dod pa'i phyir mchi gu'i lus zhes bya ba*¹³⁰ *bzhin du tha dad par brtags pas 'dzin pas*¹³¹ *'gal ba med do*¹³² *zhe na | de ni*¹³³ *lus kyi*¹³⁴ *dmigs pa can la yang*¹³⁵ *mtshungs so ||* (**Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

[Buddhist answer:] This is similar also regarding [a cognition] that has the Self as its object-support[, namely, when thinking “my self.”] If this sense of “I” has verily the Self as its object, then, how can one think “my self”? But [it is argued,] even though there is not ultimately a difference [between “my” and “Self”], there is no contradiction [in the case of “my self”] due to an apprehension based on the imagination of a difference, as in the case of “the body of a statue” (**śīlāputrakaśarīra*). This is because it is admitted that [that cognition] cognizes nothing but that, based on the exclusion of other differences [namely, it is a merely conceptual cognition]. [Then it will be answered:] This is similar also in the case of [a cognition] having the body as an object-support [namely, when thinking “my body”].”

And in the *Tattvasaṃgrahaṇīkā* he states:

No, because there is the undesirable consequence of the stumbling employment also regarding the Self, since also in this case, [when thinking/saying] “my self,” a distinction is commonly observed.¹³⁶

121 *ni* P D N G] *yang* T.

122 *gi* P D N G] *la* T.

123 *can la yang* P D N G] *dang* | T.

124 *bdag* em.] *dag* P D N G; *deest* T.

125 *ngar 'dzin pa 'di dag gi yul can zhiḡ* P D N G] *bdag nga'i yul* T.

126 *bdag* P N G T] *bdag nyid* D.

127 *ci* D] *ji* P N G.

128 *nyid du* P D N G] *deest* T.

129 *spangs pas* D T] *spang bas* P N G.

130 *zhes bya ba* P D N G] *deest* T.

131 *pas* P D N G] *te* T.

132 *do* P N G T] *de* D.

133 *ni* P D N G] *yang* T.

134 *kyi* P D N G] *la* T.

135 *can la yang* P D N G] *dang* T.

136 *na | ātmany api skhaladvṛttivaprasaṅgāt | tatrāpi hi madīya ātmeti vyatireko drśyate |* (*Tattvasaṃgrahaṇīkā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 214, ed. p. 116, 16–17).

Kamalaśīla's opponent brings forward the notion of one's own body, etc. (*madīyāḥ śarīrādaya iti*), to point out an instance where there are indeed two different referents of two different words. In the latter case, when one says "I" (according to the form of the possessive adjective *madīya*), one primarily intends the Self, using it as an attribute for the body.

Kamalaśīla responds that, given the instance of the cognition "my self," there is in fact a figurative use of "I" regarding the Self, so that the primary meaning of I as "Self" would vanish as well. This is because there is already a word/notion for Self, i.e., "Self." Accordingly, the Self is distinct from "I" as being a different referent of a different word. If one says that the distinction in the case of "my self" is only conceptually constructed, then that must also be true for "my body." Therefore, one cannot but go back to stating that there cannot be figurative use of the word "I." As Kamalaśīla says in the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, it is like the body of a statue: One imagines a difference and expresses it through a genitive, even though there are not two different things.¹³⁷

14 And the Self is *Not* the Aggregates

In both the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā* and the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*, Kamalaśīla presents his opponent as finally conceding that the notion "I" has the aggregates as its object. However, he argues, why cannot the Self be identical with those aggregates? In this respect, in the two texts, the answers are along the same lines, yet they are different.

In the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, Kamalaśīla states:

*ngar 'dzin pa kho na yang bdag ma yin la*¹³⁸ *de'i yul gzugs la sogs pa bdag yin no zhes brjod par yang mi*¹³⁹ *nus te | de dag de dang mtshan nyid mi*¹⁴⁰ *'dra ba'i phyir ro || de dag ni rim nyid*¹⁴¹ *du dmigs pa'i phyir gcig pu'i ngo bo 'am rang dbang can du med do ||* (**Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

¹³⁷ This idea is also found in another chapter of the *Pañjikā*. See *yathā svasya svabhāvaḥ śīlāpu-trakasya śarīram ityādāv asaty api vāstave bhede buddhiparikalpitaṃ bhedaṃ āśritya vyatirekaśaṣṭhīvbhaktir bhavati, tathehāpi bhaviṣyati* [...] (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā ad Tattvasaṃgraha* 389, ed. p. 179, 22–24). And in the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*: *ci ste dngos po nyid du thadad pa med kyang tha dad pa gzhan spangs pas de tsam shes par 'dod pa'i phyir mchi gu'i lus zhes bya ba bzhin du tha dad par brtags pas 'dzin pas 'gal ba med do zhe na |* (**Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming).

¹³⁸ *kho na yang bdag ma yin la* P D N G] *nyid dang* T.

¹³⁹ *yang mi* P D N G] *ni mi (myi)* T.

¹⁴⁰ *mtshan nyid mi* P D N G] *mi (myi)* T.

¹⁴¹ *nyid* P D N G] *deest* T.

As for precisely the sense of “I,” since there is no Self, its object is that Self that is the aggregates. This also cannot be said, since those [aggregates] and that [Self] are different. Since they are perceived gradually [in different moments], the [aggregates] do not have a unitary nature and are not independent.

And in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*:

Then, [the opponents say: We concede that] cognitions such as “I am fair” are [employed] primar [il]y; nevertheless, why [can] the Self not be their object? Therefore, [Śāntarakṣita] says: “[However, the Self is] not “admitted] as having that nature,” i.e., the nature of “fair,” and so on, due to the impossibility of its having qualities, such as material forms.¹⁴²

15 Conclusion

Based on this refutation, Kamalaśīla concludes his argumentations in the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā* as follows:

ming du 'dogs na ni 'dod pas 'di la brtsad¹⁴³ pa ci¹⁴⁴ yang med do || de lta bas na bdag sgrub par byed¹⁴⁵ pa'i tshad ma chung zad tsam yang med¹⁴⁶ do || mngon sum dang¹⁴⁷ rjes su dpag pa las¹⁴⁸ ma gtogs pa'i tshad ma ni med do zhes phyogs gzhan du dpyad zin to || (**Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, ed. Saccone forthcoming)

There is no debate whatsoever regarding the [sense of “I”], if it is admitted when it comes to the [common] use of the notion (*ming du 'dogs/*saṃjñāsamīveśa*) [of “I”]. Therefore, there is not even the slightest positive proof regarding the Self. And there is no other *pramāṇa* aside from perception and inference. This has [already] been examined in a different place.

In the **Vajracchedikāṭīkā*, while commenting on a scriptural passage, Kamalaśīla introduces a long philosophical portion intended as a refutation of the conception of the Self. His idea is that of showing how reasoning (*yukti*) plays a pivotal role in the path of the Bodhisattva, being employed within the cultivation of one of the three

¹⁴² *tarhi gauro 'ham ityādipratyayo mukhyas tathāpi kasmād ātmāsya viṣayo na bhavatīty āha – tatsvabhāva iti gaurādisvabhāvaḥ | tasya rūpādiguṇāsambhavāt |* (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 213–214, ed. p. 116, 18–20).

¹⁴³ *brtsad* D] *bcad* P N G; *rtsad* T.

¹⁴⁴ *ci* P D N G] *gang* T.

¹⁴⁵ *sgrub par byed* P D N G] *bsgrub* T.

¹⁴⁶ *tsam yang med* P D N G] *kyang med (myed)* T.

¹⁴⁷ *dang* P N G T] *du* D.

¹⁴⁸ *las* P D N G] *la* T.

types of insight, namely, the insight born of reflection (*cintāmayī prajñā*). The author defines this type of insight elsewhere as the means for ascertaining the final truth of scriptures. This seems perfectly exemplified in the **Ṭīkā*.

To this aim, he introduces some of the same argumentations that are found in greater detail in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*, summarizing them for an audience who was perhaps already familiar with that work.¹⁴⁹ This is evidence of Kamalaśīla's adaptive reuse of proofs designed for debates against opponents in works that were, instead, soteriological in nature. In turn, this shows how, in his view, reasoning (*yukti*, connected to *cintāmayī prajñā*), which was intended to analyse and prove key concepts of Buddhism, merged with the science of logic (*hetuvidyā*), which was used to defeat and persuade non-Buddhist opponents (Eltschinger 2010: 462–463).

The background of our case is the (fictional) debate between Vasubandhu and Uddyotakara. Kamalaśīla defends the theses found in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* against attacks by the Naiyāyika, who took particular issue with the idea of non-apprehension of the Self while perceiving the aggregates. This is arguably a witness to the significance of the Buddhist non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*) argument and related debates with Brahmanical opponents, debates that continued throughout the centuries. Following (and drawing on) Kamalaśīla's treatment of the subject (particularly in the *Pañjikā*), the debate was echoed in works by subsequent authors, such as Samantabhadra, a Tantric author from the ninth century. In a long portion of his *Sāramañjarī*,¹⁵⁰ Samantabhadra discusses the non-apprehension of the Self (while perceiving the aggregates). Precisely this long portion is then copied verbatim in Jitāri's **Sugatamatavibhaṅgabhāṣya*. This example shows once again the importance of these argumentations in the history of Buddhist thought.

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¹⁴⁹ The topic of the intended audience for this work brings up the wider question of the time and place of its composition. I believe that this work is a perfect exemplification of the importance of the use of reasoning as applied to the spiritual path. In this sense, it may have been composed having in mind the debate with the “Chinese” faction, whether or not this was at the time of the actual debate, or in Tibet as opposed to elsewhere.

¹⁵⁰ The *Sāramañjarī* by Samantabhadra is a commentary on Jñānapāda's *Samantabhadrasādhana*, a practical meditation manual of the Guhyasamājatantra. On this work, see Saccone/Szántó 2023.

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