

# A Post-Kumāriila Argument about Omniscience: Maṇḍana and Kamalaśīla on the Paradox of Determining Everything

Kei Kataoka

## 1. Introduction

Kumāriila presupposes Buddhist opponents who claim that the Buddha's teaching is authoritative because it was composed by an omniscient being (*\*buddhavacanam pramāṇam sarvajñapraṇītatvāt*). His critique of omniscience is systematically organized around each element of this syllogism—*sarva, sarvaṃ jānāti, sarvajña, praṇīta*—as seen in both the *Ślokavārttika* and the *Bṛhaṭṭikā* (the latter as preserved in the *Tattvasaṃgraha*).<sup>1</sup> This framework is further elaborated or supplemented later from different perspectives, likely reflecting the subsequent development of arguments between Mīmāṃsakas and Buddhists. One issue not found in Kumāriila's texts is the *krama-akrama* problem—whether the Buddha cognizes everything simultaneously or sequentially. In this context, a paradox is later raised concerning the impossibility of simultaneously cognizing (i.e., determining) everything. How can an omniscient being determine the total amount of everything (*iyattā-avadhāraṇa, iyattā-pariccheda*)? If everything is determined and delimited as “this much” (*iyattā*, a fixed quantity), then it is no longer truly *everything*. On the other hand, if it is not determined, it cannot be said to be cognized. Interestingly, both Maṇḍana (ca. 660–720) and Kamalaśīla (ca. 740–795) take up this issue. This paper focuses on their respective discussions in Maṇḍana's

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<sup>1</sup> Kataoka 2011: II 39.

*Vidhiviveka* (VV) and Kamalaśīla's *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* (TSP), comparing their treatments in order to reconstruct the post-Kumāriḷa, post-Dharmakīrti polemical history between Mīmāṃsā and Buddhism.

## 2. Maṇḍana's *Vidhiviveka*

In the concluding section of the first half of his VV, Maṇḍana addresses the issue of omniscience. In the preceding section, he critiques Prabhākara's *niyoga* theory. More specifically, the *niyoga* theory, which considers the meaning of Vedic imperatives as absolute commandments (*niyoga*) that transcend the three times (past, present, and future) and are untouched by them (*kālatrayāparāmrṣṭa*), is rejected. Subsequently, instead of the authorless Veda, an omniscient being who cognizes all past, present, and future is posited as the authoritative giver of commands and then the existence of such a being is refuted. This is the broader context in which the criticism of omniscience in the VV is situated. Obviously, omniscience (which is claimed by Buddhists) is not central to the VV's main line of argument concerning Vedic injunctions (*vidhi*). Rather, it is discussed in a more digressive manner, in the course of examining transcendental sources of religious authority, including God (*īśvara*).<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1. Neither sequentially nor simultaneously

As Maṇḍana makes clear in a summarizing verse, "There can be neither sequence nor simultaneity (VV I 18c: *kramākramau na kalpete*)," he denies the possibility of omniscience occurring either sequentially or simultaneously. In other words, if an

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<sup>2</sup> For a fuller account of the context in which the critique of omniscience arises within the discussion of commandment, see David 2020: 46.

omniscient being were to cognize everything, such cognition would have to occur either in sequence or all at once. However, it is impossible for an omniscient being to cognize everything in sequence, and equally impossible for him to cognize everything simultaneously.

As for why it is impossible to cognize everything sequentially, Maṇḍana states in prose that the reason is infinity (*ānanyāt*).<sup>3</sup> That is, time is infinite, and thus the totality of objects to be cognized has neither a temporal beginning nor end.<sup>4</sup> What Maṇḍana has in mind here is temporal infinity—the idea that time has no starting point and no final limit.<sup>5</sup>

The same reason, infinity, is also given for the denial of simultaneous omniscience (*ānanyād eva*).<sup>6</sup> In this case, however, Maṇḍana has spatial infinity in mind. There is an infinite number of objects, unlimited in spatial extent; yet if infinity were not delimited, there would be no distinction between the cognition of all things and the cognition of merely some things.<sup>7</sup> The use of the word *ekadeśa* suggests that Maṇḍana is referring to spatial extension. In other words,

<sup>3</sup> VV ad I 18c: *sarvaṃ na tāvat krameṇa śakyāvagamam, ānanyāt*.

<sup>4</sup> VV ad I 18c: *na hi pūrvāparakoṭivirahiṇo jñeyasyotpādavataḥ pariniṣṭhāsti*.

<sup>5</sup> The critique that the Buddha cannot be omniscient because of the infinity of dharmas is found in the \**Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (大智度論), T1509, vol. 25, p. 58, b, ll. 2-3: 復次有人。疑佛不得一切智。所以者何。諸法無量無數。(Next, there is someone who doubts that the Buddha cannot attain omniscience. Why is this? Because the phenomena are innumerable and countless.) See also Harivarman's *Tattvasiddhi* (成實論), T1646, vol. 32, p. 317, c, l. 27: 諸法無量云何一人能盡知耶。(How can one person know all the countless phenomena?) Cf. also \**Daśabhūmivibhāṣā* (十住毘婆沙論), T1521, vol. 26, p. 74, a, ll. 3-6: 無一切智人故。何以故。所知法無量無邊。而智慧有量有邊。以此有量有邊智慧。不應知無量事。如今現閻浮提水陸衆生過諸算數。(This is because there is no omniscient being. Why is this? Because the objects to be known are limitless and boundless, while wisdom is limited and finite. With this limited and finite wisdom, one cannot know the infinite matters. For example, in the present Jambudvīpa, the multitude of beings, both in water and on land, surpasses all calculation.)

<sup>6</sup> VV ad I 18c: *na yaugapadyena, ānanyād eva*.

<sup>7</sup> VV ad I 18c: *tadanavadhāraṇe sarvaikadeśapratipattyor aviśeṣāt*.

the problem is that the cognition of an omniscient being must cover a certain domain, but such cognition cannot cover the infinite. The problem here is that infinity cannot be delimited (*tadanavadhāraṇa* = *ānantya-anavadhāraṇa*). In the discussion that follows, Maṇḍana pursues this paradoxical issue.

## 2.2. Non-determination of the total amount of “all” (*iyattānavadhāraṇa*)

Verse 18d summarizes this problem as follows: “The object to be known is not demarcated (*na prameyaṃ nirūpyate*).” In other words, the scope of the whole is indeterminable. Maṇḍana refers to this problem as *iyattānavadhāraṇa*—“the quantity of ‘this much’ is not delimited”—that is, the indeterminacy of quantity. The dispute can be summarized as follows. The opponent—clearly a Buddhist and a proponent of omniscience—argues that everything can be simultaneously cognized based on the form of the objects themselves (i.e., as the objects are), without restricting the quantity cognized to “this much”.<sup>8</sup> In other words, it is not necessary to determine the total amount of everything in order to cognize it. On the other hand, the critics of omniscience—namely, the Mīmāṃsakas—counter that “everything” cannot be determined without first determining its total quantity.<sup>9</sup> Only when the full extent of what is to be known is delimited can the totality be determined.<sup>10</sup> Thus, omniscience is possible only with respect to what is limited, not with respect to what is unlimited.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> VV ad I 18d: *nanv anavadhārayann apīyattāṃ rūpato yaugapadyena sarvam avaiti*.

<sup>9</sup> VV ad I 18d: *na hīyattānavadhāraṇe sarvam avadhāritaṃ bhavati*.

<sup>10</sup> VV ad I 18d: *iyattānavadhāraṇād eva sarvapatipattiḥ*.

<sup>11</sup> VV ad I 18d: *sā (=sarvapatipattiḥ) ca parimite sambhavati, nāparimite*.

### 2.3. The present mental images cannot be infinite

Interestingly, in his discussion of simultaneous omniscience, Maṇḍana frames his critique with the Buddhist *sākāra* theory in mind. He argues that a single cognition cannot simultaneously encompass an infinite number of forms (mental images).<sup>12</sup> In other words, the forms that pertain to a present cognition cannot be infinite, precisely because they are present. They are delimited at both ends—separated from the past and the future—and confined to “only this much.” How, then, can they be infinite?<sup>13</sup> It is impossible for a single act of cognition to contain an infinite number of forms.<sup>14</sup>

In this context, Maṇḍana elucidates the character of things that belong to the three times: past, present, and future. Things of the past, present, and future are infinite as a whole because their temporal and spatial boundaries are not delimited (*avyavacchinna*, literally “not cut off”).<sup>15</sup> Past things, although they have a delimited endpoint, are infinite because their beginning is not delimited (*anavacchedāt*, literally “not cut down”).<sup>16</sup> Future things, conversely, are infinite because, while their beginning is delimited, their endpoint is not.<sup>17</sup> Present things, however—as explained above—are delimited at both ends and therefore must be finite. It is worth noting that here Maṇḍana uses the terms *vyavacchinna* and *avaccheda* to signify delimitation: the domain that is “cut off” and made available to cognition is described as “delimited.”

<sup>12</sup> VV ad I 18d: *na caikavijñānavartinām ākārāṇām yugapadbhuvām ānanyam samasti.*

<sup>13</sup> VV ad I 18d: *pratyutpannās tūbhayakoṭivvyavacchinṇā yāvanta utpannās tāvanta eveti katham ānanyam.*

<sup>14</sup> VV ad I 18d: *ato nānantākāram ekaṃ jñānam.*

<sup>15</sup> VV ad I 18d: *avyavacchinnaśakālā hy ajātātivr̥ttapratyutpannā anantā sahāpekṣamāṇāḥ.*

<sup>16</sup> VV ad I 18d: *atūtās ca, pūrvakālakoṭer anavacchedāt, avacchede 'pi parastāt.*

<sup>17</sup> VV ad I 18d: *ajātās ca, parakālakoṭer anavacchedāt, avacchede 'pi purastāt.*

#### 2.4. The infinite “all” cannot be defined

Maṇḍana also addresses the problem that all (*sarva*), which is infinite, cannot ontologically be delimited. A certain number of objects governed by a common universal can be referred to as “all,” for example, “all brahmins.” However, this characterization does not apply to the infinite.<sup>18</sup> The infinite cannot be grasped in a limited and unified way. In other words, the entirety of what infinity comprises cannot be ontologically defined.

In response to the opponent who insists that the infinite “all” is to be taken in the primary sense (i.e., as truly unlimited),<sup>19</sup> Maṇḍana argues that none of the three temporal divisions—past, present, or future—can be considered “all.” The past has an endpoint, the future has a beginning point, and the present is bounded on both sides.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, nothing that belongs to only one of these three times can constitute the whole, or “all.”

#### 2.5. Delimiting the infinite

Maṇḍana then turns to the most critical issue raised in the verse—namely, that the infinite cannot be determined in an epistemological sense. If we equate “all individual things” with “the infinite” (i.e., cognizing all things = cognizing the infinite), then it becomes theoretically impossible to determine the infinite.<sup>21</sup> For if an omniscient being “were to cognize all individual things,” those individual things would necessarily be delimited, and thus not infinite.<sup>22</sup> In other words, such

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<sup>18</sup> VV ad I 18d: *kenacit sāmānyena vaśīkṛtāḥ kiyanto 'pi. na cetthambhāvo 'nanteṣu sambhavati.*

<sup>19</sup> VV ad I 18d: *mukhyam anantam eva sarvam iti cet.*

<sup>20</sup> VV ad I 18d: *na, anyatarakālakotiḥbhājām ānantye 'py asarvatvāt, pūrvāparakoṭivyavacchinnānām cāsarvatvāt.* “No. For that which has an end of time, either [past or future], is not all, even if it is infinite. And because the things [of the present], cut off at the ends of before and after, are not all.”

<sup>21</sup> VV ad I 18d: *ānantya eva sarvatve tadavadhāraṇaṃ na sambhavati.*

cognition would not amount to cognizing the infinite in its entirety.

Conversely, if the individual things are not delimited—if their quantity is truly infinite—then the very equation “to cognize all things” = “to cognize the infinite (delimit the infinite)” would break down. That is, all things as such would not be infinite.<sup>23</sup>

Alternatively, the opponent might argue that infinity is simply the absence of limitation—that is, the negation of finiteness. But in that case, the infinite *all* would remain indeterminate and thus unknowable.<sup>24</sup> As long as *everything* is to be both cognized and determined, the problem of delimiting the infinite inevitably arises. The non-determination of an infinite number of things cannot amount to the determination—or knowledge—of all.

## 2.6. “All” cannot be delimited by the three times

Finally, the opponent claims that what is delimited (*avacchinna*, “cut out”) by the three times—past, present, and future—constitutes “all”.<sup>25</sup> However, such “delimitation” contradicts the very notion of the “infinite.” In other words, “all” cannot be something that is cut out or bounded. If “all” were delimited in this way, it would be no different from a part.<sup>26</sup>

## 2.7. Summary of Maṇḍana’s argument

Maṇḍana’s argument can be summarized as follows: the infinite “all” cannot be subject to any form of delimitation—whether ontological or epistemological. If it

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<sup>22</sup> VV ad I 18d: *avadhāritāś cet, tāvatya eva nānantāḥ.*

<sup>23</sup> VV ad I 18d: *anavadhāraṇe naiva hy anantatā tāsām.*

<sup>24</sup> VV ad I 18d: *anavadhāraṇaṃ cānantyaṃ iti kathaṃ tadavadhāraṇam.*

<sup>25</sup> VV ad I 18d: *kālatrayāvacchinmās tarhy arthāḥ sarve.*

<sup>26</sup> VV ad I 18d: *na, teṣv eva cchedābhāvād ekadeśāviśeṣāt.*

were delimited (i.e., “cut out” or determined), it would no longer be infinite. The key points of each section are as follows:

1. An omniscient being cannot cognize “all,” whether sequentially or simultaneously, because “all” is infinite in both time and space.
2. If the total extent of “all” is not determined, then “all” itself remains undetermined.
3. Present mental images, being temporally delimited at both ends, cannot constitute “all.”
4. Ontologically, an infinite number of objects cannot be defined as “all.”
5. Epistemologically, the infinite “all” cannot be determined.
6. The infinite “all” cannot be delimited by the three temporal division (past, present, and future).

### 3. Kamalaśīla’s *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*

The issue of “the impossibility of finitizing the infinite,” which Maṇḍana expresses with the term *iyattā-anavadhāraṇa* (i.e., the infinite *all* cannot be determined as “this much,” or a finite quantity), is taken up by Kamalaśīla under the term *iyattā-pariccheda*, meaning “the determination of the quantity of all as ‘this much.’” In other words, if all were determined as a finite quantity, it would cease to be infinite.

Whereas Maṇḍana uses the term *avadhāraṇa* (delimiting, restricting, or fixing)—often associated with the semantic function of the particle *eva* (“only”)—Kamalaśīla instead employs the verbal root *chid* (“to cut”). As previously discussed, Maṇḍana also uses the imagery of “cutting” in his explanation of delimiting the past and future ends of a temporal continuum.

Furthermore, in Dharmakīrti’s terminology, *pariccheda* is often

contrasted with *vyavaccheda*. While *pari-ccheda* (literally “cut on all sides”) refers to the act of positively delimiting a domain—making certain regions the object of cognition (via perception or inference)—*vy-ava-ccheda* (literally “cut down” or “cut off”) refers to the negative exclusion of other regions.<sup>27</sup>

### 3.1. The context of the TS

In his commentary on TS 3626, Kamalaśīla does not closely follow Śāntarakṣita’s verse. Instead, he diverges from the main topic to explore the issue of *iyattā-pariccheda* (“determination of quantity”) in detail on his own initiative. Before turning to Kamalaśīla’s discussion, let us briefly review the relevant context in the TS.

Śāntarakṣita presents Kumārila’s critique as a *pūrvapakṣa* in TS 3127–3246ab, followed by further objections raised by a different opponent in TS 3246cd–60. Kamalaśīla identifies this opponent as Sāmaṭa and Yajñāta (abbreviated as SY).<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that while *pariccheda* here refers to an act of determination, it is a cognitive operation that can be performed even by non-conceptual perception. It differs from ascertainment (*niścaya*) as found in inference, which is defined as the exclusion of superimposition (*samāropavyavaccheda*). In other words, this form of *pariccheda* is an act that non-conceptual cognition—specifically perception—can carry out. However, in the subsequent discussion, Kamalaśīla adopts an ambivalent stance toward *pariccheda*, treating it in two distinct ways: on the one hand, as a non-conceptual process, and on the other, as a conceptual one. In the latter case, he does not regard *pariccheda* as an operation of non-conceptual cognition but rather as an act of the post-acquired pure worldly wisdom that follows it. See also Funayama 2007: 194, n. 36. This distinction between non-conceptual and conceptual cognition is also relevant to the two modes of the Buddha’s preaching. These two types of teaching are discussed in Kataoka 2023a; see also Kataoka 2022 for an examination of the Buddha’s status as a speaker.

<sup>28</sup> It is evident that SY can be regarded as post-Kumārila Mīmāṃsakas. Moreover, the development of their critical methodology strongly suggests that they lived after Maṇḍana. We may therefore position SY as Mīmāṃsakas who lived after Maṇḍana but prior to Śāntarakṣita. However, the chronological relationship between SY and Umbeka

The full exchange between SY and Śāntarakṣita, including both critique and reply, is examined in a separate article (Kataoka 2023b). In the present discussion, we will focus exclusively on issues related to sequential and simultaneous omniscience.

SY argue in two verses (TS 3248–49) that it is impossible for an omniscient being (implicitly, the Buddha) to cognize everything, whether simultaneously or sequentially. In TS 3249, SY contend that it would be impossible to cognize all the infinite entities of the past, present, and future sequentially, one by one, even over the course of hundreds of years.

|             | TS ( <i>pūrvapakṣa</i> ) | TS ( <i>uttarapakṣa</i> ) |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 yugapat   | 3248                     | 3621-25                   |
| 2 paripātyā | 3249                     | 3626                      |

In TS 3626, Śāntarakṣita clarifies that the Buddhist position does not, in fact, endorse the sequential theory to begin with. In other words, SY's criticism of the sequential theory does not pertain to the Buddhist view. What the Buddhist side prefers and upholds is the theory of simultaneous omniscience.<sup>29</sup>

The table below presents the original Sanskrit text alongside my English translation, showing the correspondence between SY's critique of the sequential

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remains uncertain. The following table outlines a tentative chronology proposed here as a working hypothesis.

|     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 600 | Kumārila<br>Prabhākara<br>Maṇḍanamiśra | Dharmakīrti<br>Devendrabuddhi<br>Śākyabuddhi |
| 700 | Sāmaṭa, Yajñāta<br>Umbeka              | Śāntarakṣita                                 |
| 750 |  | Kamalaśīla                                   |

<sup>29</sup> Śāntarakṣita also presents an alternative view in later verses (TS 3629–30), namely, that it is indeed possible to cognize everything sequentially.

theory and Śāntarakᅇita's response.

| TS 3249 (SY)  | TS 3626 (Śāntarakᅇita)   |
|---|--|
| <i>bhūtaᅇ bhavad bhaviᅇyac ca<br/>vastv anantaᅇ krameᅇa kaᅇ/<br/>pratyekaᅇ śaknuyāᅇ boddhuᅇ<br/>vatsarāᅇāᅇ śatair api//</i>                               | <i>ekajᅇᅇāᅇakᅇaᅇavyāpta-<br/>niᅇᅇᅇaᅇᅇeyamaᅇᅇalaᅇ/<br/>prasāᅇdᅇito hi sarvaᅇjᅇaᅇ<br/>kramo nāᅇśrīyate tataᅇ//</i>   |
| [SY:] Who could cognize the infinite number of real entities in the past, present, and future, one by one, sequentially, even if given hundreds of years? | [Śāntarakᅇita:] We have proved precisely the omniscient being who pervades (knows) all objects to be known by a single moment of cognition. We do not hold [the view of] sequence. <sup>30</sup> |

The critiques of both the sequential and simultaneous theories—as well as the objection that, under the sequential theory, it is impossible to cognize all entities of the past, present, and future due to their infinitude—are also found in Maᅇᅇana's VV.

### 3.2. Kamalaᅇiḷa's presentation of the problem

After explicitly stating that TS 3626 is a response to TS 3249,<sup>31</sup> Kamalaᅇiḷa introduces a critique by noting that “some of our own people, in an attempt to reinforce the theory of consciousness-only, have raised the following objection.”<sup>32</sup> In other words, he indicates that the issue of *iyattā-pariccheda* (“determination of quantity”) is presented as a hypothetical challenge to omniscience originating from within the Buddhist tradition itself. Kamalaᅇiḷa's remark suggests that the problem of *iyattā-anavadhāraᅇa* (“indeterminacy of extent”), previously addressed by Maᅇᅇana, was also a topic of discussion within Buddhism. The following is the

<sup>30</sup> TS 3626a-c is quoted and translated in McClintock 2010: 142.

<sup>31</sup> TSP 1122,20–21: *yac coktam—bhūtaᅇ bhavad bhaviᅇyac cetyāᅇi, tatrāᅇa—ekajᅇᅇāᅇᅇetyāᅇi.*

<sup>32</sup> TSP 1122,22: *atra kecit svayūthyā eva vijᅇᅇāᅇnavāᅇimatam upodbalayantaᅇ codayanti.*

gist of the objection as explained by Kamalaśīla.

1. If all the objects to be cognized were simultaneously covered (*vyāpyate*) by a single moment of cognition, then the agreed upon infinity would be denied because the total number of existents would be determined as “only this much.”<sup>33</sup>
2. To explain, if it were determined that there were no existent other than the existent that has ascended to a single cognition, then such existents would be finite, as it is stated: “There is no existent other than that which has ascended to a single cognition. They are cognized as ‘only this much.’ Therefore it follows that they are finite.”<sup>34</sup>
3. Then, the problem of the sequential theory also exists in the simultaneous theory.<sup>35</sup>

The third point—that the simultaneous theory faces the same problem as the sequential theory—is identical to the issue Maṇḍana described with the phrase *ānantyād eva*. In other words, the problem of infinitude, and thus the impossibility of complete cognition, applies equally to the simultaneous theory. The first point succinctly captures the core of the *iyattā-pariccheda* issue, while the second reframes it in terms of the Buddhist *sākāra* theory. Both aspects are clearly affirmed in Maṇḍana’s discussion.

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<sup>33</sup> TSP 1122,23–1123,1: *yadī yugapad ekajñānakṣanena niḥśeṣaṃ jñeyamaṇḍalaṃ vyāpyate, tadā bhāvānām iyattāparicchedād ānantyam abhyupetaṃ bādhyeta.*

<sup>34</sup> TSP 1123,1–4: *tathā hy ekajñānārūḍhād bhāvād anyo bhāvo nāstīty evaṃ paricchidyamānāḥ katham antavanto na bhaveyuḥ. āha ca—ekajñānasamārūḍhān nānyo bhāvo ’sti kaścana/ iyanta iti vijñānād antavantaḥ kathaṃ na te// iti.* (Cf. Funayama 2007: 193, n. 29)

<sup>35</sup> TSP 1123,5: *tataś ca kramapakṣe yo doṣaḥ sa yugapajññānapakṣe ’pīti.*

It is noteworthy that Kamalaśīḷa uses the term *pariccheda* here instead of *avadhāraṇa*, along with the new term *vyāpyate* (“pervaded” or “covered”). This choice of vocabulary more clearly evokes the image of spatial expanse, in which a certain area is covered by cognition. As Kamalaśīḷa himself later explains, the opponent envisions a scenario in which many pots are spatially covered by a single cloth.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.3. Kamalaśīḷa’s strategy

Interestingly, Kamalaśīḷa responds to the above criticism—which presupposes the Buddhist *sākāra* theory—first from the standpoint of the *nirākāra* position and then from that of the *sākāra* position. As he states: “First of all, if criticism is made based on the view of the Nirākāra-vijñāna-vāḁins”<sup>37</sup> and “If criticism is made in regard to the view of the Sākāra-jñāna-vāḁins.”<sup>38</sup> Moreover, in each case, the response is presented from two different perspectives. Below, we will examine Kamalaśīḷa’s solution in four parts.<sup>39</sup>

#### 3.3.1. *Nirākāra* + *nirvikalpa*

First, when Buddhists adopt the *nirākāra* theory, cognition only needs to grasp the object as it is, without incorporating the object’s form into the cognition. Thus, it can be expected that defending the omniscience of the omniscient being is easier

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<sup>36</sup> Regarding the infinite, Kamalaśīḷa distinguishes between that which is spatially limitless, such as the environmental world, and that which is also limitless in terms of enumeration (counting), such as sentient beings. TSP 1124: 2-3: *deśavitānāparyantatayānanto bhājanalokaḁ, sattvalokas tu saṁkhyānāparyantatayāpi*.

<sup>37</sup> TSP 1123,5–6: *yadi tāvan nirākāravijñānavāḁimatam āśritya codyate*.

<sup>38</sup> TSP 1125,5: *atha sākārajñānavāḁipakṣe codyate*.

<sup>39</sup> Moriyama 1986 summarized the content of the relevant section of the AAPV that parallels TSP ad 3626.

within the *nirākāra* theory than in the *sākāra* theory.

Kamalaśīla states that the situation described as “everything is covered (*vyāpta*)” means that everything that comes into being is “cut out” (*paricchidyate*)—that is, determined—by the mind of the omniscient being solely through its existence.<sup>40</sup> He explicitly rejects the spatial image of many pots being completely covered by a single cloth.<sup>41</sup> As he indicates with the key term *sattāmātreṇa*, all being is perceived as it is, simply by virtue of its existence. He reiterates: “Rather, everything is determined by cognition, as it exists, and not otherwise. Likewise, the entire world, both sentient and insentient, is also grasped as it exists by the mind of the omniscient being.”<sup>42</sup> In this case, the infinite world is grasped as infinite, not as finite. Thus, the problem of being finite because it is demarcated does not arise in the *nirākāra* theory.<sup>43</sup> As Kamalaśīla emphasizes, in the *nirākāra* theory, objects do not ascend to cognition; instead, they are cognized only by their existence. This means the problem the opponent pointed out for the *sākāra* theory does not arise at all.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, Kamalaśīla attempts to justify the use of the word *pariccheda* (delimitation). The Buddha is called omniscient because he grasps what exists as existing, and what does not exist as non-existing.<sup>45</sup> Since there are no limits

<sup>40</sup> TSP 1123,7–8: *yāvat kiṃcid vastu jātaṃ sattām anubhavati, tasya sarvasya sattāmātreṇa sarvajñacetasā paricchedāt “tena tad vyāptam” iti vyapadiśyate*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 194.

<sup>41</sup> TSP 1123,8–9: *na tu paṭeneva ghaṭānāṃ deśaparyantatayāvṛyāpṭeḥ*.

<sup>42</sup> TSP 1123,12–14: *api tu yathaiḥ santi, tathaiḥ jñānena paricchidyante, nānyena rūpeṇa tadvat sattvabhājanaloko ’pi yathaiḥ sattām anubhavati, tathaiḥ sarvajñacetasā grhyate*.

<sup>43</sup> TSP 1123,14–15: *aparyantaś ca dikṣu vidikṣu satvādiloko ’vasthita ity aparyantatayā tasya grahaṇaṃ na tu paryantavartitayeti kuto ’ntavativaprasaṅgaḥ*.

<sup>44</sup> TSP 1123,24–25: *na hi nirākārajñānavādipakṣe jñānātmani bhāvānām ārohaṇam asti. api tu sattāmātreṇa tena nivedyante*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 194.

<sup>45</sup> TSP 1124,6–7: *tathā hi yad asti tad astitvena yan nāsti tan nāstitvena grhṇan sarvavid ucyate. na ca sattvabhājanalokasya paryanto ’sti*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 194 and McClintock 2010: 142, n. 352.

in the entire world, he is omniscient because he grasps the non-existent limit of reach as non-existent and perceives the existent limit, delimited by his cognition, as existent.<sup>46</sup>

Unlike the attitude of rejection suggested by the image of the cloth—which implied a delimitation of infinity—Kamalaśīḷa here clearly endeavors to justify the image of delimitation that the word *pariccheda* inevitably carries. He acknowledges the separation of “inside” and “outside” through the cognitive action of *pariccheda*. Kamalaśīḷa concludes that the omniscient person correctly grasps the situation; that is, he grasps the entire inner existent as existent and the outer non-existent as non-existent. In other words, the Buddha is omniscient because he correctly perceives the domain outside the boundaries drawn by *pariccheda* as a non-existent, an empty set.

### 3.3.2. *Nirākāra + savikalpa*

In the above defense, Kamalaśīḷa assumed the cognitive action of the omniscient being, called *pariccheda*, to be non-conceptual cognition. In this case, however, a problem arises, as described below: the distinction between objects cannot be established. Consequently, the Buddha’s proper preaching would be impossible, because the Buddha distinguishes between what is to be taken up and what is to be abandoned (*heyopādeya*). Therefore, Kamalaśīḷa presents an alternative interpretation that utilizes the nuance of the word *pariccheda*, defining it as a kind of pure worldly wisdom that follows the non-conceptual cognition of the first moment—in other words, as a type of discriminating conceptual cognition.

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<sup>46</sup> TSP 1124,7–9: *tasmāt paryantaṃ gamanakṛtaṃ avidyamānaṃ avidyamānatayā gr̥hṇan sarvajñajñāna-paricchadakṛtaṃ tu paryantaṃ vidyamānaṃ vidyamānatayā paśyan katham asarvajño nāma.*

When the form of an object is not incorporated into cognition, a problem arises: there is no distinction between different instances of cognition, such as “this is cognition of blue” or “this is cognition of yellow.” This is known as the problem of the impossibility of *pratīkarmavyavasthā*, i.e., that cognition is not differentiated with respect to its particular objects. This critique is well-known in Buddhist epistemology, specifically as it targets the *nirākāra* theory of Brahmanism and the Vaibhāṣikas.

This same critical method is now applied to the *nirākāra* theory of the Yogācāras. The opponent argues that in the *nirākāra* theory, grasping of the object is not possible<sup>47</sup> because formless cognition is not differentiated in accord with everything.<sup>48</sup> This is due to the fact that formless cognition does not allow for a distinction to be made between the cognitions of individual objects.<sup>49</sup>

Kamalaśīla’s response to this is straightforward: he concedes that no object-by-object distinction exists in the omniscient being’s cognition.<sup>50</sup> This is because such cognition encompasses all objects.<sup>51</sup> In other words, it is not merely a cognition of blue or yellow, but a cognition of everything.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, in the omniscient state, the formless cognition arising from the power of yoga presents no problem whatsoever.<sup>53</sup>

In this case, however, the problem, as described above, arises from the inability to distinguish between *heya* and *upādeya*.<sup>54</sup> In response, Kamalaśīla states

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<sup>47</sup> TSP 1124,10: *syād etat—nirākārajñānapakṣe viśayagrahaṇam anupapannam.*

<sup>48</sup> TSP 1124,10–11: *sarvatrāviśiṣṭatvāt tasya.*

<sup>49</sup> TSP 1124,11: *tena pratīkarmavibhāḡānupapatteḡ.*

<sup>50</sup> TSP 1124,12–13: *na hi sarvajñajñānasya pratīkarmavibhāḡa iṣyate.*

<sup>51</sup> TSP 1124,13: *tasya sarvavastuviśayatvāt.*

<sup>52</sup> TSP 1124,13–14: *yato na tan nīlasyaiva saṃvedanam, pītasyaiva vā, api tu sarvasyaiveṭīṣṭam.*

<sup>53</sup> TSP 1124,18: *tena sarvajñāvasthāyāṃ nirākāraṃ yogabalenotpadyamānam aviruddham eva.* Cf. Funayama 2007: 195.

that when the entire world appears, *heya* and *upādeya*—as real entities—have no problem appearing; rather, they appear separately, without losing their respective natures.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, after acknowledging the first yogic cognition, it is assumed that a second cognition, *pariccheda*, which makes a distinction, subsequently arises. Kamalaśīla then states: “Then, by means of the reflective pure worldly wisdom that [subsequently] arises by the power of the omniscient’s cognition, [*heya* and *upādeya*] are determined/distinguished (*paricchidyate*, literally “are fully cut”). How can it be said, therefore, that *heya* and *upādeya* are not fully known separately?”<sup>56</sup>

It should be noted here that in this context, intransitive verbs like “appears” (*ava-√bhās*, *prati-√bhās*) are used, rather than transitive verbs (“covers,” “determines,” “grasps,” “cognizes”). The object manifests as it is, and it is later compartmentalized by the action of the subject.

### 3.3.3. Summary of Kamalaśīla’s defense from the standpoint of the *nirākāra* view

Kamalaśīla’s primary strategy for defending omniscience within the *nirākāra* view is as follows: he rejects the model of spatial limitation implied by the expressions *paricchidyate* and *vyāpyate*. Instead, he reiterates that the infinite object is grasped and cognized as it is, using the words *grhyate* and *nivedyante* to emphasize that the

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<sup>54</sup> TSP 1124,18-19: *vibhāgena heyopādeyavastuparijñānaṃ na syād iti cet.*

<sup>55</sup> TSP 1124,23–1125,2: *yāvatā viśvasmin jagaty avabhāsamāne tad api heyopādeyaṃ vastv aviruddhapratibhāsam apracyutātmattvaṃ vibhaktam evāvabhāsate.* Cf. Funayama 2007: 195.

<sup>56</sup> TSP 1125,2–3: *paścāc ca sarvajñajñānabalotpannaśuddhalaukikapratyavamarśapratyayena paricchidyata eveti kathaṃ vibhāgena tadaparijñānaṃ nāma.* Cf. Funayama 2007: 195.

omniscient person apprehends the infinite as it is. This constitutes, so to speak, either a rejection of the primary image of *pariccheda* or its reinterpretation.

Next, Kamalaśīla considers how to integrate *pariccheda* into Buddhist epistemology. He explains *pariccheda* not as a cutting out of the inner realm from the outside, but as compartmentalization of the internal. In other words, for him, *pariccheda* represents a segmentation or internal compartmentalization. He further explains it as a function of the pure worldly wisdom obtained subsequently. Here, the cognitive action of the omniscient *pariccheda* is relegated to the subordinate position of a subsequent conceptual cognition, rather than being the non-conceptual cognition itself in the first moment. This reinterpretation of *pariccheda* helps eliminate the weaknesses of the *nirākāra* theory and accounts for the distinction between objects.

### 3.3.4. *Sākāra + nirvikalpa*

In the *nirākāra* theory, it is possible to eliminate the active aspect of the subject's "cutting" (*pariccheda*). The emphasis merely needed to be on the infinite manifesting itself as it is, because in this theory, the object reveals itself purely by virtue of its existence.

In the *sākāra* theory, however, the active aspect of the subject's "grasping" of the form cannot be overlooked. First, Kamalaśīla acknowledges that a single cognition arises through the apprehension of the forms of innumerable objects.<sup>57</sup> He then describes these forms, which belong to the single cognition, as "untrue" (*asatya*).<sup>58</sup> This aligns with Dharmakīrti's concept of *citrādvaita*, namely,

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<sup>57</sup> TSP 1125,7–8: *ekasya jñānasyānekavastvākāropagrahaṇotpattyavirodhāt*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 196. (The adopted reading here is based on the edition of Sato 2021.)

<sup>58</sup> TSP 1125,8–9: *ākārāṇām asatyatvāt*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 196.

that cognition is nondual despite being variegated with many forms. I have already discussed this problem in another article (Kataoka 2018), so I will not elaborate here. The crucial point is that even in the *sākāra* theory, where forms are typically designated as “true” (*satyākāra*) in the sense that they are causally dependent (*paratantra*), these forms exist only at the *paratantra* or *dravyasat* level, not at the *pariniṣpanna* or *paramārtha* level.<sup>59</sup> In this sense, they are labeled “untrue” (*asatya*, *asatyabhūta*) rather than “ultimate” (*pāramārthika*).

In this case, it would follow that the Buddha’s omniscience is erroneous because the forms within cognition are unreal, as the opponent points out: “If so (if the forms are unreal), the omniscient being would be deluded because he would have erroneous cognition.”<sup>60</sup> Kamalaśīla’s solution to this problem, however, is simple: since the omniscient Buddha cognizes untrue forms *as untrue*, he is not deluded.<sup>61</sup>

When assuming the duality of subjectivity and objectivity, one is compelled to posit an active grasping function, which inevitably raises the question of whether the infinite can be determined or taken into cognition *as it is*. In reality, however, the *sākāravāda* posits that the cognition of an object is merely the experience of a form (*ākārānubhava*). In other words, as is clear from the consciousness-only theory which does not admit an external object, the self-cognition of an inner form is what is termed “the grasping of an object” (*arthagrahaṇa*). To emphasize this point, Kamalaśīla states: “In the view of the Sākārajñānavādins, there is no other

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<sup>59</sup> The three levels presupposed in the Yogācāra system need to be recalled here: *pariniṣpanna*, *paratantra*, and *parikalpita*, which correspond to *paramārtha*, *dravyasat*, and *prajñaptisat*, respectively.

<sup>60</sup> TSP 1125,10–11: *yady evam, bhrāntajñānasaṅgitvād bhrāntaḥ prāpnoti sarvajña iti cet*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 196.

<sup>61</sup> TSP 1125,12–13: *yadā tv asatyabhūtān ākārān asatyatvenaiva jānāti, tadā kathaṃ bhrānto bhavet*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 196

function of grasping an object apart from cognition's experience of its own form."<sup>62</sup>

Thus, even from the standpoint of the *sākāra* theory, there is no problem in describing infinite reality as “covered” (*vyāpta*), as it is justified that for an omniscient being, a single cognition arises by grasping the forms of infinite entities.<sup>63</sup>

### 3.3.5. *Sākāra + savikalpa*

In the *sākāra* theory as well, Kamalaśīla explains the function of *pariccheda* as pertaining to post-acquired pure worldly wisdom. When existents ascend to cognition, they are determined exactly as such by the subsequent reflective awareness.<sup>64</sup> Everything that exists, without exception, ascends to the mind of the omniscient being.<sup>65</sup> The entities, when they appear to the omniscient mind, appear as infinite.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, anything else—that is, what has not appeared there—is nothing but finite.<sup>67</sup> And only this finite entity, specifically the empty set (that which has not appeared), is eliminated (*vyavacchedaḥ kriyate*) by the subsequent reflective awareness.<sup>68</sup>

Here, Kamalaśīla explains *vyavaccheda* as being in consonance with *pariccheda*, elucidating that the infinite first ascends (*samārohati*) and appears (*pratibhāsate*) to the non-conceptual cognition of the omniscient

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<sup>62</sup> TSP 1125,16–17: *sākārajñānavādipakṣe jñānasyātmākārānubhavavyatirekeṇa nānyo 'rthagrahaṇavyāpāro 'sti*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 198.

<sup>63</sup> TSP 1125,18–19: *ato jñeyavad ekasyāpi jñānasyānantavastuḡatākāropagraheṇopatter anantaṃ vastu tena vyāptam ity ucyate*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 198.

<sup>64</sup> TSP 1125,19–20: *yenaiva cātmanā jñānātmani bhāvāḥ samārohanti, tenaiva tatprṣṭhabhāvīparāmarśa-cetasā paricchidyante*. Cf. Funayama 2007: 198.

<sup>65</sup> TSP 1125,21–22: *yāvāt kiñcid astitvam anubahvati, tat sarvam eva samārohati*.

<sup>66</sup> TSP 1126,13–14: *pratibhāsamānaṃ vastu sarvajñacetasy anantaṃ eva pratibhāsate*.

<sup>67</sup> TSP 1126,14–15: *tasmād anyad apratibhāsamānam antavad eva*.

<sup>68</sup> TSP 1126,15: *tasyaiva ca parāmarśacetasā vyavacchedaḥ kriyate*.

(*nirvikalpasarvajñacetā*) as the infinite. It is then determined (*paricchidyante*) by the subsequent pure worldly reflective awareness to be precisely what it is (\**yenaiivātmanā ... tenaiivātmanā*). The outer domains that do not appear are subsequently excluded as an empty set. Thus, the “cutting” action of *pariccheda* is here explained in terms of demarcation that involves outer elimination (*vyavaccheda*) rather than inner compartmentalization.

### 3.3.6. Summary of Kamalaśīḷa’s defense from the standpoint of the *sākāra* view

Again, it should be noted that the manifestation of the object at the first stage is rephrased using the intransitive verb *pratibhāsate*. For Kamalaśīḷa, there is no concern that the object might be limited as finite from the outset, as his worldview assumes that the infinite appears as it is. This, however, compelled him to clarify that the variegated images in the omniscient being’s mind, reflecting the infinite objects, were in fact untrue. In other words, it became necessary to explicitly state the non-duality of cognition at the ultimate level of the Yogācāra system. If countless and variegated forms were squeezed into the limited domain of a single cognition, people would naturally suspect that they are finite.

### 3.4. Kamalaśīḷa’s perspectives

Kamalaśīḷa’s explanation of how “determination” or “covering” of everything occurs, from the perspectives of both *nirākāra* and *sākāra* theories and in terms of non-conceptual and conceptual cognitions, can be summarized as follows. (N: *Nirākāravāda*; S: *Sākāravāda*)

- N-1. The omniscient Buddha apprehends the entire world precisely as it is, simply by virtue of its existence. He grasps the infinite as infinite, not as

finite, and comprehends all existents as existent, and all non-existents as non-existent.

N-2. While his non-conceptual cognition of all things lacks object-by-object distinction, the subsequently arising reflective pure worldly wisdom allows him to distinguish between objects, such as *heya* (what is to be abandoned) and *upādeya* (what is to be taken up).

S-1. A single cognition arises by grasping the forms of infinite entities. Although the variegated forms appearing within this single cognition are ultimately untrue, the Buddha's accurate perception of them *as untrue* prevents him from being deluded.

S-2. All existents ascend to the Buddha's cognition and are precisely determined by subsequent reflective cognition. Only that which has not manifested in his mind is eliminated.

#### 4. Comparison

How would Kamalaśīla have answered Maṇḍana's questions? Here, we will imagine his answers within a dialogue format to assess the coherence of their arguments. (M: Maṇḍana; K: Kamalaśīla)

1. M: An omniscient being cannot cognize "all things" either sequentially or simultaneously, as "all things" are infinite in time and space.

K: Such a being can cognize all things simultaneously.

2. M: If the total quantity of "all things" is not determined, then "all things" themselves are not determined.

K: It is not necessary to determine the total quantity of all things for an omniscient being to cognize them all.<sup>69</sup>

3. M: The present mental images, being delimited at both ends, cannot encompass “all.”

K: Present cognition is capable of apprehending everything. I have discussed this elsewhere; see TSP ad TS 3472 and TS 1852–54.

4. M: Ontologically, the infinite number of objects cannot be defined as “all.”

K: [No direct answer provided by Kamalaśīla in this context.] (Our position is that we do not accept real universals; thus, the infinite “all” are not governed by a universal.)

5. M: Epistemologically, the infinite “all” cannot be determined.

K: The Buddha cognizes all things precisely as they are. He cognizes the infinite as it is.

6. M: The infinite “all” cannot be delimited by the three times.

K: [No direct answer provided by Kamalaśīla in this context. For a detailed discussion, see Chapter 21, *Traikālyaparīkṣā*.]

Maṇḍana questioned the ontological nature of the infinite, but Kamalaśīla’s response here is limited to its epistemological understanding. Consequently, Maṇḍana’s ontological queries regarding how the infinite “all” is governed by a universal, or how it is limited by the three times, remain unaddressed in this context. Kamalaśīla’s ontology is fundamentally distinct, rooted in the Sautrāntika position which, unlike other schools, only acknowledges the present moment, rejecting the reality of past and future. He has, however, explored the concept of the three times in detail within Chapter 21, *Traikālyaparīkṣā*. Furthermore, he

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<sup>69</sup> TSP 1123,17: *ko hy atra pratibandhaḥ—yatra sākalyagrahaṇaṃ tatrāvaśyaṃ paryantagrahaṇam iti*. “This is because there is no rule here that when everything is grasped, there is always a grasping of its total quantity.”

does not accept the existence of a real universal, thus dismissing from the outset the view that the infinite “all” must be governed by one.

Moreover, their epistemological frameworks are fundamentally different. In the Dharmakīrtian consciousness-only worldview, the world “appears” in an intransitive sense. The omniscient Buddha experiences the infinite variegated images precisely as they are, even while knowing them to be untrue. It is not the case that the infinite is “covered” by a cognition in a transitive sense, akin to pots being covered with a single cloth. Even when Kamalaśīla employs the expression “cutting out” (*pariccheda*), the infinite is appropriately determined as infinite, and whatever is excluded (*vyavacchidyate*) is nonexistent—an empty set.

## 5. Concluding remarks

While there is no direct philological evidence that Kamalaśīla was aware of the specific passages in Maṇḍana’s VV, it is evident they shared philosophical and doctrinal concerns. Both the VV and Kamalaśīla’s TSP address the paradoxical question of “determining the infinite” within the broader debate on both sequential and simultaneous omniscience, primarily focusing on the simultaneous theory. Maṇḍana’s query specifically targeted the Buddhist *sākāra* theory of cognition. Kamalaśīla, however, provides a comprehensive doctrinal response from both *nirākāra* and *sākāra* perspectives, reflecting the Yogācāra system of his era.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Kamalaśīla’s presentation of the *Nirākāravijñānavādimata* and *Sākārajñānavādidpakṣa* positions aims for a common ground shared by both the Sautrāntikas and the Yogācāras. However, the Sautrāntika view, which presupposes external objects, receives stronger emphasis. For example, TSP 1125,18 states: “A cognition, though single, by grasping the forms of real entities ... as the objects of cognition are” (*jñeyavad ekasyāpi jñānasya ... ākāropagrahaṇa-*). Nevertheless, Kamalaśīla appears to deliberately avoid explicitly committing to either position. A circumspect expression like *vastujātaṃ sattām anubhavati* (1123,7, “Real entities come into being”) seems to leave open the question of whether an external world truly exists (cf. Funayama 2007: 194, n. 35). Similarly, the phrase “existents

Philosophically speaking, the *nirākāra* theory is more persuasive in emphasizing how the infinite is grasped as infinite, or how it appears as it is. It was probably with this intention that Kamalaśiḷa first introduced the *nirākāra* theory. The *sākāra* theory, which is inherently more challenging to explain, can be resolved through application of the *nirākāra* theory. This is evidenced by the fact that the explanation of the *sākāra* theory, while parallel in content, is notably shorter than that of the *nirākāra* theory.<sup>71</sup>

The function of *pariccheda*, where the subject “cuts out” the object, and the spatial image of *vyāpyate*, where the subject covers the entire space of the object, could potentially render the infinite finite. To diminish such misleading images, Kamalaśiḷa employs the neutral verbs *grhyate* and *nivedyante* to describe the situation. Ultimately, he emphasizes that the infinite appears as it is by explaining it from a Yogācāra worldview, in which only mental images manifest. In the *sākāra* theory, to defend the possibility of the infinite appearing in a single perception, he goes so far as to admit that these mental images are, in fact, untrue and not ultimate.

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ascend to cognition” (*jñānātmani bhāvāḥ samārohani*, TSP 1125,19–20) leans towards a Sautrāntika perspective, yet it does not explicitly mention externality and can also be interpreted from a Yogacara viewpoint. The final position in TSP 1126,17–19, which we will examine later, explicitly states that the external world is not presupposed, drawing an analogy to positive dreaming. This implies that the preceding descriptions of the *Nirākāra* and *Sākāra* positions are intentionally framed from a standpoint that the Sautrāntikas could also accept. Given that Kamalaśiḷa considers external realists like Kumāriḷa to be his primary opponents in the omniscience debate, it is understandable that he would respond from a position acknowledging the external world. However, this approach is not entirely consistent, particularly when it risks undermining his own core view. The passage where Kamalaśiḷa explicitly states that forms are untrue, for instance, cannot be adequately explained without assuming a Yogācāra position rather than a Sautrāntika one.

<sup>71</sup> See Appendix. The number of lines in each of the four parts is as follows:

1. *Nirākāra+nirvikalpa*: TSP 1123,7–1124,9 (28 lines)
2. *Nirākāra+savikalpa*: TSP 1124,10–1125,4 (18 lines)
3. *Sākāra+nirvikalpa*: TSP 1125,5–19 (15 lines)
4. *Sākāra+savikalpa*: TSP 1125,19–16 (14 lines)

Maṇḍana pointed out that the temporally limited objects of a present cognition are not “all.” Kamalaśīla, conversely, attempts to resolve the problem of everything fitting into one cognition by emphasizing the ultimate position of nonduality. Their perspectives on this issue are misaligned. In the end, for Kamalaśīla, there is no alternative but to emphasize the perspective of “appearance” (*pratibhāsa*), as seen in his explanation of “the experience of the image” (*ākārānubhava*). The existence of the external world is no longer presupposed here.<sup>72</sup>

In Kamalaśīla’s ultimate position, the Buddha’s perception of all is nothing more than the manifestation of a single cognition containing infinite untrue images. The infinite is thus dissolved into nonduality. Alternatively, the only way to effect a “cut-off” is to make it a function of post-acquired pure worldly wisdom. But even in this scenario, according to Kamalaśīla, the eliminated part constitutes an empty set from the beginning.

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<sup>72</sup> Kamalaśīla is fully aware that, in the ultimate position—which does not presuppose an external world—this problem cannot arise from the outset. At the very end of his commentary, he states: “For those [Buddhists] who understand that all cognition of the yoga practitioner lacks [a corresponding external] object and is valid because it aligns with reality, just like positive dreaming, the criticism of finitude is not a problem at all from the very beginning.” TSP 1126,17–19: *ye tu punaḥ sarvam eva yogivijñānam anāmbanam satyasvapnadarśanavad vastusaṃvāditayā pramāṇam iti pratipannāḥ, tān praty antavattvacodyaṃ dūrīkṛtāvakāśam eva.*

**Appendix: Comparison of some of the parallel passages in the *Nirākāra* and the *Sākāra* theories of the TSP**

| Nirākāra (+ nirvikalpa)  | Sākāra (+ nirvikalpa)   |
|--|---|
| <p>TSP 1123,6–8:<br/>yadi tāvan nirākāravijñānavādimatam āśritya codyate, tadā sarvam asaṃgatam. tathā hi,<br/>yāvat kiṃcid vastu-jātaṃ sattām anubhavati,</p> <p>tasya sarvasya sattāmātreṇa sarva-jñācetasā paricchedāt “tena tad vyāptam” iti vyapadiśyate.</p> <p>TSP 1123,12–15:<br/>api tu yathaiva santi tathaiva jñānena paricchidyante, nānyena rūpeṇa. tadvat sattvabhājanaloko ’pi yathaiva sattām anubhavati, tathaiva sarvajñācetasā gr̥hyate. aparyantaś ca dikṣu vidikṣu sattvādiloko ’vasthita ity aparyantatayā tasya grahaṇam, na tu paryantavartitayeti kuto ’ntavattvaprasaṅgaḥ.</p> | <p>TSP 1125,5–8:<br/>atha sākārajñānavādipakṣe codyate, tatrāpy avirodha eva. tathā hi,<br/>yathaiva tad anantaṃ vastv anantākārānugataṃ ātmasattām anubhavati,<br/>tathaiva tat sārva-jñāṃ cetō ’parimitavastugatākāropagraheṇotpa-dyamānam aviruddham eva, ekasya jñānasyāneka vastvākāropagraheṇotpattavyirodhāt.</p> <p>TSP 1125,18–19:<br/>ato jñeyavad ekasyāpi jñānasyānantavastugatākāropagraheṇotpatteḥ “anantaṃ vastu tena vyāptam” ity ucyate.</p> |
| Nirākāra (+ savikalpa)   | Sākāra (+ savikalpa)  |
| <p>TSP 1124,23–1125,3:<br/>yāvatā viśvasmin jagaty avabhāsamāne tad api heyopādeyaṃ vastv aviruddha-pratibhāsam apracyutātmatattvaṃ vibhaktam evāvabhāstate. paścāc ca sarvajñā-jñānabalotpannaśuddhalaukikapratyavamarāśpratyayena paricchidyata eveti kathaṃ vibhāgena tadaparijñānaṃ nāma.</p>  | <p>TSP 1125,19–20:<br/>yenaiva cātmanā jñānātmani bhāvāḥ samārohanti tenaiva tat-prṣṭhabhāvīparāmarāścetasā paricchidyante.</p>   |

## Abbreviations and Bibliography

### Primary sources

*Abhisamayālaṃkāṛālokā Prajñāpāramitāvyākhyā*

AAPV *Abhisamayālaṃkāṛ'ālokā Prajñāpāramitāvyākhyā (Commentary on Aṣṭasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā) by Haribhadra together with the Text Commented on.* Part I. Ed. Unrai Wogihara. Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1932–35.

*Tattvasaṃgraha(pañjikā).*

TS(P) *Tattvasaṅgraha of Ācārya Shāntarakṣta with the Commentary Pañjikā of Shri Kamalashīla.* Ed. Dvārikadāsa Śāstrī. 2 vols. Varanasi: Baudha Bharatī, 1981, 1982. (Second edition) [Corrections not otherwise noted are based on the edition by Sato 2021. Another critical edition by Shi 2018 is also consulted.]

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T The SAT Daizōkyō Text Database, 2018. (SAT 2018).

*Vidhiviveka*

VV *Vidhiviveka of Maṅḍanamīśra: with Its Commentary Nyāyakaṇikā of Vācaspatimīśra and Its Commentaries Juṣadhvaṅkaraṇī and Svaditāṅkaraṇī of Parameśvara.* Ed. Elliot M. Stern. 2 vols. Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry, 2023. (I am grateful to him for allowing me to consult the manuscript prior to its publication.)

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# A Post-Kumārila Argument about Omniscience: Maṇḍana and Kamalaśīla on the Paradox of Determining Everything

Kei Kataoka

This paper examines part of the discussion that emerged after Kumārila between the Mīmāṃsā and Buddhist traditions concerning the problem of omniscience. How can an omniscient being know everything? If such a being knows everything in a limited manner—as "**this much**"—then what the omniscient being knows is not truly *everything*. Conversely, if their knowledge of everything is not limited in this way, they would not be "cutting out" (*pari-√chid*) everything, meaning they would not be determining the infinite. Maṇḍana critically addresses this paradox from the Mīmāṃsā perspective, while Kamalaśīla, writing from a Buddhist (specifically Yogācāra) standpoint, offers a detailed defense of omniscience. This paper closely analyzes Maṇḍana's critique and Kamalaśīla's defense, organizing the key points of their respective arguments. While Maṇḍana criticizes the Buddhist *sākāra* theory, Kamalaśīla considers both the *nirākāra* and *sākāra* theories. He also addresses the question of whether the cognition of an omniscient being is conceptual or nonconceptual, examining both positions. Finally, this paper explores how these arguments intersect within the broader context of interschool debate, aiming to illuminate the contours of this philosophical discourse during their time.