

Śāntarakṣita's Adoption and Criticism of the Theory of Self-Cognizing Cognition  
(Svasaṃvedana), Established by Śākyabuddhi  
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Śākyabuddhi (c. 660-720) in his *Pramāṇavārttika-ṭīkā* (PVTŚ P.5718, 251b5–252a4, D.4220, 204a4–b1) about Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika-kārikā* III 213 elucidates his detailed theory of self-cognizing cognition. I try to evidence that Śākyabuddhi had a great influence on Śāntarakṣita's theory of self-cognizing cognition. Śāntarakṣita (c. 725-788) in his *Madhyamakālaṃkāra-vṛtti ad MA-kārikā* 49 criticizes Śākyabuddhi's theory of the simultaneous manifold nature of homogeneous cognition (*samānajātīyāni api vijñānāni bahūni*) viz. **self-cognizing cognition**. Śāntarakṣita points out that **self-cognizing cognition** entails the same fault of being devoid of the one and many nature (*ekānekasvabhāvarahita*) that atoms (*paramāṇu*) do (cf. TS kk. 1989–1991, 1996). Because of this we can anticipate the relation between Śākyabuddhi and Śāntarakṣita. From the viewpoint of the one and many nature, negating the aggregates of the material (*rūpaskandha*), viz., external objects consisting of atoms (*paramāṇu*) or the whole (*avayavin*), Śākyabuddhi in his PVTŚ and Śāntarakṣita in his *Madhyamakālaṃkāra-kārikā* 16–18 corresponding to *Tattvasaṃgraha-kārikā* 1998–2001 examine the aggregates of cognition (*vijñānaskandha*). Śākyabuddhi and Śāntarakṣita conclude that no kind of cognition can cognize external objects because a cognition is foreign to or not identical with the external object, and then they proceed to confirm self-cognizing cognition (*svasaṃvedana*).

Śākyabuddhi and Śāntarakṣita share the theory of self-cognizing cognition, as follows: They make a clear distinction between cognition–feelings (*cittacaitta*), viz., self-cognizing cognition and external objects (*rūpa*) consisting of atoms, which are sensible (*ajāḍa*) and insensible (*jaḍa*) or non-material (*amūrtatva*) and material (*mūrtatva*) respectively. They differentiate a cognition with images (*sākārajñāna*) given by external objects, which lies in the conceptually constructed relation of subject and object (*grāhyagrāhakabhāva*), from self-cognizing cognition free from this relation. Obviously, they regard the subject-object relation as a falsity. Furthermore, they explain that self-cognizing cognition has the nature of awareness (*bodharūpa*) and cognizes itself, and hence does not perceive external objects, but only cognition itself. To justify the negation of external objects, they argue for the theory of self-cognizing cognition. Therefore it is safely said that Śāntarakṣita, who is under the influence of Dharmakīrti, adopts the theory of self-cognizing cognition and the method of probing it from Śākyabuddhi when he negates external objects. However, Śāntarakṣita regards self-cognizing cognition as conventional truth (*saṃvṛtisatya*) because it is untenable against the examination mentioned above (cf. MAV ad MAK91). This is much more evident to his pupil, Kamalaśīla (c.740-795) in his *Madhyamakāloka* (P No.5287 180b4–183a1, D N.3887

165b6–168a1) . He cites and criticizes Śākyabuddhi's theory of self-cognizing cognition. Śāntarakṣita's and Kamalaśīla's positive and negative attitudes toward the theory of self-cognizing cognition should be distinguished. The positive attitude is for the sake of excluding external objects, and the negative attitude is for the sake of vindicating the Mādhyamika philosophy. Thus it is evident that Śākyabuddhi's theory of self-cognizing cognition is adopted and criticized by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla.