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Seeing as Cognizing: Perception, Concepts and Meditation Practice in Indian Buddhist Epistemology

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Abstract: As Buddhist literature makes abundantly clear, the Buddha's knowledge is an instance of yogic perception; it radically differs from the ordinary cognition of empirical objects and results from a special training that includes ascetic toil and meditative practices. This essay aims to explore the role of special cognitive processes – in particular the Buddha's vision of the Truths and cognitive processes relating to meditation practices – in the Buddhist epistemological tradition of South Asia. It argues that, given the Indian philosophical context, an epistemology with Buddhist presuppositions had to consider why and how meditation practices can make a difference as regards the results of cognition. Passages from Dharmakīrti's work will be examined that show how Dharmakīrti represents yogic perception and the function of meditation practices (especially visualization) in transforming habitual processes of conceptualization.

Keywords: perception, conception, meditation, Indian Buddhist epistemology, visuality/vision, Dharmakīrti

1 Introduction: Seeing as cognizing

Sanskrit words belonging to the semantic field of 'seeing' are used to designate both physical acts performed by the eyes and cognitive acts relating to the mind. 'Seeing' thus appears in the various genres of Indic literature as a dominant metaphor for describing cognition. Words relating to 'seeing' such as *darśana* and *dṛṣṭi*, for example, commonly designate both ordinary and special types of cognition, which in English correspond to a range of meanings from 'view' to 'vision' and 'insight'. In Vedic texts, as observed by Jan Gonda, such words may refer to the praeter-normal cognition of the seers (*ṛṣis*), to the

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experience of events beyond eye-sight, or to activities which literally are not the eye's.[1]

The Buddha's extra-ordinary experience of the four Truths[2] is reported as the arising of five cognitions in the three phases that characterize each of the four Truths.[3] The first of these cognitions is denoted by the Pali word *cakkhu*, which designates the eye as a sense organ and the sense faculty based on it, and is used here to metaphorically indicate the result of the eyes' activity, namely vision,[4] suggesting a vivid appearance of the Truths as cognitive contents. The arising of those five cognitions leads to the purification of the Buddha's 'knowing and seeing how things are' (*yathābhūtaṃ ñāṇadassanaṃ*), an expression analogous to *jānāti passati*, which denotes a clear understanding and can literally be rendered as 'to know and to see'.[5] As Buddhist literature makes abundantly clear, the Buddha's knowledge of the Truths is an instance of yogic perception; it radically differs from the ordinary cognition of empirical objects and results from a special training that includes ascetic toil and meditative practices. Meditative practices, as modes for cultivating the mind, per se consist in 'seeing' in a way different from the ordinary one. Since they are intended to train the mind to eventually attain an extra-ordinary ability to cognize the nature of things, they form a major aspect of the training required for attaining a vision like the Buddha's.

The topic of the workshop *Vision and Visuality in Buddhism and Beyond* made me to reconsider the role of special cognitive processes – in particular the Buddha's vision and cognitive processes relating to meditation practices[6] – in

1 Gonda 1963: 27–35.

2 The word 'Truth' translates here the Pāli *sacca*, or Sanskrit *satya*, which indicates truths or facts that the Buddha recognized (Rosenberg 1924: 75: "Wahrheiten oder Fakta, welche Buddha erkannte"). It may be useful to note that "we are not dealing here with propositional truths with which we must either agree or disagree, but with four 'true things' or 'realities' whose nature, we are told, the Buddha finally understood in the night of his awakening" (Gethin 1998: 60). In order to highlight this specific meaning, the word 'truth' as a translation of the Pāli *sacca* or Sanskrit *satya* is here capitalized.

3 *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta* (SN 56.11): *... pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu* ***cakkhuṃ*** *udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi*. – " ... in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, true knowledge, and light." (Bodhi 2000, SN V, chapter 56.11).

4 *Pali-English Dictionary* (s.v. *cakkhu*) explains the word *cakkhu* also as "channel of mental acquiring" and "instrument of super-sensuous perception".

5 *Pali-English Dictionary*, s.v. *cakkhu*.

6 Even though the meaning of 'meditation' given for example by the Oxford English Dictionary is "The action or practice of meditating", the term is also used to denote the result of meditation; this must be the case in Franco 2009: 122: "meditation or perception of yogis

the Buddhist epistemological tradition of South Asia. This essay aims to explore such a role and show that the first Buddhist epistemologists thought anew, and philosophically, about doctrinal contents concerning such processes.

When we speak of the Indian Buddhist epistemological tradition, we refer to a group of thinkers who lived in South Asia between the end of the fifth and the thirteenth centuries CE. Their investigations focused on the nature of valid cognition and the means to attain it. Dignāga (480–540) first provided a comprehensive treatment on the subject in his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* ('Compendium on the means of knowledge'; hereafter PS), where he transformed subjects of doctrinal and eristic disputes in aspects of a complex epistemological discourse. Dharmakīrti (6th–7th? century) expanded on the issues discussed by Dignāga and in many respects also innovated on them.[7] His first work, in particular, the *Pramāṇavārttika* ('Explication on the Compendium [on the means of valid cognition]'), was meant to explain Dignāga's PS.[8] Following in the wake of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, generations of interpreters of their thought participated in the next six centuries of philosophical debate in South Asia.[9]

It is now common to consider Dignāga's and Dharmakīrti's thought based on doctrinal presuppositions related to the Buddha's teachings and aiming, among other things, to provide a philosophical demonstration of the validity of these teachings. The locus classicus is the 1982 article by Ernst Steinkellner, "The Spiritual Place of the Epistemological Tradition in Buddhism".[10] In another

(*yogipratyakṣa*), as it is usually called." Therefore, I prefer to speak of 'meditation practice' and render with this phrase the Sanskrit term *bhāvanā*.

7 An outline of these philosophers' life and thought is offered, respectively, in Hattori 1968: 1–11 and Tillemans 2017. The issue of Dharmakīrti's date has been recently reconsidered in Franco 2019.

8 The commentarial nature of the *Pramāṇavārttika* is indicated by the technical term *vārttika*, which denotes a type of commentary (for further remarks, see Pecchia 2015: 41–43). Modern publications repeatedly offer unlikely translations in which *vārttika* is treated as if it indicated a generic composition on a specific subject (e. g. "Commentary on Epistemology", in Tillemans 2017).

9 For bibliographical references and basic information on these philosophers, see Steinkellner and Much 1995 and the latter's online updated version EAST (http://east.uni-hd.de).

10 Here, Steinkellner refers to Tilmann Vetter's work. It may be worth recalling that Buddhist epistemologists participated in a rich and complex philosophical debate in which the purpose of philosophical thinking was clearly distinct from the soteriological goal. Vincent Eltschinger (2014) has framed Buddhist epistemology as apologetics. As I have observed elsewhere, Dharmakīrti may rather have pursued the goal of developing and refining an epistemological method that provides "a 'rational' authentication of the dharma" (Pecchia 2015: 15).

article published in 1978, "Yogische Erkenntnis als Problem im Buddhismus", Ernst Steinkellner first pointed out the issue of yogic cognition in the Buddhist epistemological approach. Subsequent studies have examined in detail passages from Dharmakīrti's work that clearly refer to yogic cognition.[11] Here, I will reflect again on these and other passages, and highlight aspects that in my opinion have been neglected, especially as regards their links to visualization and more in general meditation practices. The reason why I wanted to re-examine Dharmakīrti's approach, in particular, is because I am not sure that, as has been stated, Dharmakīrti was not greatly concerned with the perception of yogis.[12] In fact, given the Indian philosophical context, I find it difficult to think of an epistemology with Buddhist presuppositions in which yogic perception and meditation practices had an unremarkable function because – as, respectively, Buddha's vision of the Truths and special techniques to cultivate the mind – they both played a crucial role in the different traditions based on the Buddha's teachings, including the Yogācāra tradition to which Buddhist epistemologists belonged. Thus, my hypothesis is that Buddhist epistemologists had to consider why and how meditation practices can make a difference as regards the result of cognition, and, more specifically, why these practices can eventually generate an ability to see/cognize things in a way that is valid within the soteriological scope for which its validity is claimed. Since the answer to these questions is importantly connected with the perception of yogis, as regards Dharmakīrti, the locus classicus to be analysed is a passage on yogic perception, namely PV III.281–286, but also other parts of his work reveal aspects of his approach to cognitive processes connected with meditation practices. In the following, we will mainly examine the locus classicus on yogic perception and a prose passage on PV I.58. This passage is key to understanding the effect of judgemental habit on the conceptual response to perceptual situations and, thus, the role of meditation practice in transforming habitual processes of conceptualization, until what is real is perceptually experienced by the yogi-perceiver.

11 Yogic perception in Dharmakīrti's work has been the subject of three major contributions, namely Dunne 2006, Eltschinger 2009, and Franco 2011 on which, as shown by the references in this paper, my understanding of the matter heavily relies. Given the context in which this paper is presented, I here refrain from discussing these studies in detail.

12 A statement to this effect has been made in Franco 2011: 81.

2 Perception and its modes

Beginning with Dignāga, Buddhist epistemologists claimed that directly perceiving and inferring are the only two means of valid cognition. The duality of the means of cognition (equal to two types of cognitions) is related to the duality of the object. By way of inference a non–object–specific characteristic, or general characteristic (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*), is cognized in the form of a concept. For example, because one sees smoke on a hill one knows that 'there is fire on the hill'. This is a conceptual construction depending on the perception of smoke and an association normally made with the latter, namely fire. Such a conceptual construction, or inference, obtains validity when a specific set of criteria is fulfilled. By contrast, perception is characterized as a cognition that does not apprehend its object through conceptualization:

> Perception is free from conceptual construction.
> *pratyakṣaṃ kalpanāpoḍhaṃ*
> (PS I.3c)

Perceiving, then, is directly accessing an object–specific property, or particular characteristic (*sva-lakṣaṇa*), for example, 'blue', whose mental form (*ākāra*) is borne by an instance of perception.[13] Dharmakīrti expanded Dignāga's characterization of perception as being free from conceptual construction by adding that perception is non-erroneous (*abhrānta*), namely, perceptual experience arises under conditions that do not prevent its validity. In this way, Dharmakīrti addressed the problem of the possibility of error created by phenomena of perceptual illusion and hallucination[14] (to which nowadays virtual reality can be added) – a problem that was already discussed before Dignāga and traditionally exemplified by the case of a perceiver with an eye-disease, by a mirage, and so forth.[15]

Dignāga's thought continued along the line of previous Buddhist thinkers, who already attempted to elaborate a theory of perception coherent with Buddhist doctrinal premises.[16] However, he innovated a characterization of perception as cognition (instead of object) that occurs in connection with

13 On the form (*ākāra*) of the external object in perception, see Kellner 2014.
14 PVin I.4ab' and prose.
15 Lists of erroneous kinds of perception in texts composed before Dignāga are for example presented in Tucci 1929: 465 and 471.
16 Details on the similarities between the *Yogācārabhūmi* and Dignāga's and Dharmakīrti's definitions of perception and inference are provided in Yaita 1999.

(*prati*) each sense organ (*akṣa*).[17] Furthermore, he postulated four modes of perception, namely perceptual awareness that directly depends on one of the external sense faculties (*indriya-pratyakṣa*), perceptual awareness as mental perception and self-awareness (*mānasa-pratyakṣa* and *sva-saṃvedana*), which depend on the mind, and perceptual awareness as yogic perception (*yogi-pratyakṣa*).[18] It has been a matter of debate whether Dignāga distinguished three or four types of perception (depending on how self-awareness is considered),[19] and whether he wanted to identify different types of perception at all. As pointed out by Eli Franco, one of the discussants on this issue, "even by arguing for three against four types of perception, we are already caught in Dharmakirti's web. For by doing so we already presuppose that Dignāga was typologizing different types of perception."[20] In fact, Dignāga's careful statement, "Here our distinguishing [various forms of perception] is in response to the view of others",[21] seemingly suggests that he wanted perception to be essentially characterized as non-conceptualized cognition. Nevertheless, if for no other reason than accounting for his way of understanding *pratyakṣa*, Dignāga arguably needed to point out which modes of cognition previously described within the Buddhist tradition were encompassed by non-conceptualized cognition. At least to that effect, then, he needed to describe the mode of self-awareness,[22] as well as the modes of sensory, mental and yogic perceptions, which are linked to

17 For details, see Hattori 1968: n. 1.11, pp. 76f. In the post-Dignāga debate, it was pointed out that the word *pratyakṣa* is etymologically unsuitable to designate perception as understood by Dignāga. More than two centuries after his lifetime Dharmottara (ca. 740–800) still had to explain that Dignāga's definition of perception conformed to the conventional usage of the word, which implies all kinds of 'direct apprehension' (*sākṣātkāritva*), as well as to its etymological meaning (which is to be understood as an adjective denoting what is 'connected with or depending on the senses', *pratigatam āśritam akṣam*). See Kajiyama 1998[1966]: 29f. with n. 23 and Hattori 1968: 77, who refer to *Nyāyabinduṭīkā* 38.1–6.

18 PS I.4ab and 6; English translation in Hattori 1968: 26f.

19 Eli Franco (1993) and others have argued that Dignāga did not consider self-awareness a separate type of perception and therefore recognized only three, instead of four, types of perception (further references in Yao 2004, n. 2). The issue has been thoroughly reconsidered by Zhihua Yao (2004, 2005), who has not questioned the fact that Dignāga aimed at offering a typology, but has rather argued that Dignāga illustrated four types of perception.

20 Franco 1993: 298.

21 Hattori 1968: 27 (see also pp. 91f., n. 44); English translation of PS I: 3.5 (on I.6ab): *paramatāpekṣaṃ cātra viśeṣaṇam*.

22 Unlike the other forms of perceptual awareness, self-awareness was for the first time postulated by Dignāga as a form of direct apprehension (see Tucci 1929: 472). Possible antecedents of *svasaṃvedana* have been investigated in Yao 2005. Further investigations on self-awareness are presented in the collection of articles edited by Birgit Kellner in 2010 (*Journal of Indian Philosophy* 38).

different objects of perceptual awareness: something external to the cognition is the object of sensory perception and mental perception (which "is an aspect of mental consciousness that experiences but does not conceptualize the sensory object");[23] yogic cognition is the vision of the contents of soteriological teachings; and self-awareness is a cognition that is aware of itself, more in particular, "mental states and factors like the passion or feelings that accompany them are aware of themselves".[24]

3 Yogic perception: Seeing and visualizing[25]

When it comes to yogic perception, Dignāga refers to a form of perceptual awareness that in previous Buddhist discussions was probably alluded to as 'pure perception' (*śuddha-pratyakṣa*).[26] Virtually all traditions in pre-modern India acknowledged the existence of yogic perception,[27] with the notable exception of Mīmāṃsā (scriptural hermeneutics) and the materialist Cārvākas. The discussion of Mīmāṃsaka philosophers, in particular, was tailored to oppose non-Brahmanical views, primarily the Buddhist.[28] As remarked by Lawrence McCrea,

> It is, above all, against such claims of personal authority in matters of *dharma* that the Mīmāṃsakas direct their fire. It is therefore not primarily the existence of yogic perception, but its usefulness as a means for validating scriptural claims, that they wish to deny. … [E]ven if this were possible—even if certain individuals really did have the power to perceive *dharma*, for instance—this would be of no help to ordinary people—to people like ourselves who are not yogis—in gaining knowledge of *dharma* for themselves.[29]

In view of this, it is unlikely that yogic perception is just something Dignāga pays lip service to. Indeed, it entails a reference to, and a concern with, the Buddha's vision of the Truths (the yogic cognition par excellence in the Buddhist context) and the validity of this vision with regard to the *dharma* – which was as

23 Yao 2005: 136.

24 Kellner 2010: 204.

25 Longer passages referred to in this section and the next one are here presented in translation. The Sanskrit texts and their respective translations are collected in the Appendix, where further references concerning the passages or the translations are provided, too.

26 Tucci 1929: 472. A different opinion is expressed by V. Eltschinger, who states that Dignāga "is likely to have been the first one to discuss the perception of mystics within the general framework of perception (*pratyakṣa*) as a means of valid cognition" (2009: 190, n. 93).

27 A useful overview is offered in Taber 2005: 179–181, n. 23.

28 See Taber 2005: 55f. and, for another textual example, Steinkellner 2017: 13.

29 McCrea 2009: 56f.

central for the Buddhists as controversial in the larger philosophical debate. In Dignāga's description, the non-conceptuality of yogic perception specifically refers to concepts based on *āgama*, 'scripture', which in Dignāga's system belongs to the realm of inference[30]:

> The yogin's vision of the content in itself (*arthamātra*) 'not filled' (unassociated) with the teacher's instruction [is also a mode of perception].
>
> PS I.6cd

Dharmakīrti presents yogic perception in further detail in a short section of the PV and elsewhere. In a passage of his *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (PVin), in particular, he states:

> Furthermore, once the yogis have grasped the contents [of knowledge] in virtue of the wisdom resulting from hearing/learning [and] have ascertained [these contents] in virtue of [the wisdom resulting from] reflecting [upon them] by means of reasoning, they practise the mental cultivation [of these contents]. At the completion of this [process], what appears as vividly as, for example, in the case of fear, is a cognition that is not conceptual [and] does not have something unreal as its object; [that is, it is] direct perception, just as in the case of the vision of the Nobles' Truths – as we explained in the *Pramāṇavārttika*.
>
> PVin-I.28

Here, Dharmakīrti points out that the object of perception of the yogi's vision is not the conceptual meaning of a set of scripturally-based words and concepts, but a special content which has been the subject of three subsequent activities, namely learning, reflection and mental cultivation,[31] at the end of which the yogi is able to see the four Truths (*āryasatya*), or, with Dignāga's words, the 'content in itself' (*arthamātra*).[32] The perception of yogis is thus to be seen in a soteriological perspective and related to a scriptural discourse, which in view of the mention of the spiritual progression from a type of wisdom to the next (*śrutamayī prajñā*, *cintāmayī prajñā*, and *bhāvanāmayī prajñā*) can be deemed

30 The Sanskrit term *āgama* is here translated as 'scripture' in order to render its meaning of authoritative discourse, especially with regard to soteriological matters. More in general, the term refers to contents that were handed down through tradition and does not entail any indication about the modality (either oral or written) in which such contents were transmitted. For an outline of Dharmakīrti's position on *āgama*, see Tillemans 1986.

31 See Dunne 2006: 504f., Eltschinger 2009: 196f. with n. 119 and Pecchia 2015: 16 with n. 49.

32 This interpretation agrees with John Dunne's and Eli Franco's view (Dunne 2006: 510 and Franco 2009: 122). Vincent Eltschinger presents another understanding of the matter, as he regards both the "thing in itself" and the "scriptural concepts" (*arthamātra* and *āgamavikalpa*) as "notions the subsequent tradition will seemingly disregard" and different from the Truths (2009: 191, n. 93).

to belong to the Yogācāra tradition.[33] The yogi meditates on the contents of the Buddhist scripture after ascertaining the tenability of the Buddha's teaching through an analytical reflection on what s/he has learnt by studying the scripture. It is at the completion of this progress in wisdom that the yogi is able to see the contents of the Buddha's teaching, more precisely the four Truths.

Now, as Dharmakīrti unmistakably states in the PV, the scope of yogic cognition includes two types of contents, the real and the unreal (*bhūta* and *abhūta*). Both of them are objects of meditation practice. The unreal, in particular, corresponds to aspects that are object of specific meditative practices, such as the meditation on the impure and on basic visual objects (*aśubhābhāvanā* and *kṛtsnābhāvanā*):

> The unreal, too, such as the loathsome and the totality of earth, is described [by us] as vivid image and non-conceptual cognition which arises by force of mental cultivation.
> Therefore, [be it] real or unreal, whatever is intensively meditated upon
> results in a vivid and non-conceptual cognition when the cultivation is perfected.
>
> PV III.284–285

The dichotomy between real and unreal applies in connection with a Buddhist meditation setting, which is the framework in which yogic cognition occurs. Therefore, such a dichotomy refers to the dual target of the mind's attention, with the mind either *seeing* what is real, i. e. the Truths, or, in a two-steps operation, intentionally projecting an object and making this object visible to the mind itself – namely *visualizing* the object.[34] The traditional Abhidharmic term for this visualization is *adhimukti*,[35] which also refers to the voluntary judgement formulated in various meditation practices, including the *apramāṇa*s, or *brahmavihāra*s (the 'immeasurables' or the 'divine abidings', i. e. friendliness, compassion, equanimity, and joy).[36]

The meditation practice alluded to by Dharmakīrti is part of the formal path to liberation (*mārga*) that he elsewhere describes as comprising two main stages, namely the *darśana-mārga*, 'path of insight', and the *bhāvanā-mārga*, 'path of

33 For some observations, see Dunne 2006: 507–510, Eltschinger 2009: 176ff. and 198f., and Pecchia 2015: 236f. with further references therein.

34 John Dunne and Eli Franco have provided different explanations of the meaning of Dharmakīrti's text, especially PV III.285. Franco (2011: 87f.), in particular, has criticized Dunne's opinion (as in Dunne 2004: 225–226). The matter requires a detailed analysis that would be beyond the scope of this paper, but it is worth noting that both Dunne and Franco focus on the validity of yogic perception and do not consider the latter a special type of cognition that occurs in a specific setting or mind condition.

35 See Bretfeld 2003: 186, Eltschinger 2009: 195 with n. 112.

36 *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* 108.10–13 (on II.72).

mental cultivation', which respectively address a conceptual view of a self and an innate one.[37] The *bhāvanā-mārga*, in particular, is a special training that consists in a set of specific meditation practices and typically progresses by degrees. Precisely the gradualness of the path implies that the cognition of yogis cannot have one type of object only. If this were the case, it should correspond to the final object, namely the Truths, which are typically perceived by yogis/Bodhisattvas; therefore, only the perception of accomplished yogis would be at stake. But if all yogis could immediately perceive suffering, the impermanent, the selfless and so on, no path would be needed. In fact, the duality of the object of yogic cognition illustrated by Dharmakīrti arguably reflects a distinction between accomplished and not-yet-accomplished yogis, whose cognitions are, respectively, reliable cognitions and delusions:

> Among these, the perception arisen from meditative cultivation which is reliable – as is the case of the real matter [namely, the four Truths] that was explained previously [in this work] – is admitted as a means of valid cognition. The rest are disturbances (*upaplavāḥ*).
>
> PV III.286

Here, Dharmakīrti contrasts yogic cognitions that are nothing more than disturbances or delusions (whose objects are unreal – *abhūta*) with a cognition that is reliable, namely the perception of what is real, which in the Buddhist context typically are the four Truths. However, as stated in PV III.284–285, even cognitions of unreal objects (which in the end are disturbances) are vivid and non-conceptual when they occur in the specific setting of a meditative practice. If the vividness of cognition is no guarantee of a reliable cognition, the object that the yogi vividly experiences, though it is unreal, is nothing but what its cognizer has purposely projected in a meditation setting. In other words, yogic cognition can have an unreal object and thus be non-reliable, but it is vivid and non-conceptualized because it results from a guided, rather than spontaneous, reaction of the mind to selected objects within a special setting. The key point, then, is the mental training, or mental cultivation, within which this type of cognition occurs and through which the mind gradually changes, until it is completely transformed and no longer needs that training in order to perceive the Truths.[38]

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37 See PV II.199–201 and II.210 = I.221. These paths characterize the practice undertaken by the yogi of the Yogācāra tradition. Further details on these paths in relation to Dharmakīrti's system are offered in Eltschinger 2009: 181–184 and 232–235; and Pecchia 2015: 24, 207–210 and 236–239.

38 We know that this is the goal of Bodhisattvas according to Dharmakīrti because of his discussion of the Truth concerning the cessation of suffering (*nirodhasatya*) in PV II and his statement therein at PV II.205 (on which, see Pecchia 2015: 218–229).

As we have seen, the framework of Dharmakīrti's discourse that includes yogic perception can be understood according to the canons of the Yogācāra tradition. Given the links between yogic perception and some core aspects of the Buddhist discourse (such as the Buddha's vision of the Truths, meditation practice and the insight resulting from it), it is indeed unlikely that Dignāga or Dharmakīrti innovated original ideas on this subject, which by their time had been described and discussed in detail, and when needed in a prescriptive fashion. More specifically on yogic perception, the *Yogācārabhūmi* makes reference to a mundane and a supra-mundane (*laukika* and *lokottara*) kind of 'pure perception' (*śuddhapratyakṣa*),[39] probably distinguishing different objects of perception to be experienced in meditation and different stages of realization on the part of the yogi. Furthermore, among the characteristics of perception, the *Yogācārabhūmi* lists the property 'devoid of imagination', which is provisionally assumed as real and will be later revealed as such.[40] Interestingly enough, Giuseppe Tucci observed that, in the Chinese translation of the text, the term denoting this characteristic is also used with regard to "*adhimukti* or realization of a particular element, e. g. water, in another element, e. g. earth, in the process of [*kṛtsnā*] meditation."[41] The characteristic 'devoid of imagination' seems to bear a striking similarity with the yogic cognition of unreal objects mentioned by Dharmakīrti.

If his observations on yogic perception had the *Yogācārabhūmi* and other cognate texts as antecedents[42] (whose precise contours might be delineated through a textual examination), Dharmakīrti's epistemological treatment of the matter could not avoid answering the questions of how a meditation practice which admittedly operates with unreal objects functions and what the nature of its cognitive output is. Or, why and how can meditation practice on something unreal transform the mind and enable it to perceive the real? A quality that crosswise characterizes the yogi's cognition is vividness. Dharmakīrti repeatedly mentions this aspect alluding to the fact that, in cognizing unreal objects, the yogi experiences a quality of cognition which is equal to the quality of the direct apprehension of real objects; on the other hand, this quality differs from that of apparently similar cognitions such as hallucinations because it concerns intentionally projected objects.[43] An even more significant aspect is that the training

39 Tucci 1929: 466.
40 Tucci 1929: 464.
41 Tucci 1929: 465.
42 See n. 16 above.
43 Probably in view of the focus of their interpretation, Dunne 2004 and Franco 2011 (see n. 34 above) fail to make a distinction between hallucination and an unreal object of yogic cognition.

based on meditation practice is about letting the projected objects generate cognitions that the mind in its ordinary deluded state would not generate. This training aims at transforming the mind, until it stops generating concepts and – as Dharmakīrti states – the object is perceived as it is, because it naturally generates the cognition of itself according to its nature.[44] The implication is that the training of a not-yet-accomplished yogi concerning unreal objects is functional to eventually let the as-it-is content generate the cognition of itself. The duality of the object of yogic perception thus reflects the operating modality of the ordinary mind and the trajectory of its transformation, which consists in changing the mind's attitude towards the percept, rather than its way of conceptualizing it. This is to my mind in the background of a prose passage from the first chapter of the PV (on I.58) – to which we now turn – where Dharmakīrti discusses what happens immediately after perception in mundane situations, also alluding to the role of meditation practice in the transformation of conceptual habits.

4 Immediately after perception

A longer section of the first chapter of Dharmakīrti's PV deals with *apoha* ('exclusion'), the mode through which concepts and linguistic expressions refer to specific objects, namely by excluding all that which is not the referent of such concepts or linguistic expressions. A passage within this section is devoted to show – as succinctly explained by Manorathanandin (a later commentator on the PV) – that perceiving is not equal to ascertaining, nor is ascertaining merely dependent on perceptual experience.[45] Here is a translation of the Sanskrit text (quoted in the Appendix),[46] which for the sake of discussion is divided into five segments:

Furthermore, again neglecting the specificity of the objects of yogic cognition, Franco (2011: 89) identifies them with abstract statements, such as "everything is suffering".

44 PV II.206: "To perceive an object is the property of cognition. That [object] is perceived as it is. And this is because the one (i. e. the object) generates the other (i. e. the cognition) according to its present nature." This is to be read together with the two surrounding stanzas 205 and 207 (Pecchia 2015: 170–173 and 229–232).

45 Manorathanandin, PVV 310.1: *na khalv asmanmate pratyakṣaṃ niścayātmakaṃ*.

46 The entire passage has been analyzed in detail by Birgit Kellner in her 2004 article (see especially pp. 20–30), to which the reader is referred to for further observations. Also quite useful is Taiken Kyuma's examination of texts that discuss the connected issues of repeated practice (*abhyāsa*) and sharpness of perception (2005: 39–42, n. 31). My present remarks heavily rely on both studies.

> [a] Even though an undivided entity whose nature is distinct from everything else is experienced, at that time there is no ascertainment of all its distinct properties because [such an ascertainment] depends on other causes.
> [b] Experience indeed produces ascertaining cognitions in accord with [one's] conceptual habit (*vikalpābhyāsa*) – for example, the concepts of a corpse, a beloved woman, and food, even though there is no distinction in [their] seeing a visible form.
> [c] In this case, sharpness of mind, the habit (*abhyāsa*) due to the mental impressions left by a [previous ascertainment], context, and so forth are the causes that contribute to the arising of the ascertainment of a distinct feature from an experience.
> [d] And one of those [features] occurs prior to others because of the varying proximity, gradation and so forth. Just as, when one sees one's own father approaching, even though [as regards the visible form] there is no difference between [the latter's] being a genitor and a teacher, [one thinks] 'My father is coming', not the teacher.
> [e] The ascertainment that occurs [in such cases] occurs in the absence of any cause of error. Therefore, it is not the case that, merely because [something] has been experienced, all [its] aspects are ascertained.
>
> PV–I, 32.5–12

With regard to the terminology used here, the term 'experience' (*anubhava*) and related words indicate experience in perception, while the term 'ascertainment' (*niścaya*) designates both the cognition following the direct experience of an object, namely perceptual judgement, and the concept through which a perceptual object is identified, namely a conceptual judgement. The main point of the discussion is that conceptual judgements are not warranted by our perceptual experience of an object. The object is not the restricting factor of cognition – Dharmakīrti states elsewhere.[47] In fact, granted that the way in which an object of perception is conceptualized depends on a complex of causes, such as sharpness of mind, context, or judgmental habit, the latter is the most critical in determining the multiplicity of concepts eventually associated to an object of perception. Furthermore, Dharmakīrti clarifies in the last segment of the passage that such multiplicity is generated in the absence of any cause of error. It might be possible to associate the causes of error to deficient physical abilities or any other source of error traditionally related to perception, because this would stress that the multiplicity of concepts is not due to sensory errors, but intrinsic in the process of conceptualization. However, two earlier commentators on PV-I, Śākyabuddhi and Karṇakagomin, refer to those who do not see reality immediately after perception, even though they are habituated to conceptualize specific properties such as momentariness and selflessness.[48] They thus interpret the

47 PV II.174cd: *vikalpyaviṣayatvāc ca viṣayā na niyāmakāḥ.*
48 See Kellner 2004: 31, n. 43.

passage as referring to concepts as essentially erroneous, even when their contents are momentariness or selflessness.

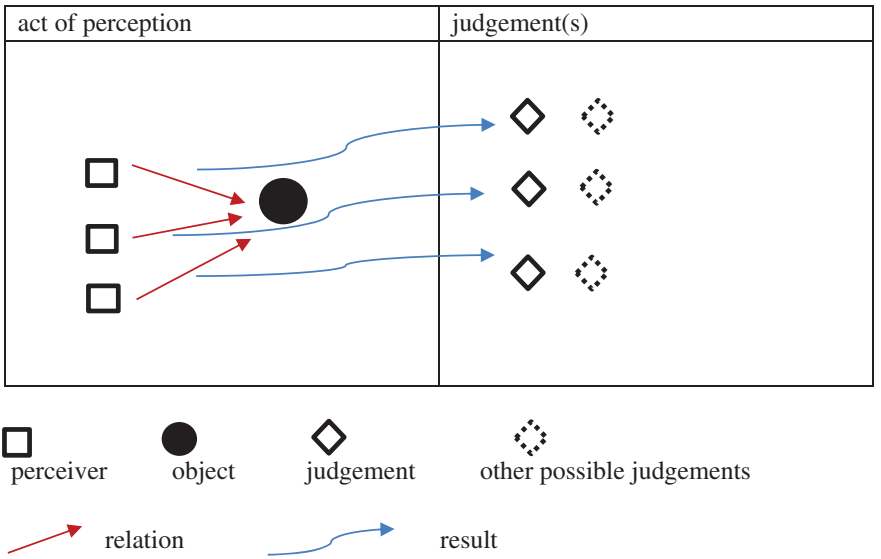
The burden of determining the judgement that is associated with an object of perception is thus on the agents; for the conceptualization that follows an instance of perception mainly depends on their individual mental setting. This corresponds to the 'conceptual habit' (*vikalpābhyāsa*) that they have formed through the mental impressions left by previous cognitions and the sharpness of their cognitions (segment [c]). The examples that Dharmakīrti mentions as evidence show that, given an object of perception, (1) different agents will form different judgments and (2) the judgment that arises in each agent is the first of a set of judgments that he/she can potentially form. The first example (segment [b]) is about the concepts of a corpse, a beloved woman, and food. The commentators explain that these concepts are respectively formed by an ascetic, a lover and a dog who see one and the same object, namely the corpse of a woman[49] (more on this below). The second example (segment [d]) is about a person who sees an object that can be identified in two different ways, as father and teacher, but is first conceptualized as father. Both examples illustrate how conceptual habits and other causes contribute to the formation of conceptual judgements, but the second case highlights that the arising of judgment *x* prior to judgment *y* is due to a distinction in terms of proximity, gradation and so on. While proximity might refer to a relational proximity between the causes that contribute to the cognition (especially the agent and object of perception), gradation might allude to the emotional intensity associated with a certain object,[50] or the frequency of a particular combination of causes. Another possibility is to consider proximity depending on gradation; hence, a judgment would appear prior to another one due to the gradation caused by proximity, or due to the degree of proximity between the cooperating causes.[51] The gist of the two examples can be

49 Karṇakagomin's commentary on PV I explains the example as follows: 'Although an ascetic, a lover, and a dog see the same visible form of a dead woman, the concepts of a corpse, the beloved one, and food respectively arise according to their conceptual habit' – *mṛtastrīrūpadarśanāviśeṣe 'pi parivrāṭkāmukaśunāṃ yathākramaṃ kuṇapakāmīnībhakṣyavikalpā yathāvikalpābhyāsaṃ jāyante* | (PVVṬ 142,4–5). He is quoting verbatim Śākyabuddhi's *ṭīkā*, a previous commentary on the PV which is only extant in Tibetan: *dper na źes bya ba la sogs pa smos te, bud med śi ba'i gzugs mthoṅ ba la khyad par med kyaṅ, kun du rgyu daṅ 'phyon ma daṅ khyi rnams la go rims bźin du, rnam par rtog pa la ji ltar goms pa bźin ro myags pa daṅ, ñal po bya ba daṅ, bza' bar bya ba'i rnam par rtog pa dag 'byuṅ ba lta bu'o* | (PVṬ 70b2–4).

50 The term *tāratamya*, 'gradation', is used in connection with emotions in PV II.171, as Manorathanandin makes clear in commenting the stanza (PVV 70.13f., *rāgāditāratamye*).

51 Kellner 2004: 20 and Eltschinger et al. 2018: 54 offer an interpretation that sides with the latter option.

summarized as in the following diagram:



Even though the correctness or just adequateness of the agent's judgement in relation with the object of perception are issues in the background,[52] the examples that Dharmakīrti selects leave little doubt, I think, that here he rather wants to make another point, namely that 'to see' is in fact 'to see as'. An agent ascertains only one aspect (at the time) among several ones that can in principle be associated with an object of perception because the judgement triggered by an instance of perception depends on the history of the agent's reiterated conceptual responses to similar perceptual situations. This means that concepts are constructed based on previous perceptual experiences that have generated specific concepts,[53] rather than based on perceptual objects. Assuming that concepts are based on perceptual objects, one would pose the object in a capacity that presupposes some sort of fixed relationship between the object

52 The issue of correctness is discussed in Dunne 2004: 186, n. 61 and Kellner 2004: 22, 26–31.
53 With the caveat that "[i]t is not certain whether Buddhist epistemologists in general reflected upon this pragmatic aspect of habituation", B. Kellner seems to propose a similar understanding of the issue when she observes that "a mere habituation to concepts, which are after all viewed as context-insensitive labels ..., would hardly be able to ensure the arising of ascertainment immediately after perception *in similar contexts* in the future. What is required is not only knowledge of situation-independent semantics, but rather knowledge, by experience, of the use of concepts *in* specific situations." (2004: 28f.)

itself and a conceptual label attached to it – which is exactly what the examples chosen by Dharmakīrti show as untenable because each concept can be claimed as "correctly" representing the object from the point of view of a particular agent.

In the second example, provided that the perceiver is a young member of a Brahman family, in which – as Dharmakīrti's audience could not fail to know – father and teacher are the same person, the perceiver will be undeniably "correct" when he identifies a particular person either as father or as teacher. The first example, on the other hand, displays three simple one-to-one relationships between perceivers and concepts linked to one and the same object, which is conceptualized in three totally different ways, namely as a corpse, a beloved woman, and food. These objects are clearly not part of everyday life. Nevertheless, since the force of the example is based on the fact that its frame of reference can be easily discerned by the audience, the three perceivers of the three respective objects must have been easily identifiable by Dharmakīrti's audience as an ascetic, a lover, and a dog in front of a dead woman.

5 A corpse, a beloved woman, and food: A meditation setting

As observed elsewhere, the concepts of a corpse, a beloved woman, and food in connection with a dead woman hint at a meditation setting,[54] especially because of the link between the corpse and the ascetic, which typically represents the meditation on the loathsome (*aśubhābhāvanā*). This type of meditation is mentioned by Dharmakīrti in the section on yogic perception (see PV III.284 above) and by his commentators in other contexts, too.[55] It forms part of the second of the nine "contemplations in the cemetery", which are meditative practices on the nine stages of the post mortem decomposition described in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, 'The Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness',[56] and in various other texts dealing with ascetic practices, such as the so-called Buddhist *Yogalehrbuch* from Qizil, where visualization is a prominent factor.[57] Another close parallel is provided by a painting found at the Buddhist monastery of Kara Tepe (Old Termez, Uzbekistan) dating to the

54 Pecchia 2008: 172f., n. 22.

55 See for example Manorathanandin's PVV on PV II.155.

56 Sutta 10 of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and Sutta 22 of the *Dīgha-nikāya*.

57 Schlingloff 1964–1966, Seyfort Ruegg 1967, and Bretfeld 2003. See also Conze 1984: 154–155, where the relevant passage from a version of the *Prajñāpāramitā* is translated into English.

middle of the fourth up to the early fifth century CE.[58] Ciro Lo Muzio (2005) has examined in detail this painting. The monochrome drawing (ochre red on a white background) shows a "brick-hut inside which a figure is seated crossed-legs with a round object in his left hand; on the hut threshold are a lying female figure and two dogs".[59] As Lo Muzio argues, the figure seated in the hut can be identified as a monk holding a skull and the entire scene, including the corpse and the dogs biting its flesh,[60] as the representation of a meditation on death, which in the frame of Buddhism reminds of the meditative technique described in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*.[61] The similarity between the mural from Kara Tepe and the example in our passage from Dharmakīrti's PV needs not to be stressed. However, Dharmakīrti also incorporates a third agent, namely a man characterized as passionate who is like observing the scene in the cemetery. He presumably represents a common point of view on objects of perception (which after a sensory contact become objects of desire, *tṛṣṇā*), in contrast with the point of view of an ascetic, whose practice should free him first of all from lustful desires. Even though the ascetic is the only one who 'correctly' identifies the dead woman as a corpse, the point that Dharmakīrti may want to emphasize here, in addition to his main argument, is not the superiority of the ascetic's concept, but rather the fact that conceptual representations do not necessarily flow from a habit crystallized through spontaneous past experiences. In fact, by means of a special training, the yogi breaks with such a habit, which can be not only spontaneous, as in the case of a passionate man, but even innate, as in the case of the dog.

The idea that concepts depend on the perceiver's attitude and do not exist outside the mind is recurring in the Dārṣṭāntika and Yogācāra literature, as shown by Nobuyoshi Yamabe's survey of sources parallel to Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundarananda*, 13.52.[62] These sources, however, seem to fall into two distinct groups: texts about the arising of feelings and texts about the formation of conceptual labels. Even though both kinds of texts have a meditator among the different perceivers, the second group comprises texts that fully explain what Dharmakīrti shortly referred to by means of the example of the concepts of a corpse, a beloved woman, and food. These texts share a stanza that with

58 Pecchia 2008: 173, n. 22.

59 Lo Muzio 2005: 483. Lo Muzio further argues that the female figure corresponds to a "piece" of the legend of Sudāya that "was cut out of its current Gandharan iconographical representation to be pasted with new elements" (2005: 486).

60 As observed by Willem Bollée, "Dogs in India, as in Homer, are primarily thought of as necrophagous and associated with beings on charnel fields" (2006: 33). I thank Monika Zin (University of Leipzig) for this reference to Bollée's book.

61 Lo Muzio 2005: 489.

62 Yamabe 2003: 239–242.

little variation is found or referred to in a variety of texts up to the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*[63]:

> *parivrāṭkāmukaśunāṃ ekasyām eva pramadātanau |*
> *kuṇapaḥ kāminī bhakṣya iti tisro vikalpanāḥ ||*[64]
> With regard to a woman's body, a mendicant, a lover, and a dog form the three [respective] concepts of a corpse, a beloved woman, and food.

The first group of sources, on the other hand, which also includes the stanza in the *Saundaranandana*, show how feelings such as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral are independent from the object to which they are related. Therefore, the main message of these texts seems to be about the emotional reaction to an object of perception, and not about the conceptual representations that form the subjective world of ideas and beliefs inhabited by a perceiver.[65]

6 From visualization to a different conceptual habit

From what we have been saying, it can be argued that Dharmakīrti's reference to a meditation setting is made against the backdrop of a discourse about the operating mode of yogic perception – which involves the instrumentality of meditation practice in view of the mental mechanism on which such practice works, namely one's own habitual formation of concepts. The yogic cognition of unreal objects, such as the loathsome aspects of a dead body, is instrumental in repeatedly generating conceptual judgements (borrowing from Dharmakīrti's *vikalpābhyāsa*) that build up another conceptual habit and, eventually, another kind of response to similar situations. This seems to be confirmed by Śākyabuddhi's and Karṇakagomin's introduction to Dharmakīrti's remark on the absence of any cause of error in the obtained ascertainment (segment [e]). Both commentators, as noted above, refer to persons who, after perceiving something, are habituated to conceptualize specific properties such as

63 Yamabe 2003: 241 refers to the *Mahāyānasaṃgrahopanibandhana* and the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*; Pecchia 2008: 172, n. 21 refers to Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika*. Saccone 2016, n. 62, refers to the *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*. Péter-Dániel Szántó has informed me that the stanza is also found in Harivarman's *Tattvasiddhi* and Samantabhadra's *Sāramañjarī*.

64 *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha* 12.7–8.

65 For this reason, the verses from Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundaranandana* (to which reference is made in Eltschinger et al. 2018: 53, n. 133) are only apparently close to Dharmakīrti's example of a corpse etc.

momentariness or selflessness, and do not see reality (*tattvadarśin*); in other words, just as the ascetic in Dharmakīrti's example, they are not-yet-accomplished yogis who have undertaken a Buddhist path. However, the issue here at stake – as indicated by the two commentators – is the 'special erroneousness' of the ascetics' conceptualization, which derives from their visualization practices.

In conclusion, it can be observed that Dharmakīrti's argument on the impact of conceptual habit not only serves the purpose of displaying the spectrum of possible representations connected to a perceptual datum, but also points out that these representations look 'natural' merely in view of their being habitual. Now, precisely the first example adduced here (namely, the concepts of a corpse etc.) demonstrates that Dharmakīrti takes into account the knowledge accumulated in centuries-long explorations of mental processes in meditative settings and, therefore, that the cognitive perspective borne by meditation practices was an integral part of the discourse of Buddhist epistemologists. The same conclusion can be drawn when we consider Dharmakīrti's description of yogic cognition, which includes the Buddha's vision of the Truths and the yogis' cognitions resulting from visualization techniques. Furthermore, it can be observed that the cognitive perspective borne by meditation practices importantly served to distinguish the dimension of 'seeing as' from that of 'seeing' and eventually explain why one can pass from one dimension to the other, namely because it is possible to change the attitude of the mind through a specific set of practices based on Buddhist presuppositions.

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Appendix: Sanskrit texts and translations

The Sanskrit texts and translations of relevant passages referred to in the essay are collected here, together with some relevant references.

– Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (PS)

PS I.6cd: *yogināṃ gurunirdeśāvyavakīrṇārthamātradṛk*[66]
The yogin's vision of the content in itself 'not filled' (unassociated) with the teacher's instruction [is also a type of perception].

This is explained in the subsequent prose by saying: *yoginām apy āgamavikalpāvyavakīrṇam arthamātradarśanaṃ pratyakṣam* (PS-I on 6cd: 3.11)

– Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV)

Pramāṇavārttika, Svārthānumāna-pariccheda (PV I)
PV-I, 32.3–12 (on I.58)[67]
[a] *yady apy aṃśarahitaḥ sarvato bhinnasvabhāvo bhāvo 'nubhūtas tathā api na sarvabhedeṣu tāvatā niścayo bhavati | kāraṇāntarāpekṣatvāt |*
Even though an undivided entity whose nature is distinct from everything else is experienced, at that time there is no ascertainment of all its distinct properties because [such an ascertainment] depends on other causes.
[b] *anubhavo hi yathāvikalpābhyāsaṃ niścayapratyayān janayati | yathā rūpadarśanāviśeṣe 'pi kuṇapakāminībhakṣyavikalpāḥ |*
Experience indeed produces ascertaining cognitions in accord with [one's] conceptual habit (*vikalpābhyāsa*) – for example, the concepts of a corpse, a beloved woman, and food, even though there is no distinction in [their] seeing a visible form.
[c] *tatra buddhipāṭavaṃ tadvāsanābhyāsaḥ prakaraṇam ityādayo 'nubhavād bhedaniścayotpattisahakāriṇaḥ |*
In this case, sharpness of mind, the habit (*abhyāsa*) due to the mental impressions left by a [previous ascertainment], context, and so forth are the causes that contribute to the arising of the ascertainment of a distinct feature from an experience.
[d] *teṣām eva ca pratyāsattitāratamyādibhedāt paurvāparyam | yathā janakatvādhyāpakatvāviśeṣe 'pi pitaram āyāntaṃ dṛṣṭvā pitā me āgacchati nopādhyāya iti |*[68]

66 The translation is based on Hattori 1968: 27.
67 I have consulted the translations in Kellner 2004: 19f., Dunne 2004: 184f. with n. 59, Saccone 2016, n. 62, Eltschinger et al. 2018: 53–54, and the partial translation in Kyuma 2005: 40, n. 31.
68 This sentence is paraphrased by Vibhūticandra in a marginal note to Manorathanandin's PVV 310, n. 3 (on PV I.58).

And one of those [features] occurs prior to others because of the varying proximity, gradation and so forth. Just as, when one sees one's own father approaching, even though there is no difference between [the latter's] being a genitor and a teacher, [one thinks] 'My father is coming', not the teacher.
[e] *so 'pi bhavan niścayo 'sati bhrāntikāraṇe bhavati | tasmān nānubhūta ity eva sarvākāraniścayaḥ |*
[e] The ascertainment that occurs [in such cases] occurs in the absence of any cause of error. Therefore, it is not the case that, merely because [something] has been experienced, all [its] aspects are ascertained.

Pramāṇavārttika, Pratyakṣa-pariccheda (PV III)[69]
PV III.284
aśubhāpṛthivīkṛtsnādyabhūtam api varṇyate |
spaṣṭābhaṃ nirvikalpaṃ ca bhāvanābalanirmitam ||
The unreal, too, such as the loathsome and the totality of earth, is described [by us] as vivid image and non-conceptual cognition which arises by force of mental cultivation.[70]
PV III.285
tasmād bhūtam abhūtaṃ vā yad yad evātibhāvyate |
bhāvanāpariniṣpattau tat sphuṭākalpadhīphalam ||
Therefore, [be it] real or unreal, whatever is intensively meditated upon
results in a vivid and non-conceptual cognition when the cultivation is perfected.[71]
PV III.286
tatra pramāṇaṃ saṃvādi yat prāṅnirṇītavastuvat |
tad bhāvanājaṃ pratyakṣam iṣṭaṃ śeṣā upaplavāḥ ||
Among these, the perception arisen from meditative cultivation which is reliable – as is the case of the real matter (namely, the four Truths) that was explained previously [in this work] – is admitted as a means of valid cognition. The rest are disturbances.[72]

69 The Sanskrit text of the PV follows the version reflected in Manorathanandin's PVV.
70 Other translations in Vetter 1966: 75, Dunne 2006: 516, Eltschinger 2009: 194, n. 109, and Franco 2011: 84.
71 Other translations in Vetter 1966: 75, Dunne 2006: 514, Eltschinger 2009: 192, n. 99, and Franco 2011: 84.
72 Other translations in Dunne 2006: 515, Eltschinger 2009: 195f., and Franco 2011: 84.

– Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, chapter I (PVin-I)

PVin-I, ~~28.7–8~~

yoginām api śrutamayena jñānenārthān gṛhītvā yukticintāmayena vyavasthāpya bhāvayatāṃ tanniṣpattau yat spaṣṭāvabhāsi bhayādāv iva, tad avikalpakam avitathaviṣayaṃ pramāṇaṃ pratyakṣam, āryasatya-darśanavad yathā nirṇītam asmābhiḥ pramāṇavārttike |

Furthermore, once the yogis have grasped the contents [of knowledge] in virtue of the wisdom resulting from hearing/learning [and] have ascertained [these contents] in virtue of [the wisdom resulting from] reflecting [upon them] by means of reasoning, they practice the mental cultivation [of these contents]. At the completion of this [process], what appears as vividly as, for example, in the case of fear, is a cognition that is not conceptual [and] does not have something unreal as its object; [that is, it is] direct perception, just as in the case of the vision of the Nobles' Truths – as we explained in the *Pramāṇavārttika*.[73]

Dharmakīrti repeats most of the stanzas on yogic perception, namely PV III.281–286, in the first chapter of his PVin, which consists in verse and prose. The correspondence between the two texts is displayed in the following table:

Table 1: Correspondence between PV III.281–286 and PVin-I, 27.7–28.8 (stanzas 28–32).

PV III	PV-in I
281	–
–	28
282	29
–	30
283	32
284	on 31 (p. 28, ll. 7–8)
285	31
286	–

73 Other translations in Vetter 1966: 75, Dunne 2006: 507, Eltschinger 2009: 198, and Pecchia 2015: 16.

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PS = *Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya, Chapter 1*. A hypothetical reconstruction of the Sanskrit text … Edited by Ernst Steinkellner. www.oeaw.ac.at/ias/Mat/dignaga_PS_1.pdf, Vienna, 2005.

PV = *Pramāṇavārttika* of Dharmakīrti (PV II and III respectively correspond to the Pramāṇasiddhi and the Pratyakṣa chapters): "*Pramāṇavarttika-kārikā* [sic] (Sanskrit and Tibetan)". Edited by Y. Miyasaka. *Acta Indologica* 2, 1971–1972: 1–206.

PV I = *The Pramāṇavārttikam of Dharmakīrti*. The first chapter with the Autocommentary. Edited by R. Gnoli. Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1960 (a dash between the letters and the numeral of the abbreviation signals the reference to the prose).

PVin = *Dharmakīrti's Pramāṇaviniścaya*, *Chapters* 1 *and* 2. Critically edited by Ernst Steinkellner. [STTAR 2] Beijing – Vienna: China Tibetology Publishing House, Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2007 (a dash between the letters and the numeral of the abbreviation signals the reference to the prose).

PVṬ = *Pramāṇavārttikaṭīkā* of Śākyabuddhi: Tibetan translation in Peking edition of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka by Daisetz T. Suzuki, Kyoto – Tokyo 1955–1961, no. 5718; and sDe dge edition of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka: Tokyo 1981, no. 4220. (References are according to the Peking edition.)

PVV = *Pramāṇavārttikavṛtti* of Manorathanandin: *Dharmakīrti's* Pramāṇavārttika *with a Commentary by Manorathanandin*. Edited by R. Sāṅkṛtyāyana. Appendix to *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* 24–26, 1938–1940.

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