SECTION 1. EXPOSITION OF THE THEORY OF PERCEPTION

A.  

k. 1. Saluting Him, who is the personification of the means of cognition, who seeks the benefit of [all] living beings, who is the teacher, the sugata, the protector, I shall, for the purpose of establishing the means of valid cognition, compose the [Pramāṇa]-samuccaya, uniting here under one head my theories scattered [in many treatises].

At the beginning of the treatise, here [in this verse], I express praise in honor of the Worshipful [Buddha] in order to produce in [the hearts of] men faith in Him who, because of His perfection in cause (hetu) and effect (phala), is to be regarded as the personification of the means of cognition (pramāṇa-bhūta). There [in the above statement], “cause” means perfection in intention (āśaya) and perfection in practice (prayoga). Perfection in intention means the [Buddha’s] taking as His purpose the benefit of [all] living beings (jagad-dhitaisitā). Perfection in practice means [His] being the [true] teacher (śāstṛtvā) because He teaches all people. “Effect” means the attainment of His own objectives (svārtha) as well as those of others (parārtha). Attainment of His own objectives is [evidenced] by [His] being sugata in the following three senses: (i) that of being praiseworthy (praśastatva), as is a handsome person (surūpa), (ii) the sense of being beyond a return [to saṁśāra] (apunar-ārvṛtty-artha), as one who is fully cured of a fever (sunaśta-jvara), and (iii) the sense of being complete (nihśesārtha), as is a jar wholly filled (supūrṇa-ghaṭa). These three senses [of His title “sugata”] distinguish the Buddha’s attainment of His own objectives from that of non-Buddhists of subdued passions (vīta-rāga), from the attainment of those who are undergoing religious training (śaikṣa), and from that of those who are no longer in need of religious training (aśaikṣa). Attainment of the objectives of others is [seen from His] being a protector (tāyitva) in the sense of [His] saving the world.

Saluting the teacher who is endowed with such merits, the author will compose the Pramāṇasamuccaya or the Collected Writings on the Means of Cognition by gathering [passages] from the Nyāyamukha and other of his treatises in order to establish the means of valid cognition. The purpose [of the work] is to reject the theories concerning the means of cognition maintained by others and to
elucidate the virtues in his own theories concerning the means of cognition, since there are divergent opinions with regard to [the nature, number, object, and result of] the means of cognition, on which depends the clear understanding of the object to be cognized.

B. Now,

k. 2a–b₁, the means of cognition are [immediate and mediate, namely,] perception (pratyakṣa) and inference (anumāna).

They are only two, because

k. 2b₂–c₁, the object to be cognized has [only] two aspects.

Apart from the particular (sva-lakṣaṇa) and the universal (sāmānya-lakṣaṇa) there is no other object to be cognized, and we shall prove that perception has only the particular for its object and inference only the universal.

What, then, of those [cognitions] which cognize a thing of color, etc., in such an aspect as evanescent, etc., or which repeatedly (asakṛti) cognize one and the same object?

Certainly there are such cognitions, but

k. 2c₂–d₁, there is no [need for admitting an] other separate means of cognition for [cognizing] the combination of the [two] above-mentioned [aspects of the object];

[In the case of the cognition which cognizes a thing of color, etc., as noneternal, firstly,] one cognizes the inexpressible particularity (āvyapadeśya = svalakṣaṇa) and the universal (sāmānya-lakṣaṇa), color-ness (varṇatva). Then, by means of the operation of the mind (manas), one relates [the color-ness] to [the universal,] noneternity (anītyatā), and expresses [the resulting cognition in the judgment] “the thing of color, or the like, is noneternal.” Hence [for this kind of cognition] there is no need of any other means of cognition.

k. 2d₂–3a, nor [is there any need for a separate means of cognition] in the case of recognizing (abhijnāna) [an object] again and again;

Although there are cognitions which repeatedly cognize one and the same object, [cognitions of that sort require] no [postulate of a] separate means of cognition. Why?

k. 3b₁, because [if a separate means of cognition were to be accepted as necessary, then] there would occur the fallacy of infinity (aniṣṭha).
If every sort of cognizing were [to involve] a [different] means of valid cognition, the means of valid cognition would have to be infinite in number.

\[k. 3b_2.\] for instance, [such mental faculties as] recollection (smṛta) and the like [would have to be recognized as separate means of valid cognition].\textsuperscript{22}

The word "smṛta" [in the verse] has the same meaning as "smṛti" (recollection).\textsuperscript{23} Such mental faculties as recollection, desire (icchā), anger (dveṣa), etc., since they operate on an object once cognized, are not independent means of valid cognition. So, here [recognition should not be considered as a separate means of valid cognition].\textsuperscript{24}

C. Among these [two means of cognition]

\[k. 3c.\] perception (pratyakṣa) is free from conceptual construction (kalpanā);\textsuperscript{25}

The cognition in which there is no conceptual construction is perception. What, then, is this conceptual construction?

\[k. 3d.\] the association of name (nāman), genus (jāti), etc. [with a thing perceived, which results in verbal designation of the thing].\textsuperscript{26}

In the case of arbitrary words (yadṛcchā-śabda, proper nouns), a thing (artha) distinguished by a name (nāman) is expressed by a word [such as] "Dittha." In the case of genus-words (jāti-śabda, common nouns), a thing distinguished by a genus is expressed by a word [such as] "go" (cow). In the case of quality-words (guna-śabda, adjectives), a thing distinguished by a quality is expressed by a word [such as] "śukla" (white). In the case of action-words (kriyā-śabda, verbal nouns), a thing distinguished by an action is expressed by a word [such as] "pācaka" (a cook, to cook). In the case of substance-words (dravya-śabda), a thing distinguished by a substance is expressed by a word [such as] "daṇḍin" (a staff-bearer) or "viṣāṇin" (horned, a horn-bearer).\textsuperscript{27}

Here, [with regard to action-words and substance-words,] some maintain that what is expressed [by the words "pācaka," "daṇḍin," etc.] is [a thing] distinguished by a relationship [such as that of an action to its agent, that of a substance to its possessor, and the like].\textsuperscript{28}

On the other hand, some others hold that what is expressed [in all these cases] is a thing qualified only by words which denote no real entity (artha-śūnya-śabda).\textsuperscript{29}

[In any case,] that which is devoid of such conceptual construction is perception.\textsuperscript{30}

Daa–1. For what reason, then, is it [viz., perception] called "pratyakṣa"
Translation

[literally, belonging to each sense-organ (akṣa) and not “pratīvīśa” [literally, belonging to each object], despite the fact that it is dependent on both [the sense-organ and the object].]

k. 4ab. it is named after the sense-organs because they are its specific cause (asādhāraṇa-hetu).

[It is] not [named] after the object such as color, etc. The reason is that the object is common (sādhāraṇa) [to many cases], for it is a cause of mental cognition ( mano-vijñāna) and perceptions in other persons (anya-saṁtānika-vijñāna) [as well as of one’s own perception]. We find that a designation is generally by means of a specific [cause]; for example, [we use expressions like] “the sound of a drum” or “a sprout of barley” [to indicate a certain sound or a certain sprout, instead of calling it “the sound of a stick” or “a sprout of the earth,” although the stick or the earth is also a cause].

Thus, it is established that perception is free from conceptual construction.

Daa–2. In an Abhidharma treatise, too, the following is stated: “One who has the ability to perceive perceives something blue (nīlam vijñātī), but does not conceive that ‘this is blue’ (nīlaḥ iti vijñātī).” “In respect to an object, he has the sense of the object itself (artha-saṁjñīn), but does not possess any notion of its name (dharma-saṁjñīn).”

Dab. If perception is absolutely devoid of conceptual construction, then why is it [stated in the Abhidharma treatise] that “the five kinds of sense-cognition take aggregates [of atoms] as their object”? [An aggregate (saṁcita) of atoms is cognizable only by the conceptual construction which binds together the perceptions of several individual atoms. It seems, therefore, incongruous to hold that perception is free from conceptual construction and yet cognizes an aggregate of atoms.] Again, it is mentioned [in the Abhidharma treatise] that “these [sense-cognitions] take a particular (svalakṣaṇa) as their object insofar as it is the particular in the form of a [cognizable] sphere (āyatana-svalakṣaṇa) and not in the form of a [component] substance [viz., an atom] (dravya-svalakṣaṇa).” How is this to be understood?

k. 4cd. there [in the above-cited Abhidharma passages], that [perception], being caused by [the sense-organ through its contact with] many objects [in aggregation], takes the whole (sām-ānya) as its sphere of operation in respect to its own object.

Since it [viz., perception] is caused by [the sense-organ through its contact with] many substances [viz., atoms in aggregation], it is said, in respect to its sphere of operation, that it takes the whole as its object; but [the sense is] not [that it operates] by conceptually constructing a unity within that which is many and
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separate. [Therefore, the definition that perception is free from conceptual construction is not inconsistent with the statements in the Abhidharma treatises.]

Dac. Further, we hold:

\[ k. 5. \] A thing possessing many properties cannot be cognized in all its aspects by the sense. The object of the sense is the form which is to be cognized [simply] as it is and which is inexpres- sible.

Thus, in any case, perception caused by the five kinds of sense-organs is devoid of conceptual construction (avikalpaka).

Here our distinguishing [various kinds of perception] is in response to the view of others. However, all [kinds of perception] are indeed free from conceptual construction.

Db. \[ k. 6ab. \] There is also mental [perception, which is of two kinds:] awareness of an [external] object and self-awareness of [such subordinate mental activities as] desire and the like, [both of which are] free from conceptual construction.

The mental [perception] which, taking a thing of color, etc., for its object, occurs in the form of immediate experience (anubhava) is also free from conceptual construction. The self-awareness (sva-samvedana) of desire, anger, ignorance, pleasure, pain, etc., is also recognized as mental perception because it is not dependent on any sense-organ.

Dc. Likewise,

\[ k. 6cd. \] The yogin’s intuition of a thing in itself unassociated (avyatibhinna) with the teacher’s instruction [is also a type of perception].

The yogin’s intuition which is not associated (avyavakṛṣṇa) with any conceptual construction of the āgama (the authoritative words of the teachers) and which apprehends only a thing in itself is also perception.

Dd. If the self-awareness of desire, etc., is perception, then even the awareness of conceptual construction (kalpanā-jñāna) should be considered as perception. Indeed it is so.

\[ k. 7ab. \] Even conceptual construction, when it is brought to internal awareness, is admitted [as a type of perception]. However, with regard to the [external] object, [the conceptual construction is] not [admissible as perception], because it conceptualizes [the object].
Translation

When it [viz., conceptual construction] is directed toward an object, it is not perception, any more than desire or the like. However, the internal awareness [of conceptual construction] is not [itself a conceptual construction], and hence there is no harm [in admitting it as a type of perception].

E. \[k. 7cd–8ab.\] erroneous cognition, cognition of empirical reality, inference, its result, recollection, and desire are not true perceptions and are accompanied by obscurity (sataimira).

Erroneous cognition (bhrānti-jñāna) is not a true perception because it arises conceptually constructing, for example, water, etc., out of such things as vapor floating over sand. Cognition of empirical reality (saṁvṛti-saj-jñāna) is not a true perception because it superimposes something extraneous upon things which are only empirically true (saṁvṛti-sat), and thus functions through the conceptualization of forms of these [extraneous things]. Inference and [the cognition which is] its result, etc., are not perceptions because they arise through the conceptualization of what formerly has been perceived.

F. And

\[k. 8cd.\] [we call the cognition itself] “pramāṇa” [literally, a means of cognizing], because it is [usually] conceived to include the act [of cognizing], although primarily it is a result.

Here we do not admit, as the realists do, that the resulting cognition (pramāṇaphala) differs from the means of cognition (pramāṇa). The resulting cognition arises bearing in itself the form of the cognized object and [thus] is understood to include the act [of cognizing] (savyāpāra). For this reason, it is metaphorically called pramāṇa, the means of cognition, although it is [ultimately speaking] devoid of activity (vyāpāra). For instance, an effect is said to assume the form of its cause when it arises in conformity with its cause, although [in fact] it is devoid of the act [of assuming the form of its cause]. Similar is the case with this [resulting cognition].

G. \[k. 9a.\] or [it can be maintained that] the self-cognition or the cognition cognizing itself (svasaṁvitti) is here the result [of the act of cognizing]—

Every cognition is produced with a twofold appearance, namely, that of itself [as subject] (svabhāsa) and that of the object (viṣayābhasa). The cognizing of itself as [possessing] these two appearances or the self-cognition (svasaṁvitti) is the result [of the cognitive act]. Why?

\[k. 9b.\] because the determination of the object (artha-niścaya) conforms with it [viz., with the self-cognition].
When a cognition possessing [the form of] an object \( (saviṣayam \ jñānām) \) is itself the object to be cognized, then, in accordance with the nature of the self-cognition, one conceives that [secondary] object \( (artha) \) as something either desirable or undesirable.\(^63\)

When, on the other hand, only an external thing is [considered to be] the object, then

\[ k. \ 9c–d_1. \] the means of cognizing it is simply [the cognition’s]

having the form of the object;

For, in this case, we overlook the true nature of the cognition as that which is to be cognized by itself, and [claim that] its having the form of a thing is our means of knowing that [thing]. Why? Because [we may say of] the thing [that]

\[ k. \ 9d_2. \] it is known only through this [viz., through the cognition’s having the form of it].

Whatever form of a thing appears in the cognition, as, for example, something white or non-white, it is an object in that form which is cognized.\(^64\)

Thus, [it should be understood that] the roles of the means of cognition \( (pramāṇa) \) and of the object to be cognized \( (prameya) \), corresponding to differences of [aspect of] the cognition, are [only] metaphorically attributed \( (upacaryate) \) to the respective [distinctive] factor in each case,\(^65\) because [in their ultimate nature] all elements of existence, [being instantaneous,] are devoid of function \( (nirvyāpāra) \).\(^66\)

The same idea is stated [in the following verse].

\[ k. \ 10. \] whatever the form in which it [viz., a cognition] appears, that [form] is [recognized as] the object of cognition \( (prameya) \).

The means of cognition \( (pramāṇa) \) and [the cognition which is] its result \( (phala) \) are respectively the form of subject [ in the cognition] and the cognition cognizing itself. Therefore, these three [factors of cognition] are not separate from one another.\(^67\)

\textit{Ha.} How, then, is it understood that cognition has two forms?\(^68\)

\[ k. \ 11ab. \] that cognition has two forms is [known] from the difference between the cognition of the object and the cognition of that [cognition];\(^69\)

The cognition which cognizes the object, a thing of color, etc., has [a twofold appearance, namely,] the appearance of the object and the appearance of itself [as subject]. But the cognition which cognizes this cognition of the object has [on the one hand] the appearance of that cognition which is in conformity with
the object and [on the other hand] the appearance of itself. Otherwise, if the
cognition of the object had only the form of the object, or if it had only the form
of itself, then the cognition of cognition would be indistinguishable from the
cognition of the object.70

**Hb.** Further, [if the cognition had only one form, either that of the object or of
itself,] then the object which was cognized by a preceding cognition could not
appear in a succeeding cognition. Why? Because that [object of the preceding
cognition does not exist when the succeeding cognition arises and] could not be
the object of the latter.71 Hence it is proved that cognition has two forms.

**Hc–1.** [That cognition has two forms follows]

\begin{enumerate}
\item{k. 11c.} later also from [the fact of] recollection—72
\end{enumerate}

This [expression] “later also from [the fact of] recollection” (in k. 11c) refers
back to “cognition has two forms” (in k. 11ab). Some time after [we have per-
ceived a certain object], there occurs [to our mind] the recollection of our cog-
nition as well as the recollection of the object. So it stands that cognition is of
two forms.73 Self-cognition is also [thus established].74 Why?

\begin{enumerate}
\item{k. 11d.} because it [viz., recollection] is never of that which has
\hspace{1cm} not been [previously] experienced.75
\end{enumerate}

It is unheard of to have a recollection of something without having experienced
[it before]. For instance, the recollection of a thing of color, etc. [does not arise
unless the thing of color or the like has been experienced].

**Hc.2.** Some may hold that cognition also, like a thing of color, etc., is cognized
by means of a separate cognition.76 This is not true because

\begin{enumerate}
\item{k. 12a–b\textsubscript{1}.} if a cognition were cognized by a separate cognition,
\hspace{1cm} there would be an infinite regression—77
\end{enumerate}

An infinite regression would result if a cognition were to be cognized by a
separate cognition.78 Why?

\begin{enumerate}
\item{k. 12b\textsubscript{2}.} because there is a recollection of this [separate cogni-
\hspace{1cm} tion] too.79
\end{enumerate}

It must be admitted that this cognition by which the [previous] cognition is
cognized is [also] later recollected. [The later recollection of this separate cog-
nition does not arise unless it is experienced.] So, if it should be that this
[separate] cognition is experienced by the third cognition [so that it may be
recollected], there would be an infinite regression.

**Hc–3.** \(k. 12cd.\) [Further,] in such a case, there could be no motion [of
cognition] from one object to another. But actually such [a
movement of cognition] is accepted.80
Therefore, self-cognition must be admitted. It itself is a result [of the act of cognizing].

In this way it is established that perception is free from conceptual construction.