Adhyavasāya and Imagination

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> When the student of Indian philosophy is faced by the task of finding an equivalent for a conception which is familiar to him, because he meets it often used in his texts, he may nevertheless be often quite perplexed about how to render it in translation because there is no corresponding term available. In philosophy and logic all European languages form common stock, because they have a common ancestor in the writings of Aristotle. But Indian philosophy has developed independently from this influence. It has its own Aristotle and its own Kant. It constitutes an independent line of development which runs parallel to the European one. It is therefore of the highest historical interest to note the cases when both currents agree on a common conception or a common theory. It may be an indirect, partial proof of its truth, because truth is one, and error is many. (Stcherbatsky 1932: 226)

I

The primary goal of this article is to investigate *adhyavasāya*, a complex notion of Buddhist epistemology, from a comparative philosophical viewpoint. This notion, which is usually translated as "determination," was first examined by Th. Stcherbatsky, a pioneer Russian scholar of Buddhist epistemology, as a mediator that bridges the gap between perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*), the two sources of our valid cognition. As is well known, in the Buddhist epistemological tradition founded by Dignāga (ca. 480-540) and Dharmakīrti (ca. 600-660), while perception is defined by the characteristic of "non-conceptual" or "without conceptual construction," inference is considered to be a conceptual thought that is based on the necessary relation between two concepts or items being connected through causality or identity. Both perception and inference are commonly referred to by the Sanskrit word *pramāṇa*, "means of valid cognition." According to Dharmakīrti, only when a certain form of cognition leads us successively to our intended object, and when it reveals an object that is yet unknown to us, it is called a means of valid cognition; any other forms of cognition, such as sensory illusion, conceptual cognition, and pseudo-inference, are classified as means of invalid cognition (*apramāṇa*). In this manner, the basis of our experience is dissolved into different types of cognition. However, when focusing on the formation process of our empirical knowledge, we will soon notice the difficulty of explaining the transition from the non-conceptual to conceptual state in a series of different forms of cognition, and at the exact point, Stcherbatsky draws our attention to "perceptual judgment":

> Empirical perception is that act of cognition which signalizes the presence of an object in the ken and is followed by the construction of an image of that object and by an act of

> identification (*ekatvādhyavasāya*) of the image with the sensation. Such identification is made in a perceptual judgment of the pattern "this is a cow", where the element "this" refers to the sensational core incognizable in itself, and the element "cow" to the general conception expressed in a connotative name and identified with the corresponding sensation by an act of imputation. (Stcherbatsky 1932: 211)

Here, Stcherbatsky assumes three steps for perceptual judgment: (a) signalization of an object, (b) construction of an image of the object, and (c) identification of the image with the sensation. In other words, when we perceive an object that is present to us, in the first moment, we simply grasp a particular entity without applying any general concept to it; in the subsequent moments, we recognize the object with its conceptual construction and determine its form: "This is a cow." This mental act of determination that unifies what is sensed in the first moment with a general concept like "cow" is called *adhyavasāya*.

In technical terms, by using the Kantian notion of synthesis, Stcherbatsky interprets the function of *adhyavasāya* both as temporal and spatial syntheses through which an enduring and extended object appears before us, and as a special synthesis through which the object is connected with a general concept that corresponds to its essential property.[1] Stcherbatsky's emphasis on the parallel between Buddhist epistemology and Kant's philosophy is less surprising. In fact, elsewhere in the same book, Stcherbatsky contrasts some popular passages of Kant with similar Buddhist ideas: "Without sensation, says the Buddhist, our knowledge would be empty of reality. Without intuition, says Kant, all our knowledge would be without object, and it would therefore remain entirely empty"; "If all thought (by means of categories) is taken away from empirical knowledge, no knowledge of any object remains, because nothing can be thought by mere intuition, says Kant. Pure sensation, without any perceptual judgment, says Dharmottara, is as though it did not exist at all"; "Intuitions without concepts are blind, says Kant. Without concepts, say the Buddhist, with pure sensation alone we would never know neither where to move nor where to abstain from moving" (p. 177f.). These coincidences, however, are still dubious unless we examine more details of the philosophical backgrounds of the two different traditions. Nevertheless, at least regarding Stcherbatsky's treatment of the synthetic function of *adhyavasāya*, I think that it deserves our special attention not only because there are remarkable similarities between two epistemological traditions of East and West but also because we find that there are some crucial points where they differ from each other.

For this comparative approach, we need to introduce another one of Kant's technical terms,

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[1] Stcherbatsky 1932: 212f.

'imagination' (*Einbildungskraft*), which mediates between two fundamental faculties of the mind, namely, between sensibility and understanding, or between intuitions and concepts.[2] When we read Kant's argument on imagination with the help of the analytical-philosophical interpretations of P. F. Strawson, W. Sellars, and others, its close relation to the Buddhist notion of *adhyavasāya* appears convincing, though some differences also exist between them. In this article, using Strawson's analysis of imagination and some limited passages from Dharmakīrti and his followers, I will offer a brief comparison of the two notions, as a first step for future comparative studies of perception.

II

Let us start with imagination. We use this popular term, for instance, when it refers to the faculty of creating new ideas or imaging something that is not present to our senses. In the article, "Imagination and Perception" (1971), P. F. Strawson has offered the following three areas with which the term is associated:

> (1) the area in which imagination is linked with image and image is understood as mental image—a picture in the mind's eye or (perhaps) a tune running through one's head;
> (2) the area in which imagination is associated with invention, and also (sometimes) with originality or insight or felicitous or revealing or striking departure from routine;
> (3) the area in which imagination is linked with false belief, delusion, mistaken memory, or misperception.

However, Kant's specific notion of imagination is different from those meanings, though the first one is closely connected to it. In the writings of Kant, whereas he sometimes uses the term in its ordinary sense, he sometimes underlines imagination as "a necessary ingredient of perception itself." Let us see Strawson's example. When I notice a strange dog in the garden, I observe its movement for a while, and a few minutes later I notice that it is still there. In this case, I recognize the strange dog I see as a dog, and at the same time I take what I continuously, or interruptedly, observe to be the same object, the same dog, throughout. In both operations of my mind, imagination takes a significant role for (a) kind-identification/concept-identification and (b) individual-identification/object-identification. It is certainly questionable whether the two types of identification are found exactly in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, but his description of "three-fold synthesis" as the work of imagination seems to somehow support Strawson's understanding. I borrow M. Johnson's summary of three-fold synthesis:

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[2] The term 'imagination' is mentioned by Stcherbatsky (1932: 213f.) as an equivalent to *adhyavasāya*. Except Stcherbatsky, almost attention of modern Buddhist scholars have been paid to *adhyavasāya*'s function of perceptual judgment but not to its function of imagination in its Kantian interpretation. For instance, Katsura (1984) emphasizes the significance of perceptual judgment in Dharmakīrti's theory of truth, which is originated from the notion of "conventional knowledge" (*sāṃvṛta*), and which is also called "recollecting decision" (*smārtaniścaya*).

> 1. *Synthesis of apprehension in intuition*. In order to cognize a series of separate representations as one object, we must first grasp them as one unified image at a single point in time. I can't experience a dog unless I can get a unified image of a dog as distinct from other possible unities in my perceptual field.
> 2. *Synthesis of reproduction in imagination*. It is not enough, however, merely to have one unified image; we apprehend objects as persisting through time, so to experience unified objects we must keep before our awareness representations (i.e., previous images) that were given to us at a prior time (i.e., the moment before the present one, the moment before that, and so on). It is imagination, as a power of representing what is no longer present, that performs this synthesis.
> 3. *Synthesis of recognition in a concept*. It is still not enough merely to apprehend unified images over time, if we are to grasp objects in perception. In addition, we must recognize what it is we are experiencing. Kant says that this involves a more or less automatic recognition of the rule (concept) that tells us that this present object is an object of a certain kind (say, a dog). In other words, we must be able to distinguish one unity from another, which we do by recognizing the different organizing properties and relations that make them different kinds of objects. (Johnson 1987: 149; Cf. KrV, A 98-110)

It is almost clear that the first two syntheses correspond to "individual-identification/ object-identification," and the last one to "kind-identification/concept-identification." According to the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, these mental activities are ascribed to the faculty of imagination, that is, an "active faculty for the synthesis of the manifold [of appearances in intuition]." When giving an account of the imagination's operation of individual identification, Strawson emphasizes the fact that when we perceive an object, our past perceptions are alive in the present perception. Accordingly, through such overlapping of the past perceptions on the present perception, we come to attain a judgment of the object with a certain concept. For instance, again, when you see a dog, Strawson says, the following mental process occurs:

> To see it as a dog, silent and stationary, is to see it as a possible mover and barker, even though you give yourself no actual image of it as moving and barking. (...) Again, as you continue to observe it, it is not a dog, with such and such characteristics, but the dog, the object of your recent observation, that you see, and see it as. (Strawson 1971=1982: 89)

In other words, if no imagination operates in our perceptual experience, we only receive multiple impressions through senses and perceive nothing. Since imagination unifies our present or actual perception with the past or possible perceptions that do not exist at the moment, we can perceive an object as such.

However, this is just one aspect of imagination, which Kant calls "reproductive imagination." There

is another aspect of imagination, namely, "productive imagination." Unlike reproductive imagination, which recalls previous perceptual experiences, productive imagination creates a transcendental structure or schema that is necessarily presupposed by our empirical cognitions. Regarding this, M. Johnson observes the following: "the productive function of imagination is what makes it possible for us to experience public objects that we all share in our common world. This productive imagination is none other than the unifying structures of our consciousness that constitute the ultimate conditions for our being able to experience any object whatever" (Johnson 1987: 151). This point should be kept in mind for our later comparison with Prajñākaragupta's treatment of *adhyavasāya*.

We have very briefly summarized Kant's notion of imagination with help of Strawson's insightful analysis. Next, we move to the Dharmakīrtian concept of *adhyavasāya*. To be sure, even within the field of Buddhist studies, the concept is problematic due to different possibilities of its interpretation. However, for our present purpose, it seems better to limit the topic to three questions from a comparative philosophical viewpoint: First, is Strawson's distinction between object-identification and concept-identification useful even for the analysis of the Buddhist notion of *adhyavasāya*? Second, does the Buddhist analysis also entail such a systematic understanding of our empirical knowledge like Kant's threefold synthesis? Third, like Kant's productive imagination, does the Buddhist *adhyavasāya* make our objective knowledge prior to experience possible? These questions shall be examined next.

III

Before examining the Buddhist notion of *adhyavasāya*, we shall bear in mind two presuppositions of Buddhist epistemology. First, the Buddhist worldview is based on its theory of momentariness, according to which all mental and physical entities come into existence only in one moment and disappear at the same moment. Since nothing endures through time, strictly speaking, the empirical objects, such as a pot, are not considered to have 'real' existence. Second, the Buddhist philosophers use philosophical analysis or investigation for soteriological concerns, and thus give more priority to non-conceptual perception or intuition, which is almost equivalent to wisdom for liberation, than to other conceptual forms of cognition, including inferential reasoning and determination. Therefore, starting with what we directly perceive in our mind, Buddhists need to explain how the transition from the non-conceptual to conceptual state in the mind is possible.

III.1

First, we shall look at Dharmakīrti's famous passage from the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, which is often quoted by later Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophers:

PVin 2, 46.7-8: *svapratibhāse 'narthe 'rthādhyavasāyena pravartanād bhrāntir apy*

arthasambandhena tadavyabhicārāt pramāṇam.

Even though [a cognition based on inference] is erroneous, [the subject] undertakes to act toward [an intended object through the determination (*adhyavasāya*) of [the cognition's] own appearance (i.e., mental image), which is not a real object, as a "real object." Therefore, [the cognition] is a valid cognition because it does not deviate from the [intended] object inasmuch as it is [indirectly] connected to the [object]. [3]

This passage explains how a universal (*sāmānlyalakṣaṇa*) or a general concept that appears in inferential cognition is unified with a particular object that does not exist at the present moment. For instance, when one infers a fire on a mountain from one's observation of smoke there, the subject only has a concept of "fire" in his mind. However, since *adhyavasāya* operates for unifying the concept with a particular object as an actionable object, the subject can approach the mountain to obtain the fire. Here, we can see a different version of "concept-identification," which Strawson has mentioned for explaining the formation of one's empirical knowledge of "dog" when one observes a dog as a certain kind. In Kant's exposition of three-fold synthesis, this faculty of identification corresponds to the synthesis of recognition of a concept, in which an object given by the first intuition is unified with an adequate concept.

On the other hand, there is also the function of object-identification in Dharmakīrti's account of *adhyavasāya*. Let us see the following passage from his later work, *Hetubindu*:

HB 3.10-16: *adhigate tu svalakṣaṇe tatsāmarthyajanmā vikalpas tadanukārī kāryatas tadviṣayatvāt smṛtir eva na pramāṇam anadhigatavasturūpānadhigateḥ; vastvadhiṣṭhānatvāt pramāṇavyavasthāyāḥ, arthakriyāyogyaviṣayatvāt tadarthināṃ pravṛtteḥ, arthakriyā-yogyalakṣaṇaṃ hi vastu; tato api vikalpād vastuny eva tadadhyavasāyena pravṛtteḥ, pravṛttau vikalpasya pratyakṣeṇābhinnayogakṣematvāt.*

On the other hand, when a particular (*svalakṣaṇa*) is already apprehended [by a perception], its subsequent conceptual cognition (*vikalpa*) that arises by the force of the [previous perception] is nothing but a recollection (*smṛti*) since it relates to the object of that [previous perception]. [Such a conceptual cognition] is not a means of valid cognition [only] because it does not apprehend the nature of an entity that is not yet apprehended. [Except for this point, the conceptual cognition might be considered to be a means of valid cognition] because the arrangement of means of valid cognition [finally] depends on an entity (*vastu*), inasmuch as the action of those who aim at the [entity] relates to [an object] that is capable of purposeful action (*arthakriyāyogya*). [As said elsewhere,] "entity" is characterized by the capability of purposeful action. [Thus,] even from this conceptual cognition, one [can] undertake to act toward an entity through its determination (*adhyavasāya*), and concerning such action, the conceptual cognition shares the prosperity (i.e., the result of the action) with the perception. [4]

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[3] For a German translation, see Steinkellner 1979: 26-27.

Although it is not entirely clear how to interpret the connection of several ablative-ending sentences, the basic idea of Dharmakīrti is obvious. He distinguishes the initial perception from its subsequent, conceptual cognition because only the former makes us know an entity that is not yet apprehended (*anadhigavastu*), and because the latter simply reuses the content given by the initial perception. Except for this crucial difference, however, perception and its subsequent, conceptual cognition cooperate in leading the subject to a successful action toward an intended object. Further, the function of *adhyavasāya* is required at this stage for unifying an entity that is given by the initial perception with an actionable object. In this case, *adhyavasāya* operates by connecting two temporally different entities, an entity at the moment of the first perception and another entity that is to be obtained at a later moment, insofar as the Buddhist doctrine of momentariness is presupposed. In this sense, this function seems to be similar to Strawson's object-identification, which unifies different perceptions of an object in different moments as an individual entity that continues through time. This point will be discussed later, in regard to Dharmottara's more detailed analysis. Now, we shall summarize what we have examined so far concerning Dharmakīrti's idea of *adhyavasāya*: [5]

- ***Adhyavasāya* in the context of inference**: Like imagination, *adhyavasāya* is integrated in one's inferential cognition and plays a role of concept-identification. By applying a general concept of a particular object, the subject is motivated to act toward the object.
- ***Adhyavasāya* in the context of perceptual experience**: Unlike in the case of inference, *adhyavasāya* of conceptual cognition that arises immediately after a perception plays a role of object-identification. Because of this function, a successful human action based on perception is well-explained, even though such conceptual cognition is not counted as valid cognition.

III.2

Next, we shall explore some controversial views on *adhyavasāya* held by Dharmottara and Prajñākaragupta, both representative commentators on Dharmakīrti's works from the 8th century. First, let us look at Dharmottara's interpretation. One of his important contributions to the Buddhist epistemology is the dichotomy he used for classifying the objects of valid cognition, namely, the apprehended (*grāhya*) and the determined (*adhyavaseya*), as shown in the following table: [6]

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[4] For a detailed analysis of the argument, see HBṬ 33.22-36.27. For a German translation and a Japanese translation, see Steinkellner 1967: Teil II, 36 and Katsura 1989: 546f.

[5] For the most recent study on Dharmakīrti's concept of *adhyavasāya* and its relation to *niścaya* and perceptual judgment, see Nakasuka 2014.

	The apprehended (*grāhya*)	**The determined (*adhyavaseya*)**
Perception	A momentary entity (*kṣaṇa*)	A continuum (*santāna*)
Inference	An image that is not an [actionable] object but manifest to one's mind	A particular entity (*svalakṣaṇa*) that one determines mistakenly with respect to a superimposed object (*āropitārtha*) in the mind

Based on the table, while Dharmottara's account of two kinds of object of inference is almost like that of his predecessor's, his analysis of perception is highly innovative because, unlike Dharmakīrti, Dharmottara accepts *adhyavasāya* as an embedded element of perception as the means of valid cognition. In the analysis of the reliability of cognition, Dharmottara claims that a perceptual awareness is understood to be reliable when one obtains an object, just as the initial awareness has presented it. In more detail, the initial awareness here plays three different roles: (1) *pradarśaka*, namely, indicating an object to the subject, (2) *pravartaka*, namely, motivating the subject to the action toward the object, and (3) *prāpaka*, namely, causing the subject to obtain the object.[7] In this manner, Dharmottara positively accepts perception's accompaniment with *adhyavasāya*, a kind of conceptual cognition.[8] Of course, Dharmottara's radical account of perception endowed with conceptual thought gave rise to a controversy in later Buddhist circles,

[6] See NBṬ 71.1-5: *dvividho hi viṣayaḥ pramāṇasya—grāhyaś ca yad ākāram utpadyate, prāpaṇīyaś ca yam adhyavasyati. anyo hi grāhyo 'nyaś cādhyavaseyaḥ. pratyakṣasya hi kṣaṇa eko grāhyaḥ. adhyavaseyas tu pratyakṣabalotpannena niścayena santāna eva. santāna eva ca pratyakṣasya prāpaṇīyaḥ, kṣaṇasya prāpayitum aśakyatvāt. tathānumānam api svapratibhāse 'narthe 'rthādhyavasāyena pravṛtter anarthagrāhi. sa punar āropito 'rtho gṛhyamāṇaḥ svalakṣaṇatvenāvasīyate yataḥ tataḥ svalakṣaṇam avasitaṃ pravṛttiviṣayo 'numānasya. anarthas tu grāhyaḥ*. "Now, the object of the means of valid cognition is twofold: That which arises as a mental image [in a cognition] is the apprehended, and that which determines [as an actionable object] is the [object] to be obtained. Indeed, the apprehended and the determined are different. For a perceptual awareness, a momentary entity is the apprehended; only the continuum [of the momentary entities] is the determined through the ascertainment that arises by the force of perception, and the same continuum is the [object] to be obtained by perception, [simply] because it is impossible to obtain a momentary entity. In the same manner, inference, too, apprehends [an image] that is not an [actionable] object, because one undertakes to act through the determination of [an image] that is not an object but just manifests [to the mind] as an "object." On the other hand, since the superimposed object that is apprehended [by inference] is determined to be a particular [object] (*svalakṣaṇa*), the particular is determined to be an actionable object for inference; [an image] that is not the object is the apprehended [by inference]." For a translation, see Arnold 2009: 191.

[7] On the reliability of a cognition, Krasser (1995: 248) shows the following example from Dharmottara's *Laghuprāmāṇyaparīkṣā*: "For example, when a pot is seen and perception ascertains it, this perception is a valid cognition. For it is *avisaṃvādin* since, by ascertaining this pot, it indicates the latter, and by this it motivates a person towards it and thus causes a person to obtain it." As Krasser has noted, in this text, Dharmottara does not refer to another qualifier: "revealing objects that have not yet been known," and thus, it would not matter for him to incorporate the conceptual determination into perception.

[8] See NBṬ 20.1-3: *tatra yo 'rtho dṛṣṭatvena jñātaḥ sa pratyakṣeṇa pravṛttiviṣayīkṛtaḥ. yasmād yasminn arthe pratyakṣasya sākṣātkāritvavyāpāro vikalpenānugamyate, tasya pradarśakaṃ pratyakṣam, tasmād dṛṣṭatayā jñātaḥ pratyakṣadarśitaḥ.*

because it apparently contradicts Dignāga's definition of perception as "non-conceptual"; however, the examination of Dharmottara's real intention is not the topic of this article.[9] Instead, we should pay attention to the analogy between Dharmottara's account and Kant's exposition of the "synthesis of reproduction in imagination." According to Kant, after the first synthesis of the manifold intuitions as a single object, we apprehend the object as an enduring object through time, by the operation of imagination concerning previous perceptions of the same object. Likewise, Dharmottara holds the view that we perceive a continuum (*santāna*) as the object to be obtained, through the determination of a momentary entity in the initial perceptual awareness of such a continuum. Thus, except for the difference of whether it presupposes the worldview of momentariness or not, these philosophers share a common interest in the systematic account of the formation of our empirical knowledge in the sequence from initial perception to subsequent imagination or *adhyavasāya*. Unfortunately, the last step, from the second synthesis to the last one, the "synthesis of recognition in a concept" is not clear in Dharmottara's explanation. However, since he also accepts the function of *adhyavasāya* in applying what is superimposed in the mind to a particular object, like Dharmakīrti, we may accept a similar idea of the third synthesis in Dharmottara, though concepts or universals (*sāmānya*) are unreal and exist only within the superimposed character of his philosophy of language.[10] In addition, the fact that Dhamottara refers to conceptual cognition as "basis of 'I' cognition" (*ahaṅkārāspada*) should also be kept in mind when we will compare his idea to Kant's theory of apperception and self-consciousness.[11]

III.3

The final focus of our investigation is Prajñākaragupta. Since his discussions on *adhyavasāya* are

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[9] On this problem G. Dreyfus comments as follows: "Dharmottara's solution could be that coordination [between perception and conception] is achieved because perception, which directly perceives real moments, also indirectly cognizes practical objects. This, however, would be problematic, for it would entail that perception determines its object and thus contradict Dharmakīrti's explicit denial that perception determines reality. If, on the other hand, perception merely induces judgment that conceives of the moments held by perception as practical objects, our problem is still unsolved. For all that has been achieved is a coordination of perception and conception in relation to conceptually constructed practical objects. The relation of this coordinated perception and conception to reality is still problematic" (Dreyfus 1997: 361).

[10] For instance, Ratnakīrti, a Buddhist philosopher in 11th century, accepts a horizontal universal (*tiryaksāmānya*), namely, a type which is excluded from other types, and explains its generation from a particular object that belongs to the type. For Ratnakīrti's idea on particular and universal, see Patil 2009: 259-263.

[11] For more details, see Dharmottara's *Apohaprakaraṇa*, where he elaborates the function of *adhyavasāya* by providing its four alternative interpretations: (1) grasping (*grahaṇa*), (2) making (*karaṇa*), (3) connecting (*yojanā*), and (4) superimposition (*samāropa*). Of the four, the last one, or more correctly, the second alternative of the last one, seems to represent his own idea. That is, the superimposition occurs at the same time when the conceptual cognition, namely, the basis of 'I' cognition, is experienced. Dharmottara's argument is quoted in NVTṬ 441.15-22 and RNA 135.9-15. For the analysis of the argument, see McCrea & Patil 2010: 93, Moriyama 2011: 81, fn. 74, Kataoka 2013: 57 fn. 24; 70-73

scattered throughout his large commentary on Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika*, it is not easy to reconstruct a complete picture of Prajñākaragupta's ideas. The following is my tentative analysis of some relevant passages from the commentary, for the purpose of considering its analogy to Kant's productive imagination.

Let us start with Prajñākaragupta's basic perspective toward Dharmakīrti's philosophy. In this regard, the most remarkable point is his emphasis on the distinction between the ultimate and conventional reality. Accordingly, in the case of perceptual experience, the initial perception, which should be understood as self-awareness/reflexive awareness (*svasaṃvedana*), is placed in the ultimate reality, a different layer than the conventional reality of our empirical experience. In other words, unlike Dhamottara, Prajñākaragupta does not regard perceptual experience as a linear sequence from initial awareness to cognition of the obtainment of an intended object.[12] Rather, regardless of whether it is a perception or an inference, insofar as we discuss everyday activity, every form of cognition relates to a particular object that is to be obtained in the future, toward which one acts by unifying what is cognized at present with such a future object through identical determination (*tadekatvādhyavasāyād eva vṛttir bhāvini vastuni*).[13] For Prajñākaragupta, there is no difference between objects of perception and inference; the only difference is whether the object's appearance is vivid or less vivid at the moment when cognition occurs.[14]

Layer	Cognition	Object
The ultimate level	Self-awareness	The own nature of the cognition itself
The conventional level	Perception with *adhyavasāya*	A future entity, but its appearance is vivid (*spaṣṭa*)
	Inference with *adhyavasāya*	A future entity, but its appearance is less vivid (*aspaṣṭa*)

Regarding this connection, we shall look at Prajñākaragupta's account of verbal cognition. When admitting the meaning of a word (*śabdārtha*) as 'exclusion of the others' (*anyāpoha*, e.g., the meaning of the word "cow" as the exclusion of non-cow), he considers that the exclusion appears as a mental image (*buddhyākāra*) in one's conceptual cognition.[15] After having explained how a word prompts the subject to act towards an intended object through excluding other non-intended objects, Prajñākaragupta claims an alternative view that a mental image in conceptual cognition becomes the intended object that is determined to be acted by the subject in the following manner:

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[12] In PVABh 216.24-26, Prajñākaragupta rejects Dharmottara's idea that the actionable object is a continuum (*santāna*) because the initial moment of perception does not belong to the continuum and thus its object differs from the actionable object. For more details of the argument, see Kobayashi 2011.

[13] See PVABh 216.6.

[14] See PVABh 218.4-5: *kathan tarhi pratyakṣānumānayor viṣayabhedaḥ. spaṣṭe 'spaṣṭam adhyāropyate 'spaṣṭe ca spaṣṭam iti; 218.26: tasmāt pratyakṣaviṣayapravartakatve 'pi spaṣṭāspaṣṭabhedāt pramāṇadvitayam eva.*

[15] See PVABh 263.13-14.

PVABh 263.24-28: *athavā vikalpapratibimbakam evānyāpoho bāhyatvenādhyavasito bhavatīti na doṣaḥ, na tu svena rūpeṇa. tasmān na kiñcit svena rūpeṇābhidheyaṃ*[16] *śabdasyeti na vidhiḥ śabdārthaḥ. nanu svarūpe pratibhāsamāne jñānasya katham bāhye pravartate? bāhyatvenādhyavasāyāt. ko 'yam adhyavasāyaḥ? tadvyavahāraviṣayatayā vyavasthānam. katham anyonyavyavahāraviṣayaḥ. tatrānurāgābhyāsāt sādṛśād gotraskhalanavat.*

Alternatively, there is no fault [in claiming] that only the mental image in a conceptual cognition is the "exclusion of the others," which is determined to be an external object, but [it is] not [the object determined] as its own form. Therefore, any word has no [object] to be designated by its own form, and thus, the meaning of a word is not a positive entity.

[Objection:] If the own form [just] appears in a cognition, how does one undertake to act towards an external object?

[Reply:] This is because one determines [the appearance] as an external object.

[Objection:] What is the "determination" (*adhyavasāya*)?

[Reply:] This is arranging the [appearance] as a [suitable] object for our linguistic activity (*vyavahāraviṣaya*).[17]

[Objection:] How is it possible that it becomes the object of mutually [communicative] activities?

[Reply:] This is because the similarity occurs due to the repetition of [people's] attachment to [the name], like calling someone by his wrong name (*gotraskhalana*).

According to this exposition, *adhyavasāya* constitutes the basis of our linguistic activity (*vyavahāra*). In our everyday communication, when one utters a simple word, "cow," another understands what a cow is. In this case, what appears in the speaker's mind, that is, in his verbal cognition, is an image of the conceptual content of cow, namely, the exclusion of non-cow, as expressed in the Buddhist philosophy of language. However, this image is determined habitually to be an external object, a real cow. The same thing happens in the hearer's mind, too. An image that occurs in the hearer's mind is also determined to be the external object that exists only fictionally. Thus, people can communicate with each other by relying on such determined objects. This implies *adhyavasāya*'s important role of extending one's personal experience of a verbal form of cognition to a public experience in which people share common verbal usages, even though such a public experience is simply an illusion from the ultimate point of view. Needless to say, it reminds us immediately of the function of productive imagination, which M. Johnson has explained as "what makes it possible for us to experience public objects that we all share in our common world." Unlike this, Prajñākaragupta does not explicitly name the transcendental character of *adhyavasāya*; however, by distinguishing the private domain of cognitive events by the name of self-awareness/

[16] Ms. B., 131b3: *-ābhidheyaṃ* (Tib. D243b2: *brjod par bya ba*) for Sāṅkṛtyāyana's edition: *-āvidheyaṃ*.

[17] Jayanta seems to understand the *vyavahāra* as a linguistic one. See J (D) 70b2-3: *rang gi 'dod pas zhen par bstan pa ni | **de'i tha snyad kyi yul nyid du rnam par 'jog pa 'o** zhes bya ba 'o || gzhan gyi ming gzhan du tha nyad byed pa ni rigs 'khrul pa yin no ||*

reflexive awareness (*svasaṃvedana*) from the conventional, everyday practice, he also recognizes the role of adhyavasāya as the basis of the mutually communicative world.

IV

We have seen that the two concepts of *adhyavasāya* and imagination have some remarkable similarities. The two play the role of bridging between intuition and conception, between particular and universal, between a momentary entity and an enduring object, and between private and public experience. Simultaneously, however, we also found several crucial differences between the two notions. Among them, the Buddhist emphasis on its practical aspect and the nature of superimposition are noteworthy, because these two points suggest that the Buddhist philosophical analysis, even though it looks like genuine philosophical thinking, is still within the religious context of the Buddhist practice of removing our fallacious superimpositions. For Buddhists, the analysis of our cognitive experience, no matter whether it is empirical or transempirical, does not aim to construct a solid worldview compatible with natural sciences, but to deconstruct each empirical object to which we are deeply attached, by revealing its imaginary nature, and to attain perfect wisdom devoid of subject-object distinction, a kind of non-conceptual perception. In this respect, we should not forget that *adhyavasāya* is another name for attachment (*abhiniveśa*). Thus, we finally face a gap that is hard to leap across: between the two philosophical traditions or between philosophy and religion. To bridge this gap, we need to search for yet another kind of imagination. However, for now, I must stop here and start imagining such a future study.

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KrV *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Immanuel Kant): J. Timmermann (ed.), *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1998 [Original 1st edition, 1781; 2nd edition, 1787]. References are in the standard pagination of the 1st (A) and 2nd (B) editions.

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