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## Dharmakīrti's Interpretation of the Causelessness of Destruction\*

### 0. INTRODUCTION

In Indian Buddhism, especially in the Sautrāntika and Yogācāra systems, it is a traditionally held notion that destruction is causeless. This notion is used to infer the momentariness (*kṣaṇikatva*) of the conditioned (*saṃskṛta*, *saṃskāra*) or produced (*kṛtaka*). The precise origin of the notion is unknown, but already in the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (AKBh) and the Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya (ASBh) we find a highly developed form of the proof of momentariness based on this idea. Scholarly attention has been drawn to von Rospatt's contention that in the earlier and later phases of Indian Mahāyāna scholastic Buddhism the role of this idea in the inference of momentariness is not the same and that the idea thus underwent a certain historical development. According to him, for example, in the Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkārabhāṣya (MSABh) the non-existence of an external cause of destruction only plays a subordinate role in the proof that the *saṃskāras* cannot endure. That is, its function is not to prove momentariness directly, but merely to support the theory that conditioned things cannot last beyond their origination. The causelessness of destruction serves to explain why conditioned things are not destroyed at a later time. In contrast, in the AKBh and the ASBh, the same notion is used to infer that things perish due to their nature (*svarasa* or *svabhāva*) and that therefore they necessarily vanish immediately after their origination.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In von Rospatt 1995: 178-182, von Rospatt clarifies the historical development of the notion of the causelessness of destruction. He considers the proof of momentariness based on the causelessness of destruction that appears in the MSABh as an older approach to proving that things cannot persist beyond their origination. In contrast, he sees the proof that appears in the AKBh and the ASBh as a newer approach in which it

As is well known, Dharmakīrti (ca. 600-660),<sup>2</sup> one of the most influential Buddhist philosophers in India, also used the concept of the causelessness of destruction to infer momentariness. In this paper, I will take up Dharmakīrti's interpretation of this concept and try to shed some light on his understanding thereof. In particular, it seems worthwhile to investigate how the idea is used in Dharmakīrti's logical and ontological system, since it is here that it finds its most exhaustive expression. Indeed, its usage in this system can be seen as a culminating moment in the idea's historical development. Inheriting the idea of the causelessness of destruction from his predecessors, Dharmakīrti defends it against criticism from realist philosophers, including Uddyotakara (ca. 550-610) of the Nyāya school, who attacked Vasubandhu's proof of momentariness.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, I will also examine the debate between Uddyotakara and Dharmakīrti.

#### 1. INDEPENDENCE OF DESTRUCTION: THE SPATIO-TEMPORAL ASPECT

The causelessness of destruction, in Sanskrit *vināśasya ahetutvam* (e.g., in PV 1.193c),<sup>4</sup> is expressed by Dharmakīrti in another formulation as “the independence of destruction” (*vināśasya nirapekṣatā*). In my view, this is not merely a paraphrase of the traditional expression, but shows that Dharmakīrti intends to refine the concept itself. Both in his *Pramāṇavārttikasvavṛtti* (PVSV) and in the second chapter of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (PVin 2), Dharmakīrti insists that the independence of destruction proves that destruction occurs constantly and with respect to all substances. The following is the final statement in his inference of momentariness:

This very independence of destruction, being incompatible with [the fact that destruction] occurs in a certain locus and at a certain time, proves in itself (*svabhāvena*) that there is no such [destruction that occurs in a certain locus and at a certain time]. [This is] because if that nature, which is independent, occurred at a certain time, or occurred in a certain locus, it would never be independent, for it is dependent on that time and that

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is assumed that things are momentary because they perish on account of their own nature.

<sup>2</sup> Recently, Krasser (2011) re-examined Dharmakīrti's time of activity. According to him, it should be around the middle of the sixth century. Thus, we have two possible datings for Dharmakīrti: one by Frauwallner (1961), namely, ca. 600-660, the other by Krasser. In this paper, I provisionally accept Frauwallner's dating.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. von Rospatt 1995: 188 (n. 410).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. PV 1.193cd: *ahetutvād vināśasya svabhāvād anubandhitā* ||.

substance; this has [already] been explained [by me in PV 1.35 and the auto-commentary thereon].<sup>5</sup>

Here, Dharmakīrti explains the independence of destruction from two different perspectives, namely, the temporal and the spatial. If destruction were to take place at a certain time, as for example ten seconds after an object's origination, this destruction would be dependent on this point in time. If, on the other hand, destruction were to occur in a certain locus, that is, not in all substances in general but only in a particular substance,<sup>6</sup> for example, only in my books, destruction would be dependent on this locus. By negating such dependence on time, one can thus conclude that destruction takes place all the time, that is, it occurs immediately after a thing's origination. In other words, if we provisionally accept the continuum (*santāna*) of an object, then destruction occurs constantly in that object's continuum. Therefore, the thing is momentary. Similarly, from the negation of such dependence on a specific locus it is deduced that destruction occurs everywhere,<sup>7</sup> that is, it takes place equally in every produced object without exception.

<sup>5</sup> PVSV 99,19-23 (= PVin 2 81,9-12): *seyam nirapekṣatā vināśasya kvacit kadācid ca bhāvavirodhinī tadabhāvaṃ svabhāvena<sup>a</sup> sādhayati. yo hi svabhāvo nirapekṣaḥ, sa yadi kadācid bhavet kvacid vā tatkāladravyāpekṣa itī nirapekṣa eva na syād ity uktam.*<sup>b</sup> This entire passage is cited in PVin 2. The Tibetan translation of this passage is translated into German in Steinkellner 1979: 97; cf. also Tani 1991: 156. This is the concluding statement of Dharmakīrti's inference of momentariness based on the absence of a cause of destruction as found in the PVSV and PVin 2. In his PVSV and PVin 2, the section on the inference of momentariness begins with PVSV 98,4 (= PVin 2 76,11). He concludes the first part of his proof with PVSV 98,20-22 (= PVin 2 77,9-10). The section PVSV 98,22-99,19 (= PVin 2 77,11-78,16) consists in an exchange of questions and answers with opponents. Following this, he ends his proof of momentariness with PVSV 99,19-23 (= PVin 2 81,9-12). In PVin 2 79,3-80,9 Dharmakīrti brings a new argument that does not appear in the PVSV, namely, the inference of momentariness from the fact that if a thing would be non-momentary it could not produce its effect(s) either gradually or in a single instant (the so-called *sattvānumāna*), an argument that has to be seen against the background of Dharmakīrti's notion of *svabhāva*. He uses this argument to ascertain (*niścaya*) the pervasion of the property of "being produced" by the property of "being impermanent". After this, from PVin 2 80,10 onwards, he continues his inference of momentariness based on the causelessness of destruction. — <sup>a</sup> According to the commentators, the word *svabhāva* refers to *sattā* or *svasattā*. Cf. PVT Ms Ub5: *tadabhāvaṃ tasya kvacid* [*kvacid* Ms ('ga' zhiq la PVT (D) 226a3): *kecit* Inami et al.] *kadācid ca vināśabhāvasyābhāvaṃ svabhāvena sattāyā sādhayati*; PVinT 2 Ms 94a1: *tasya dravyakālaviśeṣasya bhāvasyābhāvaṃ svasattāyā sādhayati*; PVSVT 364,30-365,6: *tadabhāvaṃ tasya kvacit kadācid ca vināśasyābhāvaṃ svabhāvena sattāyā sādhayati*. <sup>b</sup> *ity uktam*: no correspondence in PVin 2.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. PVSVT 365,16-17: *sarvasya jātasya bhavati, na dravyaviśeṣasya*. "[Destruction] occurs in everything that has arisen [from its own producing cause], not in a particular substance."

<sup>7</sup> Cf. PVT (D) 226a33-4: *thams cad la dus thams cad du 'jig pa yod par* (par D: *pa P grub par byed ces bya ba'i don to* || "It means: [this very independence of destruction]

Concerning the temporal aspect, it is established that a produced thing is momentary,<sup>8</sup> and concerning the spatial aspect, it is established that every produced thing is impermanent.<sup>9</sup> Thus, it is proven that everything is momentary. It is evident in this theory that by employing the independence of destruction, Dharmakīrti is dealing not only with the proof of momentariness, but also with that of the pervasion of the property of “being produced” (*kṛtakatva*) by the property of “being impermanent” (*anityatva*) in the form that everything which is produced is impermanent.<sup>10</sup>

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proves that destruction occurs everywhere at all times”: PVSVT 365,6-8: *sarvatra sarvakālaṃ bhāvaṃ sādhayatīti yāvāt* “It means: [this very independence of destruction] proves that [destruction] occurs everywhere at all times.”

<sup>8</sup> Cf. PVinT 2 Ms 94a3: *kadācidbhāvavirodhād utpadyaiva vinaṣṭaṃ kṣanikam ...* “[It is proved] from the incompatibility with the occurrence [of destruction] at a certain time that immediately after [a produced object] has originated it is destroyed, [that is, it is] momentary.”

<sup>9</sup> Cf. PVinT 2 Ms 94a3: *kvacidbhāvavirodhāc ca sarvaṃ naśvaram ...* “Moreover, [it is proved] from the incompatibility with the occurrence [of destruction] at a certain locus that everything is impermanent.”

<sup>10</sup> Indeed, in PVin 2, Dharmakīrti puts forward the view that if destruction had a cause, then the pervasion would be impossible. Cf. PVin 2 81,8-9: *hetumattve<sup>a</sup> tu vināśasya kasyacit tathābhāve 'py anyatra hetor vaikalayād avināśo 'pi syād ity avyāptiḥ*. “Meanwhile, if destruction possesses a cause, there is no pervasion, since – even if a certain [produced thing] is in such a state [i.e., the state in which it is accompanied by a cause of destruction] – for another [produced thing] it is to be assumed, owing to the incompleteness of a cause [of destruction,] that there is no destruction.” That is, if destruction has a cause, only that produced object upon which a cause of destruction descends by chance can be subject to destruction. Since it has been assumed that the cause of destruction is deficient and encounters obstacles, it is not certain that all produced objects encounter a cause of destruction. Accordingly, in order to establish the pervasion that all produced things are impermanent, destruction must be causeless; otherwise, it would not be possible to ensure the impermanence of all produced objects. The Tibetan translation of this passage in PVin 2 has been translated into German in Steinkellner 1979: 97. My reading and understanding of this passage are inspired by the following commentary by Dharmottara. Cf. PVinT 2 Ms 93b4-7: *atha hetumattve sati kasmād vyāptir na syād ity āha – hetumattve tv iti. yadi dr̥ṣṭeṣu rūpādiṣu hetumān eva vināśaḥ syāt, tadā rūpādījananahetuṣu na pratibaddho naśvaraḥ svabhāvaḥ. tena yeṣv eva rūpādiṣu vināśahetavaḥ sannipatantaḥ, ta eva vinaśvaraḥ syuḥ. anyeṣāṃ punar vināśahetūnāṃ pratibandhavaikalayasambhavād asati sannipāte 'vināśo 'pity avyāptiḥ. — <sup>a</sup> hetumattve tu vināśasya emended (cf. PVinT 2 Ms 93b4: *atha hetumattve sati ...; hetumattve tv iti ...; hetumān eva vināśaḥ ...*). The Sanskrit edition reads *hetusattve tu vināśasya*. The Tibetan translation reads *'jig pa la rgyu yod pa ñid yin na ni* (PVin 2<sub>Tib</sub>: 30\*,24-25).*

## 1.1. TIME AND LOCUS AS THE CAUSE OF DESTRUCTION

In this theory of the independence of destruction, our attention is attracted to the fact that the causes of destruction to be negated no longer refer to causes like a hammer or fire, as are found in many passages of early Mahāyāna scholastic literature, but refer to other causes of destruction, namely, time (*kāla*) and locus (*deśa*). Kaṛṇakagomin explains that if destruction occurs at a certain time and in a particular substance, this very time and substance must be what brings about destruction (*vināśaka*). He comments on the PVSV as follows:

[Objection:] Isn't it the case that destruction is [considered] independent because of its independence from causes that bring about destruction (*vināśakahetvanapekṣatvena*) [i.e., a hammer, etc.], but not because of independence from time and so on (*kālādyanapekṣatvena*)? Therefore, for what reason is it said [by Dharmakīrti]: “destruction would never be independent, for it is dependent on that time and that substance”? If, on the one hand (*ca*), destruction were independent of time, there would be no destruction even in the second moment [of a thing's existence, as you, the Buddhist, assert], since destruction would have to be independent of that point in time [i.e., of the second moment, too]; if [destruction], on the other hand (*ca*), were independent of substance, what could destruction in this case belong to? [Reply:] On the basis of [Dharmakīrti's] statement: “because [a thing] that has arisen is independent of another with reference to that nature” one [can] think as follows: destruction occurs only in the second moment, not in another moment. In the same manner, [destruction] occurs for everything that has arisen, not for a particular substance. By this [argument], [the objection by the opponent:] “if [destruction] were independent of substance, what in this case could destruction belong to?” is refuted. If it [i.e., destruction] occurs at another time [than the moment immediately following an object's origination] and in a particular substance, another time and the particular substance must be (*syāt*) just that which brings about destruction (*vināśaka*), for destruction exists only when those [i.e., that time and that substance] are present. Therefore, it is said [by Dharmakīrti] that if [destruction] were dependent on that time and that substance, “[it] would never be independent”.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> PVSVT 365,10-18: *nanu vināśakahetvanapekṣatvena vināśasyānapekṣatvam, na tu kālādyanapekṣatvena. tat katham ucyate – tatkāladravyāpekṣa iti nirapekṣa eva vināśo na syād iti. yadi ca kālānapekṣo vināśaḥ, dvitīye 'pi kṣaṇe vināśo na syāt, tatkālānapekṣatvāt* [°kālānapekṣatvāt PVSVT Ms:<sup>a</sup> °kālāpekṣatvāt PVSVT], *dravyānapekṣatve ca kasya tarhi vināśaḥ syāt. evaṃ manyate jātasya tadbhāve 'nyānapekṣaṇād* ('nyānapekṣaṇād PVSVT Ms: 'nyonapekṣaṇād PVSVT) *iti vacanāḥ – dvitīya eva kṣaṇe vināśo bhavati, nānyasmin kṣaṇe. tathā sarvasya jātasya bhavati, na dravyaviśeṣasya. tena dravyānapekṣatve kasya tarhi vināśo bhavati iti nirastam. kālāntare dravyaviśeṣe cāsya* [cāsya PVSVT Ms: ca nāśasya PVSVT]<sup>c</sup> *bhāve kālāntarasya dravyaviśeṣasya ca vināśakatvam eva syāt, vināśasya tadbhāva*

Under the assumption that Karṇakagomin's interpretation is correct, it is safe to say that even if a substance disappears spontaneously without any extrinsic cause of destruction like a hammer, if it does not disappear immediately after its origination but only after a short period of time, this bit of time is what brings about destruction and thus, destruction is dependent on time.<sup>12</sup> Here Karṇakagomin takes into consideration the theoretical possibility that spontaneous destruction without any extrinsic cause does not necessarily imply that this destruction has taken place immediately upon origination.<sup>13</sup> Namely, he assumes the possibility of there being a delay.<sup>14</sup>

When considering the locus as the cause of destruction, it can be explained that when a substance vanishes, this very substance is what brings about destruction. Thus, destruction is dependent on this substance, as long as it is only this substance among all produced things that vanishes. In this case, the pervasion in the form of everything that is produced is impermanent would be impossible, since only this particular produced object is impermanent, not everything.<sup>15</sup>

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*eva bhāvāt.*<sup>d</sup> *tasmāt tatkāladravayāpekṣatve nirapekṣa eva na syād ity ucyate.* — <sup>a</sup> *na* is added in the margin at the top of the manuscript (cf. PVSVT Ms 132b4). <sup>b</sup> PVSV 100,2-3. <sup>c</sup> For °*āsya*, the gloss *nāśasya* is found in the margin of the manuscript (cf. PVSVT Ms 132b5). It seems to me that the editor of the PVSVT did not consider the word *nāśasya* to be a gloss, but rather to belong to the body of the text. <sup>d</sup> *vināśasya tadbhāva eva bhāvāt* (“for destruction exists only when those [i.e., that time and that substance] are present”). With this explanation Karṇakagomin seems to mean that *anvaya-vyatireka* relationships are established between destruction and time as well as between destruction and locus. The fact that destruction occurs in a particular substance means: if this particular substance exists, then destruction occurs; on the other hand, if this particular substance does not exist, then destruction does not occur. Likewise, the fact that destruction occurs at a particular time means: when this particular time occurs, destruction takes place; on the other hand, if it is not that time, destruction does not occur. In this manner, time and substance can be considered that which brings about destruction.

<sup>12</sup> Conversely, only in the case of destruction occurring immediately after an object's origination can destruction be considered independent.

<sup>13</sup> In fact, in the commentaries on the PVSV we find this kind of opponent's objection. Cf. PVT Ms Tb3 (on PVSV 98,24-25: *naivam bhāvasya kācid apekṣā*): *kṛtakasyāpy asti vināśam prati kālāntarapratikṣā. tato hetur asiddha ity āha – naivam ityādi kṛtakasya bhāvasya nāśe kācīt kālāntarāpekṣā.* Also, cf. PVSVT 362,12-13: *kṛtakasyāpy asti vināśam prati kālāntarāpekṣā. tato hetur asiddha ity āha – naivam ityādi kṛtakasya bhāvasya nāśe kācīt kālāntarāpekṣeti vakṣyati.*

<sup>14</sup> According to von Rospatt, the reasoning for excluding a delay in spontaneous destruction appears for the first time in the AKBh. Cf. von Rospatt 1995: 182.

<sup>15</sup> The situation that “among all produced things only the particular substance x vanishes” can be explained ontologically as follows: “of all causal complexes, only the particular causal complex that produced x has the ability to produce an impermanent thing, not every causal complex.” In this case, one cannot say that every causal complex



Consequently, the independence of destruction from the causes of destruction time and locus leads to the conclusion that destruction occurs all the time, everywhere.

## 2. THE CONCEPTS OF "INDEPENDENCE" AND "DEPENDENCE"

For the theoretical basis of the idea of destruction independent of time and locus, one must refer to Dharmakīrti's understanding of the concept of "independence" as well as its counter-concept "dependence". In his discussion on how the relation between cause and effect should be ascertained, Dharmakīrti clearly elucidates both concepts as follows:

Accordingly, that which is causeless is permanently existent or permanently non-existent because it is independent of anything else, since the fact that things exist at a particular time is due to [their] dependence (PV 1.35 = PVin 2.58). Namely, if smoke were causeless, since it is independent, it would never not exist, because [the cause] for its existence is not deficient, just as at the time when [the existence of smoke] is accepted. Alternatively, even at the time [when the existence of smoke is accepted], it would not exist, because [this time] is not distinct from the time when [the smoke] does not exist, since things exist at a particular time due to [their] dependence. ... Therefore, it turns out (*bhavati*) that a thing that exists in one [particular] locus and at one [particular] time, avoiding another locus and another time, is indeed dependent on that [particular locus and time]. That is to say, dependence is nothing but existence in this manner (*tathāvṛtti*), because for that which is independent of the assistance provided by that [locus and that time], the restriction to that [locus and that time] is impossible.<sup>16</sup>

has the ability to restrict things to having an impermanent nature (concerning this theory, cf. Yoshimizu 2011). Further, it would be impossible to ascertain the pervasion in the form that everything produced is impermanent at the ontological level, and hence inferring impermanence based on the logical reason of being produced would also be impossible. In the above-mentioned example, the particular substance x can be considered that which brings about destruction, and thus destruction is dependent on that substance. Destruction, however, can be considered to be independent only if everything that is produced disappears.

<sup>16</sup> PVSV 22,19-24, 23,3-6 (= PVin 2 86,8-13; 86,16-87,2) *tathā ca – nityaṃ sattvaṃ asattvaṃ vāhetor anyānapekṣaṇāt | apekṣāto hi bhāvānāṃ kādācītkatvasambhavaḥ ||* (PV 1.35 = PVin 2.58). *sa hi dhūmo 'hetur bhavan nirapekṣatvān na kadācīn na bhavet, tadbhāve vaikalābhāvad iṣṭakālavat, tadāpi vā na bhavet, abhāvakālāviśeṣāt. apekṣayā hi bhāvāḥ kādācītkā bhavanti. ... tasmād ekadeśakālaparihāreṇānyadeśakālayor vartamāno bhāvas tatsāpekṣo nāma bhavati. tathā hi tathāvṛttir evāpekṣā, tatkr̥topakārānapekṣasya tanniyamāyogāt.* There are many translations of this passage. Cf. Steinkellner 1979: 104-105 (German translation of the Tibetan translation of PVin 2); Mookerjee – Nagasaki 1964: 85-86 (in English); Funayama 1989: 16-17 (in Japanese); Dunne 2004: 336-337 (in English); Gillon – Hayes 2008: 354 (in English). See also HB 21\*,8-10: *ahetukatvād bhāvānām*

In my interpretation, Dharmakīrti explains here that the fact that “x has a cause” is equal to the fact that “x is dependent on the particular time at which the cause exists and on the particular locus where the cause exists”. Therefore, x is restricted to the very time at which the cause exists, and to the very locus where the cause exists.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, the causeless is free of such spatio-temporal restrictions. Hence, that which has no cause must exist always and everywhere, as space does;<sup>18</sup> or alternatively, what is non-caused does not exist at all, because it has no cause and therefore can never come into existence by any means of production, like, e.g., a rabbit’s horn.<sup>19</sup> In the same manner, if destruction occurs without cause, it must follow that destruction takes place always and everywhere, as space does, or that it never occurs at all, like a rabbit’s horn. Of these two outcomes, Dharmakīrti applies the first, namely, that destruction occurs always and everywhere, to his theory of the independence of destruction discussed above.

### 3. UDDYOTAKARA’S CRITICISM OF THE CAUSELESSNESS OF DESTRUCTION

At this point, we should examine Uddyotakara’s criticism of the Buddhist theory of the causelessness of destruction. In his *Nyāyavārttika* (NV), Uddyotakara confronts the Buddhists with the following problem in their tenet of causeless destruction. The passage reads as follows:

[A person] who proclaims that there is no cause of destruction should be questioned closely [in the following way]: “1) Does destruction not exist because of its causelessness, just like a lotus in space, etc.? Or, 2) is [destruction] permanent because of its causelessness, just like space, etc.?” Because in your position it is understood that what is causeless is twofold, [namely] permanent and non-existent, for there is no other alternative than existence and non-existence. Among these [alternatives], 1) if destruction is non-existent because of its causelessness, then it follows that everything is permanent, since there is no destruction; furthermore, it follows that this [Buddhist] conviction: “all conditioned [things] are subject to destruction” is groundless, since if there is no “going” (*gati*) there is no [idea of] “it goes” (*gacchati*). If 2) [destruction] is permanent, it follows that a thing persists together with destruction, because [destruc-

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*nityaṃ sattvaṃ asattvaṃ vā syāt, apekṣyasyābhāvāt. apekṣayā hi bhāvāḥ kādācitkā bhavanti.*

<sup>17</sup> This is the characteristic ontology of the Sautrāntika system. Cf. Yoshimizu 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. PVV 300,12: *ākāśasyeva* ....

<sup>19</sup> Cf. PVV 300,12: *śaśaviṣānāder iva* ....

tion] persists at all times. But this is not correct, for existence and non-existence are characterized as existing (*sthita*) by mutual exclusion.<sup>20</sup>

It is striking that the argument offered by Uddyotakara – that causeless destruction must be either non-existent or permanent – essentially corresponds to Dharmakīrti's aforementioned statement in PV 1.35 (*nityam sattvam asattvam vāhetoh*). Moreover, the consequence that causeless destruction would be permanent and that therefore objects and destruction would co-exist can be identified as the opponent's objection presented in PV 1.274a-c,<sup>21</sup> which reads:

[Objection:] Even if destruction is causeless, there is the [unfavourable] consequence that things and destruction co-exist, since [because of its causelessness] destruction is permanent.<sup>22</sup>

This objection also suggests that Dharmakīrti accepts the above-mentioned consequence that destruction occurs permanently, namely, all the

<sup>20</sup> We have two expositions of Uddyotakara's argument, namely, one in his own Nyāyavārttika, and the other in the Tattvasaṅgrahapañjikā (TSP) cited (or reported?) by Kamalaśīla; cf. Steinkellner 1963: 130-131 (see no. Z18). The exposition in the Nyāyavārttika presents a number of textual problems that could not be solved even in Thakur's improved edition of the text. I have therefore used Kamalaśīla's version of the argument which is much clearer and more elaborate, as Steinkellner (1963) has pointed out. TSP 172,26-173,17: *vināśasya hetur nāstīti bruvāṇaḥ paryanuyojyaḥ – kim akāraṇatvād vināśo nāstī vyomotpalādivat, athākāraṇatvān nityo vyomādivad iti. bhavatām hi pakṣe 'kāraṇam dvidhā dṛṣṭam – nityam asac ca. na hi sattvāsattvavyatirekeṇa prakāraṇtaram asti. tatra yady akāraṇatvād asad vināśaḥ, tadā sarvabhāvānām nityatvaprasaṅgaḥ, vināśābhāvāt. kim ca sarvasaṃskārā vīnaśyantiṭy eṣa pratyaḥ nirnimittāḥ prāpnoti. na hy asatyām gatau gacchatīti bhavati. atha nityaḥ, tadā bhāvasya vināśena sahāvasthānam prāpnoti, sarvadāvasthānāt. na caitat yuktam, bhāvābhāvayoḥ parasparaparihāravasthānalakṣaṇatvāt.* Cf. NV 834,1-835,7 (NV Th 389,12-20): *vināśahetur nāstīti bruvāṇaḥ paryanuyoktavyaḥ – kim akāraṇatvād vināśo nāstī, utākāraṇatvān nitya iti. bhavatām pakṣe akāraṇam dvidhā, nityam asac ca. asmākaṃ tu nityam eva. tad yady (tad yady NV Th: yady NV) akāraṇatvān nityo vināśaḥ, kāryasyotpādo na prāpnoti, utpannasya ca bhāvasya (utpannasya ca bhāvasya NV: anutpannasya ca vināśo bhāvasya NV Th) vināśena (vināśena NV: vināśo na NV Th) sahāvasthānam iti ca doṣaḥ. tataś ca bhāvānām abhāvāvirodhād (°āvirodhād NV: °virodhitvād NV Th) atyantam avasthānam (atyantam avasthānam NV: atyantāvasthānam NV Th) iti. athāsan vināśaḥ, evam api sarvanityatvam, vināśābhāvāt. yadi cāsan vināśaḥ, vīnaśyatīty asatī vināśe pratyaḥ na prāpnoti, nāsatyām gatau gacchatīti bhavati.* For a philological analysis of the relationship between these two texts, see Steinkellner 1963: 130-131; for translations, see Kuwatsuki 1979: 9-10 (both NV and TSP, in Japanese), Chatterjee 1988: 21-22 (only TSP, in English). Summaries of Uddyotakara's view can also be found in Mookerjee 1935: 3-5, Moriyama 1999: 192, and Tani 1996: 55-56 .

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Moriyama 1999: 192.

<sup>22</sup> PV 1.274a-c: *ahetutve 'pi nāśasya nityatvād bhāvanāśayoḥ | sahabhāvaprasaṅgaś cet* .... For a translation of this passage, cf. Ōmae 1991: 97.

time and everywhere.<sup>23</sup> However, he rejects the consequence, indicated by Uddyotakara here, that objects and destruction co-exist. How, then, does Dharmakīrti defend the constant occurrence of destruction, while warding off Uddyotakara’s attack?

### 3.1. DHARMAKĪRTI’S REPLY

In reply to Uddyotakara’s objection, Dharmakīrti argues that destruction does not actually exist (*asat*) and hence it is not possible to discuss whether destruction possesses permanence or impermanence as its property, since these two properties can only belong to a real entity (*vastu*). In addition, only what is real can co-exist with something else, and thus, since destruction is not anything, destruction cannot co-exist with anything else.<sup>24</sup>

It is evident that in this rejoinder Dharmakīrti is negating the ontologically independent status of destruction, that is, he denies that destruction is an actual thing that exists as something ontologically different (*arthāntara* or *bhāvāntara*) from that which disappears. And yet, as I read it, this negation of the existence of destruction does not necessarily imply that Dharmakīrti has thereby excluded the omnipresence of causeless destruction. In general, the Buddhists accept that destruction cannot be ontologically distinguished from the disappearing thing itself;<sup>25</sup> rather destruction is a thing’s nature (*bhāvasvabhāva*),<sup>26</sup> i.e., a thing’s property, with which the thing originates from its own means of

<sup>23</sup> Although Uddyotakara does not directly mention the omnipresent nature of causeless destruction, judging from the example of space it is possible to assume that causeless destruction has the character of omnipresence.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. PV 1.274d and thereon PVSV 144,18-21: *asato nityatā kutaḥ || na, tasya nityā-nityadharmāyogāt. na hy asaty ayaṃ vikalpaḥ sambhavati, tayor vastudharmatvād vināśasya cākīṃcītvāt. bhavato hi kenacit sahabhāvaḥ syāt. na ca vināśo bhavati. tasmād adoṣaḥ.* “How can there be permanence of that which is not existing? (PV 1.274d) [This] is not [the case], because the property of being permanent and that of being impermanent are not suitable for it. For this alternative is not possible in regard to something not existing, since both are properties of a real entity and destruction is not anything. For there might be the co-existence of that which is actually existent (*bhavat*) with something [else], but destruction does not actually exist. Therefore, there is no fault.” For a translation of this passage, cf. Ōmae 1991: 97. In Muroya 2011, there is a summary of this argument; cf. Muroya 2011: section 3.1.2.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. PVSV 100,3: *na vināśo nāmānya eva kaścīd bhāvāt.* “There is nothing called destruction that is separate, [namely] from the thing [that is destroyed].”

<sup>26</sup> For example, Dharmottara states as follows (PVinT 2 Ms 97a1): *asmābhis tu bhāvasvabhāva eva vināśa ity uktam.* “But, it is said by us that destruction is nothing but a thing’s nature.” Cf. also PVSV 141,20-21: *na hi nāśo bhāvānām kutaścīd bhavati, tad bhāvasvabhāvo bhavet.*

production, i.e., its causal complex. To this extent the omnipresence of causeless destruction with all things holds theoretically, even if destruction is not an actual thing.

At this point, it should be additionally noted that there is a decisive difference in character between space and destruction. Destruction as the property of a thing always requires an actual thing as the locus where it occurs, since if there were no thing, destruction would not occur. But space does not belong to anything. Space can exist everywhere, all the time, and does not require anything else. Therefore, in sharp contrast to space, the phrase “everywhere all the time” in the case of destruction must always be understood with the following qualifications: “destruction occurs everywhere *where things exist* and all the time *when things exist*.”<sup>27</sup> In other words, it is only necessary for destruction, not for space, that something exists. And the fact that something exists means that something originates from its own cause and hence comes into existence; therefore, destruction already takes place with a thing's origination. Thus, it can be said that everything which originates from its own cause is momentary.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In Dharmakīrti's logical and ontological system, the causelessness of destruction serves to prove that destruction occurs all the time and everywhere. Accordingly, one can conclude that everything is momentary (*sarvaṃ kṣaṇikam*), since destruction, inasmuch as it has no cause and hence is independent of both time (*kāla*) and locus (*deśa*), is free of spatio-temporal restrictions (*deśakālanīyama*).<sup>28</sup> What is of para-

<sup>27</sup> “Destruction exists everywhere where things exist and all the time when things exist.” Dharmakīrti summarizes this statement tersely in PV 1.269ab: *sattāmātrānubandhitvān nāśasya* .... “Because destruction follows from existence as such ....” For translations and interpretations of this verse, see Ōmae 1991: 90, Tani 1991: 156, Yoshimizu 1999: 244 (fn. 27), and Muroya 2011: section 2.1.

<sup>28</sup> It is worth mentioning that the assumption of causeless destruction being free of spatio-temporal restriction is fraught with considerable doctrinal problems. As Yoshimizu (2007) has shown with regard to the profound significance of the theory of spatio-temporal restriction (*deśakālanīyama*) in the Sautrāntika philosophical system, what exists in reality for the Sautrāntika is only what is conditioned, namely, produced by a cause. Therefore, for the Sautrāntika space and atoms, etc., are not real things. Thus, if one maintains the causelessness of destruction, this implicitly means for the Sautrāntika that destruction is unreal and hence does not exist at all. This becomes a controversial issue for Dharmakīrti and his successors, for while they flatly deny destruction as is propounded by the realists (i.e., destruction that is ontologically different from a disappearing thing itself), they acknowledge the fact that things are of a perishable nature

mount importance in this theory is that “destruction” (*vināśa*) never means destruction as understood by the realists, namely, something ontologically different from what is disappearing and thus, something that has an ontologically independent status. The temporal independence of causeless destruction contributes to the proof of momentariness, and its spatial independence is of relevance for the proof of pervasion. In this regard, it may be safe to say that the notion of the causelessness of destruction represents the Buddhist worldview altogether: “everything is momentary”, or “things change all the time”.<sup>29</sup>

In many early Mahāyāna scholastic works, extrinsic causes of destruction like a hammer or fire are usually discussed as potential causes of destruction. Dharmakīrti, however, also considers time and locus as causes of destruction next to extrinsic causes such as hammers, etc. That is, if a produced entity encounters an extrinsic cause of destruction like a hammer, etc., and disappears, the point in time at which this happens could be indirectly regarded as being a cause of destruction. Likewise, if a produced entity encounters a cause of destruction and is destroyed by it, the locus where this happens could be considered an extrinsic cause of destruction as well. In this regard, time and locus would not be separate from other extrinsic causes of destruction. In contrast, 1) it may be assumed that a produced entity disappears spontaneously without the activity of any extrinsic cause, however not immediately after

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(*naśvarasvabhāva*). If this perishable nature were causeless, it would not exist. In my view, this is the doctrinal problem of the assumption of causeless destruction confronting Dharmakīrti and his successors. Cf. PVSV 99,23-25 (= PVin 2 81,13-14): *sa tarhi naśvarasvabhāvo nirapekṣa ity ahetukaḥ syāt. nāhetukaḥ, sattāhetor eva bhāvāt tathotpatteḥ, sato hi bhavatas tādrśasyaiva bhāvāt*. “[Objection:] Then, this perishable nature is independent; therefore, it would be causeless. [So, it would not be able to exist at all]. [Reply:] It is not causeless, because [this perishable nature] arises so [i.e., as it is] from a thing (*bhāva*) that is nothing but the cause of the existence [of the thing that has this perishable nature], because something real that comes into existence arises exactly as such [i.e., as having a perishable nature].” For other translations of this PVSV passage, see Steinkellner 1969: 367, Steinkellner 1979: 97 (German translation from the Tibetan translation of PVin 2), and Yoshimizu 2011: 497-498 (n. 27). To me it seems that here Dharmakīrti is trying to respond to this objection by showing that a perishable nature is that with which objects arise from their own cause of existence, i.e., their causal complex; therefore, to this extent it is not causeless. Namely, the perishable nature has an indirect cause; this cause is the cause of a thing being produced. Therefore, the existence of a perishable nature is undeniable. See also HBT(A) 77,14-17 (on HB 7\*,18-19: *svabhāvata eva naśvarā bhāvāḥ*): *yadi tarhi nāśasya hetur nāsti, sa teṣāṃ kṛtakānāṃ satām avāśyambhāvī vināśaḥ kutāḥ. na hy ākasmikaḥ kaścit svabhāvo yukta ity āha – svabhāvata eva. bhavaty asmāt kāryam iti bhāvaśabdo hetuvacanaḥ. tena svahetubhya eva naśvarā naśanaśīlāḥ*.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. von Rospatt 1995: 195.

its origination, but at a particular later point in time, having existed for a while. This kind of destruction would have to be explained as follows: The produced entity arises from its own cause and possesses such an own nature that it has to perish at a later point in time. If this were to be the case, time as a cause of destruction would no longer be extrinsic, but intrinsic to the entity, since the point in time at which destruction occurs would be dependent on the thing's own nature.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, 2) it could be assumed that a produced entity vanishes spontaneously, but only that particular substance of all produced entities vanishes. This fact could be explained as follows: Of all causal complexes only the specific causal complex that produced this particular entity has the ability to produce an impermanent thing, not every causal complex. Were this the case, the locus as cause of destruction would also not be extrinsic, but intrinsic, since the destruction that occurs in this particular locus, i.e., in this particular produced entity, would have to be ascribed to the causal complex that produced this very entity. In my view, according to Dharmakīrti these two causes, time and locus, are in this way theoretically conceivable as the ultimate causes of destruction and, as such, are the two main obstacles to establishing the Buddhist doctrine of the universal flux of momentary entities. In this sense, Dharmakīrti's elaboration of the notion of causelessness of destruction can be regarded as the most sophisticated affirmation of the traditional concept in its historical development.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> However, if we consider the theory of the so-called *kālavādin*, for example, who insists that time changes and in the end destroys everything, then time would have to be regarded as an extrinsic cause of destruction. For textual sources for the *kālavādin*'s theory of time, see Uno 2003.

<sup>31</sup> At this point, the following issue may be worth considering: why doesn't Vasubandhu, the author of the AKBh, insist on the view that causeless destruction occurs everywhere all the time, as Dharmakīrti does, despite the fact that he is conversant with the Sautrāntika theory of spatio-temporal restriction, as Yoshimizu (2007) has shown. For him, too, it is self-evident that something causeless exists everywhere at all times (cf. Yoshimizu 2007: 1054-1060, especially 1058-1059 with n. 16). But, to my knowledge, there is no clear evidence in the AKBh that Vasubandhu holds the view that causeless destruction occurs everywhere all the time. My provisional answer to this question is the following: As is well known, Vasubandhu maintains steadfastly that destruction is mere non-existence (*abhāva*) and therefore destruction cannot be caused by anything whatsoever. Thus, a conditioned entity is momentary (cf. von Rospatt 1995: 187). As long as he proves the causelessness of destruction in this way, he can never treat destruction as something positive, for destruction is mere non-existence. Therefore, for him the possibility is excluded, from the beginning, of considering destruction existent everywhere at all times. In contrast, Dharmakīrti's approach to proving the causelessness of destruction is different. He maintains that if destruction were to have a cause, it could not be guaranteed that the produced inevitably disappears, because the cause of destruction could

## A b b r e v i a t i o n s

AKBh	Abhidharmakośabhāṣya of Vasubandhu, ed. P. Pradhan. Patna 1967.
ASBh	Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya of Jinaputra, ed. N. Tatia. Patna 1976.
D	<i>sDe dge Tibetan Tripiṭaka, Bstan hgyur – preserved at the Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo</i> , ed. J. Takasaki, Z. Yamaguchi and Y. Ejima. Tokyo 1977ff.
HB	Hetubindu of Dharmakīrti, ed. E. Steinkellner. Wien 1967.
HBṬ(A)	Hetubinduṭīkā of Arcaṭa, ed. S. Sanghavi and Muni Shri Jina-vijayaji. Baroda 1949.
MSABh	Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkārahāṣya of Vasubandhu, ed. S. Lévi. Paris 1907 (repr. Kyoto 1984).
NV	Nyāyavārttika of Uddyotakara, ed. Taranatha Nyaya-Tarkatirtha and Amarendramohan Tarkatirtha. Calcutta 1936, 1944 (repr. New Delhi 2003).
NV Th	Nyāyavārttika of Uddyotakara, ed. A. Thakur. New Delhi 1997.
P	<i>The Tibetan Tripitaka, Peking Edition, Reprinted under the Supervision of the Otani University, Kyoto</i> , ed. D.T. Suzuki. Tokyo – Kyoto 1955-1961.
PV 1	Pramāṇavārttika of Dharmakīrti, chapter 1, in PVSV.
PVin 2	Pramāṇaviniścaya of Dharmakīrti, chapter 2, ed. E. Steinkellner. Beijing – Vienna 2007.
PVin 2 <sub>Tib</sub>	Pramāṇaviniścaya of Dharmakīrti, chapter 2 (Tibetan), ed. E. Steinkellner. Wien 1973.
PVinṬ 2 Ms	Sanskrit Manuscript of the Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā of Dharmakīrti, see PVin 2: Introduction, p. xxx-xxxi.
PVSV	Pramāṇavārttikasvavṛtti of Dharmakīrti, ed. R. Gnoli. Rome 1960.
PVSVṬ	Pramāṇavārttikasvavṛttiṭīkā of Karṇakagomin, ed. R. Sāṃkṛtyāyana. Allahabad 1943 (repr. Kyoto 1982).
PVSVṬ Ms	Sanskrit Manuscript of the Pramāṇavārttikasvavṛttiṭīkā. In: <i>The Sanskrit Commentaries on the Pramāṇavārttikam from Rāhula Sāṃkṛtyāyana's Collection of Negatives II</i> . Sanskrit Manuscripts of Karṇakagomin's Pramāṇavārttika(sva)vṛttiṭīkā, Facsimile Edition, ed. S. Ihara. Patna – Narita 1998.

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be deficient or encounter obstacles. This is an unfavorable conclusion for opponents who accept the impermanence of the produced. Thus, the causelessness of destruction is proven. Cf. n. 10 and Sakai 2004. It seems to me that as long as Dharmakīrti proves the causelessness of destruction in this way, he has a right to treat destruction as something positive, namely, as the nature of all that exists.



PVṬ Ms	Sanskrit Manuscript of the Pramāṇavārttikaṭīkā. In: <i>A Study of the Pramāṇavārttikaṭīkā by Śākyabuddhi from the National Archives Collection, Kathmandu</i> . Part I: <i>Sanskrit Fragments Transcribed</i> , ed. M. Inami, K. Matsuda and T. Tani. Tokyo 1992.
PVṬ(D)	Pramāṇavārttikaṭīkā of Śākyabuddhi, D 4220.
PVṬ(P)	Pramāṇavārttikaṭīkā of Śākyabuddhi, P 5718.
PVV	Pramāṇavārttikavṛtti of Manorathanandin, ed. R. Sāṃkṛtyāyana. Patna 1938-1940.
TSP	Tattvasaṅgrahapañjikā of Kamalaśīla, ed. E. Krishnama-charya. Baroda 1984.

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