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Are Buddhist Pramāṇavādins non-Buddhistic? Dignāga and Dharmakīrti on the impact of logic and epistemology on emancipation

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The question as to whether Buddhist logic and epistemology (*pramāṇavāda*) is of any relevance for the Buddhist striving for liberation still seems to be a controversial one. The controversy on this issue was initiated by the great Russian scholar Theodor Stcherbatsky¹ in his famous *Buddhist Logic*, namely in the statements that *pramāṇavāda* “is a doctrine of truth and error. In the intention of its promoters the system had apparently no special connection with Buddhism as a religion, i.e., as the teaching of a path towards Salvation” (p. 2) and that according to Sa skya Paṇḍita (1182–1251) “logic is an utterly profane science, containing nothing Buddhistic at all, just as medicine and mathematics” (p. 46). The role of epistemology has subsequently been dealt with in several contributions including Ernst Steinkellner’s “The Spiritual Place of the Epistemological Tradition in Buddhism” of 1982 (cf. n. 1) and “Tshad ma’i skyes bu” of 1983,² Seiji Kimura’s “The Position of Logic in Tibetan Buddhism” of 1986,³ Leonard van der Kuijp’s “An Early Tibetan View of the Soteriology of Buddhist Epistemology” of 1987,⁴ David Jackson’s “The Status of Pramāṇa Doctrine According to Sa skya Paṇḍita and Other Tibetan Masters” of 1994⁵ and David Seyfort Ruegg’s “*Ordre spirituel*

¹ For later interpretations of modern scholars, cf. Ernst Steinkellner, The Spiritual Place of the Epistemological Tradition in Buddhism. *Nanto Bukkyō* 49 (1982) [1–15]: 4–7.

² Ernst Steinkellner, Tshad ma’i skyes bu: Meaning and Historical Significance of the Term. In: Ernst Steinkellner and Helmut Tauscher (eds), *Contributions on Tibetan and Buddhist Religion and Culture*, Wien 1983: 275–284.

³ Seiji Kimura, Chibetto no Bukkyō ni okeru ronrigaku no ichizuke. In: Z. Yamaguchi (ed.), *Chibetto no Bukkyō to shakai* [Buddhism and Society in Tibet]. Tōkyō 1986: 365–401. An English summary is given in Jackson 1994: 125–128; cf. n. 5.

⁴ Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, An Early Tibetan View of the Soteriology of Buddhist Epistemology: The Case of ‘Bri-gung ‘Jig-rten mgon-po. *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 15 (1987) 57–70.

⁵ David Jackson, The Status of Pramāṇa Doctrine According to Sa skya Paṇḍita and Other Tibetan Masters: Theoretical Discipline or Doctrine of Liberation? *Buddhist Forum* 3 (1994) 85–129.

et ordre temporel” of 1995,⁶ to mention only the most important. Roughly speaking, in these contributions, in the various positions attributed to the Buddhist scholars, the science of epistemology and logic (*hetuvidyā*) is considered to be a Buddhistic science, a non-Buddhistic science, or – more conscientiously – a profane secular science that is common to the Buddhist and other Indian non-Buddhist schools such as the Naiyāyikas.

In this study, however, I will not consider the views of the scholars that have already been mentioned. Rather, I will focus on the explicit and implicit statements of Dignāga, the founder of the Buddhist epistemological tradition in the first half of the sixth century, that can be gathered from his main work, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (*PS*) and his own commentary thereupon, which have not yet received the necessary attention. In so doing, I will also make use of other related texts. To conclude, we will take a look at Dharmakīrti’s position and Dharmottara’s comments on it.

In the conclusion of his *Pramāṇasamuccaya*(*vṛtti*) (*PS[V]*), Dignāga elaborates on his reason for its composition and on his understanding of the role of *pramāṇa*. Two passages from this explanation that deserve closer examination are quoted by the Tibetan scholar Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364) in his famous “History of Buddhism” (*Chos ’byun*). In the first, Dignāga formulates, according to the commentator Jinendrabuddhi, his second or indirect (*vyavahita*) purpose (*prayojana*) for the composition of the *PS(V)*. The first or directly (*sākṣāt*) stated purpose in the *maṅgalaśloka* is “to establish valid cognition” (*pramāṇasiddhi*) which in the *Vṛtti* thereon is explicated as meaning “to refute the *pramāṇas* of the opponents” (*parapramāṇapratiśedha*) and “to reveal the good qualities of one’s own *pramāṇas*” (*svapramāṇaguṇodbhāvana*). Bu ston refers to these passages in order to show that according to Dignāga, the works belonging to the *pramāṇa* tradition should be understood as constituting the written corpus of the science of logic, *hetuvidyā*, alone and may not be counted as also belonging to the so-called “internal science”, *adhyātmavidyā*, the Buddhist soteriology proper. As is well known, the Buddhists distinguish between five major branches of science or fields of knowledge (*vidyāsthāna*). As enumerated in Seyfort Ruegg’s *Ordre spirituel* (1995: 102; cf. n. 6), these five branches are:

- (1) *nañ rig pa* = *adhyātmavidyā* “Science intérieure”
- (2) *gtan tshigs rig pa* = *hetuvidyā* “épistémologie et logique”,
- (3) *sgra rig pa* = *śabdavidyā* (*vyākaraṇa*) “grammaire”

⁶ David Seyfort Ruegg, *Ordre spirituel et ordre temporel dans la pensée bouddhique de l’Inde et du Tibet*. Paris 1995.

(4) *gso ba'i rig pa* = *cikitsāvidyā* "médecine"

(5) *bzo rig pa* = *karmasthānavidyā (śilpa)* "arts, métiers et techniques".

Among Tibetan scholars, long debates arose with regard to this traditional classification. It is especially in the tradition of the dGe lug pas, founded by Tsoñ kha pa (1357–1419), that we find strong arguments that the texts of the Buddhist epistemological tradition do not only have the purpose of explaining logic, etc., but also have a strong soteriological impact on the Bodhisattva's path (*mārga*) to liberation and thus should also be subsumed under the category of *adhyātmavidyā*.⁷ An unidentified proponent of such a position is quoted and refuted by Bu ston in the following manner:

[Some] Tibetans say that the logical treatises (*rtog ge'i bstan bcos, tarkaśāstra*) of those [teachers mentioned before] and others (*sogs pa*) [constitute] the Abhidharma-*piṭaka*. This is not correct, as logical [works] are treatises of *hetuvidyā* and Abhidharmic [works] are treatises of *adhyātmavidyā*.

... *de dag la sogs pa rtog ge'i bstan bcos mams bod mams mñon pa'i sde snod du smra ba ni mi 'tshad te | rtog ge gtan tshigs rig pa'i bstan bcos yin la | mñon pa ni nañ rig pa'i bstan bcos yin pa'i phyir ro || ... (Chos 'byuñ 17b[666]4–5)*⁸

He corroborates this with a quotation from Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti*⁹ and another from the *Mahāyānasūtrāṅkāra* (MSA 1.12) and by two quotes from Dignāga's *PS(V)*.

*tshad ma kun las btus par yañ | tshad ma dañ g'zal bya ñe bar brjod pa ñid kyi mu stegs pa'i 'dod pa sñin po med pa'i phyir | der zen pa rnam ldog pa'i don du 'di brtsams pa yin gyi | 'di tsañ gyis de b'zin g'segs pa'i bstan pa la g'zug pa'i don du ni ma yin te | de'i chos ni rtog ge'i yul ma yin pa'i phyir ro || ldog pa las ni ston pa'i chos ñid thos nas 'bad pa med par rtogs par 'gyur te | bar du ma bskal ba'i phyir ro ||*¹⁰

⁷ On the different positions of Tibetan scholars regarding the role of *pramāṇa*, cf., e.g., Jackson 1994 (cf. n. 5).

⁸ *bDe bar g'segs pa'i bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byuñ gnas gSuñ rab rin po che'i mdzod chos 'byuñ*. In: Lokesh Chandra (ed.), *The Collected Works of Bu-ston*, Vol. 24 (Ya). (Śata-piṭaka series 64) New Delhi 1971, [633–1055] 1a-212a.

⁹ Jong Cheol Lee (ed.), *The Tibetan Text of the Vyākhyāyukti of Vasubandhu Critically Edited from the Cone, Derge, Narthang and Peking Editions*. Tōkyō 2001: 74,14–20.

¹⁰ = *PSV Peking 5702, 176b8–177a2* (translated by Kanakavarman and Mar thuñ Dad pa'i śes rab). The translation prepared by Vasudhararakṣita and Źa ma señ rgyal reads (Derge 4204, 85b1–3): *g'zal bar bya ba dañ | 'jal bar byed pa sgrub dka' ba ñid kyi mu stegs can 'di la sñin po med par bstan pa'i phyir dañ | de la spro ba rnam bzlog par bya ba'i don du 'di brtsams so || 'di las de b'zin g'segs pa'i bstan pa la 'jug pa ma yin te | de'i chos rtog ge'i spyod yul ma yin pa'i phyir ro || log na ni ston pa'i chos ñid ñe bar mñan nas dka' sla med pa thob par 'gyur ro || riñ du bskal pa'i phyir ro ||*

žes bya ba dañ |
 gañ žig rtog ge'i lam nas chos ñid la 'khrid na ||
 thub pa'i bstan las cher bsrins ñams par byas pa yin ||
 de lta na yañ de bžin gšegs pa'i chos mtshan ñid ||
 gal te gžan du 'gro na dpyad par bya ba'i rigs ||¹¹
 žes 'byuñ bas so ||¹²

Both passages to which Bu ston refers are, as already mentioned, from the end of the *PS(V)*. In his *Chos 'byuñ*, the translation of the first passage corresponds exactly to the translation of the *PSV* prepared by Kanakavarman and Mar thun Dad pa'i šes rab, while the text of the verse is exactly the same as that found in Vasudhararakṣita and Ža ma Señ ge rgyal mtshan's translation of the *PS* that is available only in the Derge edition (4203). The verse text that is incorporated into the translation of the *PSV* by the same translator team differs slightly.¹³

Obermiller did not identify the quotations and tried to make sense of the text as given by Bu ston. A closer look at the translation of the *PSV* and at Jinendrabuddhi's commentary, the *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā (PST)*, however, reveals that the text Bu ston made use of was perhaps not well transmitted,

¹¹ = *PS* Derge 4203, 85b3–4, translated by Vasudhararakṣita and Ža ma señ rgyal; variant reading for *dpyad par bya ba'i rigs* in *PSV* (by the same translator team) Derge 4204 85b4: *dpyad par bya ba'i 'os*. In the translation by Kanakavarman and Mar thun Dad pa'i šes rab the verse reads (Peking 5700, 12b8–13a2): *thub pa'i dbañ po'i bstan pa las ni yun riñ ñams gyur ba || gañ yin rtog ge'i lam gyis chos ñid 'grod par byed ma yin || de lta na yañ de bžin gšegs pa'i rtog ge'i mtshan ñid ni || gal te rnam par 'gyur bar 'gro bar byed dam riag par gyis ||*

¹² The two quotations from the *PS(V)* read, according to the translation of E. Obermiller (*History of Buddhism [Chos-ḥbyung] by Bu-ston. I. Part. The Jewelry of Scripture*. Heidelberg 1931: 46): "It (the *Pramāṇa-samuccaya*) has been composed in order to cause those, that adhere to heterodox views, to abstain from them, since they are false, – by discussing the modes of cognition and their (respective) objects. It does not, however, intend to convert anyone to Buddhism by these means only, for the Doctrine is not the object of dialectics. (But), if (heretical views) are rejected, the Teacher's Doctrine is studied and apprehended without difficulty, since all the numerous impediments are withdrawn.

Moreover, the same work has the following verse:
 He, that leads to the Absolute Truth by the way of Dialectics,
 will be very far from the Teaching of Buddha and fail.
 Nevertheless, if the essence of the Lord's Teaching
 will endure change, it is advisable to probe it (by Logic)."

¹³ In a different reading this verse is also quoted by dPa' bo gTsong lag phreñ ba in his *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* and erroneously attributed to the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*; cf. Jackson 1994: 100 n. 31 (cf. n. 5): "... rnam ñes las | rtog ge'i lam gyis chos ñid la khrid na || bde gšegs bstan las cher bsrins ñams pa yin || ston pa bla na med pa'i bstan pa yañ || gal te gžan du gyur na dpyad pa'i rigs ||" = *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 852,6–8.

and that it also displays incorrect translations. In the following table the major different readings are listed.¹⁴

Chos 'byuñ/PSV ^K	PSV ^V	PST _T ¹⁵	PST _{ms B 258b4ff}
<i>ñe bar brjod pa ñid kyis</i>	<i>sgrub dka' ba ñid kyī</i>	<i>byed dka' ba ñid kyis</i>	<i>°durvihitatvena</i>
<i>'di tsam gyis ma yin</i>	<i>'di las ma yin</i>	<i>'di tsam gyis ma yin</i>	<i>na tv iyatā</i>
<i>ldog pa las ni</i>	<i>ldog na ni</i>	<i>log pa rnam ni</i>	<i>vyāvṛttās tu</i>
<i>bar du ma bskal pa'i phyir</i>	<i>riñ du bskal pa'i phyir</i>	<i>bar śin tu riñ ba'i phyir</i>	<i>viprakṛṣṭāntaratvāt</i>
Pratīkas in PST: <i>pramāṇaprameyadurvihitatveneti; na tv* iyateti; ... ity āha – taddharmasyātarkagocaravāt; vyāvṛttās tv iti; viprakṛṣṭāntaratvād iti (tat punaḥ suvihitadurvihitatvena). * na tv em.: nanv/nasv⁷ ms</i>			

The first entry in the first row, *ñe bar brjod pa ñid kyis*, which corresponds to *sgrub dka' ba ñid kyī* in Vasudhararakṣita's translation and *byed dka' ba ñid kyis* in Jinendrabuddhi's *PST_T* (Peking 5766, 352b1), is a rendering of Sanskrit *durvihitatvena*, *durvihitva* meaning here "being not fixed properly". Thus, *ñe bar* in Bu ston's text and in the *PSV^K* may be understood to represent a badly transmitted *ñes par*, meaning "in a faulty manner" or "incorrectly". However, as both translations of the *PSV* are not very reliable and full of misunderstandings, I am not sure if we are allowed to correct the Tibetan text here, although it could easily be argued for. The next phrase to be examined more closely is the last one on the list, which Obermiller understood as "since all the numerous impediments are withdrawn". In the translation of Vasudhararakṣita, *riñ du bskal pa* may be understood as meaning "remote for a long time" or "very far away". The wording in the Tibetan translation of Jinendrabuddhi's commentary, which we owe to dPañ lo Blo gros brtan pa (beginning of the fourteenth century), whose translation, despite his working alone without a Sanskrit Paṇḍit, is of very high quality, displays here simply a word by word translation without any interpretation. According to Jinendrabuddhi the two terms *viprakṛṣṭa* and *antara* refer to the *dharmatā*, the essence of reality, as understood when listening to the assumptions of the heretics and as understood when listening to the teaching of the Buddha respectively. As the teaching of the Buddha is fixed properly (*suvihita*) whereas the teachings of the heretics are not (*durvihita*), *dharmatā* is easily under-

¹⁴ The first row shows the text of Bu ston and the translation of the *PSV* by Kanakavarman and Mar thuñ Dad pa'i śes rab. The second row contains the readings of the translation prepared by Vasudhararakṣita and Źa ma Señ ge rgyal mtshan. In the third and fourth row one finds the corresponding Tibetan and Sanskrit texts of Jinendrabuddhi's commentary thereon.

¹⁵ Derge 4268, 312b1–6 = Peking 5766, 352b8–353a7.

stood upon hearing the teaching of the Buddha, i.e. *dharmatā* as an object of cognition is near (*antara*), whereas it cannot be understood upon hearing the assumptions of the heretics, because it is remote (*viprakṛṣṭa*). Dignāga's formulation of the indirect purpose for the composition of his *PS(V)* can thus be understood roughly as follows:

I composed this [work] in order to turn those who adhere to (*zen pa nams*) the assumptions of the heretics away from them, because they are without essence as the valid cognitions (*pramāṇa*) and their objects (*prameya*) [as taught by the heretics] are not fixed properly. However, by [doing] that much (*iyatā*) I do not aim at their introduction into the teaching of the Tathāgata, because his *dharma* is not in the realm of logic. But those who are turned away [from the assumptions of the heretics] can easily understand [*dharmatā*] after hearing it, as it is absent/remote [from their teaching] and present in/near to [his teaching].

In the next statement Dignāga explains why the *dharma* of the Buddha, although not in the realm of *tarka*, nevertheless has to be examined by *tarka*:

[Those] who lead (*khrid*) to *dharmatā* by way of *tarka* have gone far away from (*sudūraṇaṣṭa*) the teaching of *muni*. Nevertheless, the characterization (*lakṣaṇa*) of the *dharma* [as propounded] by the Tathāgata has to be examined as long as (*yadī*) it undergoes a change.¹⁶

To understand more clearly, further information can be gained from Dignāga's own comments and from Jinendrabuddhi's explanations. To begin with, *dharmatā* as propounded by the Tathāgata is not in the realm of *tarka*, while the object of cognition (*prameya*) of all Tīrthikas is to be known through *tarka* only, as the objects imagined by them cannot be perceived.¹⁷ This im-

¹⁶ Jinendrabuddhi on this verse (*PST* ms B259b2–6; *PST*_T Derge 4268, 313a5–313b3 = Peking 5766, 353b8–354a6): *sudūraṇaṣṭās tv iti, unnārgapravṛttatvāt. sudūraṇaṣṭās te munīndraśāsanāt, ye tarkapathena dharmatām niścinvanti, tasyā atarkaviṣayatvāt^f. yady apy etad evaṃ tathāpi tathāgatadharmalakṣaṇam^b parīkṣyatām^c yady upayāti vikriyām tīrthikaparikalpitapadārthavat. etad uktaṃ bhavati – tarkaviṣayatvenābhyupagatā api tīrthikair ātmādayaḥ padārthāḥ tarkeṇa vicāryamāṇā vikriyante, yathā śāstre teṣāṃ vyavasthāpitās tathā nāvatiṣṭhanta ity arthaḥ. tathāgatapraveditadharmāṇām aviparītaḥ svabhāvo nairātmyādī^d vicāryamāṇo na vikriyate, yathā darśito vyāvahārikenātmanā tathāivopalabhyata ity arthaḥ. etena yady api tarkaḥ paramārthaviṣayo na bhavati, tathāpi yathāvasthitaṃ vastu sāmānyarūpeṇa sūcyaṃ tattvādhiḡgamānukūlo bhavati sūcitam. Underlined words may have been taken from Dignāga's verse.*

^a *tasyā atarkaviṣayatvāt* em. (*de rtog ge'i yul ma yin pa nīd kyi phyir T*): *tasyās tarkaviṣayatvāt* ms

^b *tathāgata<dharma>lakṣaṇam* em. (*de bzin gsegs pa'i chos kyi mtshan nīd T*): *tathāgatalakṣaṇam* ms

^c *parīkṣ<y>atām* em.: *parīkṣatām* ms

^d *nairātmyādī<r>* em.: *nairātmyādi* ms

¹⁷ For the text cf. below, n. 32.

plies that *dharmatā* is the object of perception, and such an interpretation is corroborated by Jinendrabuddhi. When commenting on the phrase *taddharmasyātarkagocaratvāt* he says that here *tarka* is a synecdoche for correct cognitions on a pragmatic level, i.e., the perception and inference of normal people, and that the *dharma* is an object only of the supra-mundane correct cognition.¹⁸ Moreover, the entities (*padārtha*) assumed by the heretics (*tīrthika*) to be the object of logic (*tarka*) such as the soul (*ātman*) still undergo a change when being analyzed (*vicāryamāṇa*) by *tarka*, because in the way they are taught by the heretics these objects do not exist. The nature of the entities made known by the Tathāgata such as selflessness (*nairātmya*), however, does not undergo a change when being analyzed. He concludes that although the nature of entities is thus not the realm of *tarka*, an entity (*vastu*) that is made known as it is in its general form (*sāmānyarūpeṇa*) is helpful to understand reality (*tattvādhiḡamānukūla*).

The information that can be gathered from these two statements of Dignāga is that neither the Buddhist teaching as such, nor the introduction into their teaching of the opponents and those confused by them is the aim of his writing the *PSV*. He only aims at turning them away from their flawed teachings so that they can then easily grasp the words of the Buddha. In addition, according to Jinendrabuddhi: As long as the heretical opponents teach false categories such as an eternal soul, etc., which do not stand a critical analysis, Buddhists have to write works on logic in order to help the heretics and their followers get rid of these incorrect conceptions and to understand reality.

At first glance this seems to confirm Stcherbatsky's assumption with regard to Buddhist logic and epistemology that "[i]n the intention of its promoters the system had apparently no special connection with Buddhism as a religion, i.e., as the teaching of a path towards Salvation", although Stcherbatsky never mentions a source for this opinion.

A passage from the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (*BoBhū*) may be adduced as another possible source for the negative classification of *pramāṇavāda* or *hetuvidyā*. There we read indeed that the five *vidyāsthānas* or *śāstras* consist of, besides *adhyātmavidyā*, the three external (*bāhyaka*) *śāstras* and the mundane (*laukika*) *śāstras* of art and technology, the three external being epistemology (*hetuśāstra*),¹⁹ grammar (*śabdaśāstra*), and the healing of diseases

¹⁸ *PSV* ms B258b6–7; *PSV* Derge 312b1–2 = Peking 353a1–2: ... *ity āha – taddharmasyātarkagocaratvāt. tarkagrahaṇaṃ vyāvahārikapramāṇopalakṣaṇārtham. lokottarasyaiva hi pramāṇasya viśayo bhagavato dharmāḡ pratyātmavedyaḡ, na vyāvahārikasyety arthaḡ.*

¹⁹ Unfortunately the *BoBhū* does not say which texts should be regarded as belonging to *hetuvidyā*, etc.

(*vyādhicikitsā*).²⁰ The term *bāhyaka* is used in Buddhist texts to refer to the outsiders, the heretics, as opposed to the Buddhist insiders (*ābhyanteraka*). This is confirmed, e.g., by Yaśomitra who, following Vasubandhu, divides normal human beings into insiders and outsiders, the insiders being included in the group of the Buddhists and the outsiders not.²¹ This characterization of epistemology as a science of the heretics may be regarded as a possible source of confusion not only for modern scholars, but also as a source for the assumption as found in the later Tibetan tradition that epistemology is a science shared by both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. While this passage from the *BoBhū* may have been a basis for a negative attitude towards epistemology, I, on the contrary, consider it to provide the clue for placing the study of epistemology into a wider context. It is also stated here that a Bodhisattva is engaged in, or strives for, all five sciences (... *imāni pañcavidyāsthānāni, yāni bodhisattvaḥ paryeṣate*). And he has to study and master all of them in order to obtain omniscience.²² The aim of his study of *hetuvidyā* is, among others, to defeat the teachings of the opponents.²³ Thus, although it is an external science, it is being practiced by a Bodhisattva.

²⁰ *BoBhū_w* (ed. Wogihara, Tōkyō 1930–1936): 96,4–15 = *BoBhū_D* (ed. Dutt, Patna 1978: 68,2–9): *bāhyakāni ca sāstrāṇi laukikāni ca śilpakarmasthānāni paryeṣate. ... bāhyakāni punaḥ sāstrāṇi samāsatas trīṇi – hetuśāstraṃ śabdaśāstraṃ vyādhicikitsāśāstraṃ* (W; *cikitsakaśāstraṃ* D) *ca. tatra laukikāni śilpakarmasthānāni ... tāny etāni sarvavidyāsthānapariḡhūtāni pañca vidyāsthānāni bhavanti. ādhyātmikavidyā* (W; *ādhyātmavidyā* D) *hetuvidyā śabdavidyā vyādhicikitsāvidyā śilpakarmasthānavidyā cetimāni pañca vidyāsthānāni, yāni bodhisattvaḥ paryeṣate*. Cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1995: 102 (cf. n. 6). The important role of the five *vidyāsthānas* of the *BoBhū* for the career of a Bodhisattva is treated extensively in James G. Mullens, *Principles and practices of Buddhist education in Aśaṅga's Bodhisattvabhūmi*. PhD thesis, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario 1994: 148–181.

²¹ Yaśomitra's *AKV* (ed. Shastri, Varanasi 1987) 150,15–16 (on *AKBh* [ed. Pradhan, Patna 1975] 42,28–43,1): *prthagjano vā dvividha iti. ābhyanterakaś ca bāhyakaś ca. asamucchinnakuśalamūla ābhyanterakaḥ, baudhasaṅgrhātātāt. samucchinnakuśalamūlas tu bāhyakaḥ, tadviparyayāt*. Also a passage from the *BoBhū* itself suggests that the term *bāhyaka* is used to mean heretics (*BoBhū_w* 222,6–8 = *BoBhū_D* 152,20–21; cf. n. 20): *ito bāhyakeṣu tīrthikeṣu pūrvaṃ ca tīrthikadṛṣṭicariteṣu sattveṣv arthacaryā bodhisattvānāṃ duṣkarā*.

²² *BoBhū_w* 105,24–106,2 = *BoBhū_D* 74,19–21 (cf. n. 20): *sarvāni caitāni pañca vidyāsthānāni bodhisattvaḥ paryeṣate 'nuttarāyāḥ samyaksambodher mahājñānasambhāraparipūraṅgārtham. na hi sarvatraivaṃ aśikṣamāṇaḥ krameṇa sarvajñāñānam anāvaramaṇam pratilabhate*.

²³ *BoBhū_w* 105,13–16 = *BoBhū_D* 74,11–13 (cf. n. 20): *hetuvidyāṃ bodhisattvaḥ paryeṣate tasyaiva śāstrasya durbhāṣitadurlapatātāyā yathābhūtaparijñānārtham paravādanigrahārtham cāprasannānām asmiñ chāsane prasādāya prasannānāṃ ca bhūyobhāvāya*.

Let us now, following this path, take a look at another *locus classicus* for the formulation of the notion of the five sciences, namely, *Mahāyānasūtrā-lāṅkāra* (MSA) 11.60, ascribed to Maitreya, with its commentary, the *Bhāṣya* (MSABh).²⁴ It reads:²⁵

Without being engaged in the five branches of science, [even] the highest Ārya becomes in no way omniscient. Thus, he is indeed engaged in them in order to defeat and aid others, or for the sake of his own gnosis.

The five branches of science are the internal science (*adhyātmavidyā*), epistemology, grammar, medicine, and the science of art and technology. Thus [the author of the verse] shows the aim for which the Bodhisattva has to be engaged. In order to obtain omniscience, [he is engaged] in all without differentiation. In particular, he is now engaged in epistemology and grammar for the sake of defeating those who are not disposed to omniscience (*tad[=sarvajñatva]anadhimukta*), [i.e., those who have not yet attained the necessary spiritual conviction in the Buddhist teaching]. [He is engaged] in medicine and the science of art and technology in order to give aid to those already striving for it [i.e., omniscience]. [He is engaged] in the internal science for the sake of his own gnosis.

Here the division of the four *vidyāsthānas* into external and mundane is not applied, and it is also clearly stated that a Bodhisattva has to master all five sciences in order to obtain omniscience, that is to say, in order to obtain liberation.

With these two passages from the *BoBhū* and the *MSA(Bh)* we thus have a framework offered by the Buddhist tradition itself in which the study of the science of epistemology, in addition to the sciences of grammar, medicine, and arts and technology, is a necessary requirement on the path to liberation.²⁶

²⁴ This passage is also treated in the chapter “The five sciences and omniscience” in Paul J. Griffiths, Omniscience in the Mahāyānasūtrā-lāṅkāra and its commentaries. *Indo-Iranian Journal* 3 (1990) [85–120]: 99–101.

²⁵ *vidyāsthāne pañcavidhe yogam akṛtvā sarvajñatvaṃ naiti kathañcit paramāryaḥ | ity anyeṣāṃ nigrahaṇānugrahaṇāya svājñārthaṃ vā tatra karoty eva sa yogam ||* (MSA 11.60) *pañcavidhaṃ vidyāsthānam – adhyātmavidyā hetuvidyā śabdavidyā cikitsāvidyā śilpakarmasthānavidyā ca. tad yadarthaṃ bodhisattvena paryeṣitavyam, tad darśayati. sarvajñatvaprāptyarthaṃ abhedena sarvam. bhedena punar hetuvidyāṃ śabdavidyāṃ ca paryeṣate nigrahārthaṃ anyeṣāṃ tadanadhimuktānām. cikitsāvidyāṃ śilpakarmasthānavidyāṃ cānyeṣāṃ anugrahārthaṃ tadarthikānām. adhyātmavidyāṃ svayam ājñārthaṃ.* MSABh (ed. Lévi, Paris 1907) 70,14–18.

²⁶ The idea that a Buddhist adept has to study grammar, logic, etc., or even the doctrines of the heretical schools is also found in the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā* (大毘婆沙論), extant in Chinese translation only. I owe this information to Ikuhisa Takigawa, M.A., Tokai

Now the question remains as to whether Dignāga's account regarding his aim for composing the *PS(V)* relates to and fits into this frame. To begin with, I have, as expected, not been able to locate any explicit statements, neither in Dignāga's writings nor in the texts of the scholars belonging to the Buddhist epistemological tradition, that clearly express such a relationship. However, if we look at Dignāga's aim, namely, turning the opponents away from their incorrect views, and at the aim of the study of epistemology as formulated in the passages of the *BoBhū* and the *MSABh*, namely defeating non-Buddhists, the two aims are somewhat in harmony. Also Dignāga's other concept, namely that the *dharma* of the Tathāgata is not in the realm of logic, has its corresponding passage in the *MSA(Bh)*. The same idea is formulated in *MSA* 1.12, where we read that logic is assumed to be a basis for the foolish, and thus, that it [i.e. Mahāyāna] is not in its realm (... *bālāśrayo matas tarkas tasyāto viṣayo na tat*).²⁷ This idea that the *dharma* or the *dharmakāya* of the

University, who also provided the translations: *Taishō* 27, 885b09–13: 受持讀誦素怛纒毘奈耶阿毘達磨，通達文義分別解說。又能傍通世俗諸論，所謂記論因論王論諸醫方論工巧論等。或復兼善外道諸論，所謂勝論數論明論順世間論離繫論等。 “[One should] keep and read Sūtras, Vinayas and Abhidharmas, and, versed in their meanings, discriminate and explain them. Moreover, one can learn secondary secular sciences, namely, grammar (記論 *vyākaraṇa*), logic (因論 *hetuśāstra*), politics (王論 *rājaśāstra*), medicine (醫方論 *cikitsāśāstra*), technology (工巧論 *śilpakarmasthānaśāstra*) and so on. Or one may study heretical doctrines, namely, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Veda, Lokāyata, Nirgrantha and so on.” Cf. also *Taishō* 27, 905a11–15: 問四無礙解加行云何？答有說，法無礙解以習數論爲加行，義無礙解以習佛語爲加行，詞無礙解以習聲論爲加行，辯無礙解以習因論爲加行。於此四處若未善巧，必不能生無礙解故。 “Question: What are the preparations (加行 *prayoga*) for the four unhindered abilities (無礙解 *pratisamvid*)? Someone answers: Learning calculation is the preparation for the unhindered ability of teaching (法無礙解 *dharmaprasamvid*), learning Buddha's words for the unhindered ability of understanding (義無礙解 *arthaprasamvid*), learning *śabdavidyā* for the unhindered ability of speech (詞無礙解 *nirukti-prasamvid*), and learning *hetuvidyā* for the unhindered ability of explanation (辯無礙解 *pratibhāna-prasamvid*), because unhindered abilities will never arise unless one is already skilled in these four preparations.” The parallel passage in the *AKBh* reads (419,20–420,2): *āsām ca kila pratisamvidāṃ gaṇitaṃ buddhavaśānaṃ śabdavidyā hetuvidyā ca pūrvaprayogo yathākramam. nāpy eteṣv akṛtakauśalas tā utpādayituṃ śaknoṭīti. buddhavaśānaṃ eva tu sarvāsām prayogaṃ varṇayanti, yasya caikā tasyāvaśyaṃ catarāḥ pratisamvidō bhavanti.*

²⁷ Cf. also *MSABh* (ed. Lévi, Paris 1907) 3,10–11, where *agocarāt* of *MSA* 1.7 is explained: *nāyam evam udāro gambhīraś ca dharmas tārikānām gocarah, tīrthikaśāstreṣu tatprakārānupalambhād iti*; cf. also *MSA* 1.17 with *Bhāṣya*.

Buddha cannot be known through *tarka* or is *acintya* is not limited to the *MSA*, but is shared by probably all Buddhists.²⁸

We have thus gained a wider context in which Dignāga's scanty statements regarding the role of *pramāṇa* can be meaningfully understood. Needless to say, the basis for this assumption is not a broad one, and it also goes without saying that nothing in the wording of Dignāga indicates that it was really the *BoBhū* or the *MSABh* that he had in mind. But these texts, or at least the ideas referred to, must have been widely accepted among his Buddhist contemporaries, for they are the addressees of his statement. His explanation seems to be compelled by the need to justify why he, in addition to his works dealing with *buddhavacana* such as the *Prajñāpāramitāpiṇḍārthasaṅgraha* and although the teaching of the Buddha is not subject to *pramāṇa* studies, nevertheless composed works such as the *Nyāyamukha*, the *PSV*, etc. The addressees may have been followers of the Madhyamaka, as Dignāga's justification for his writing on *pramāṇa* as well as his theory of *pramāṇa* was heavily attacked by Candrakīrti in his *Prasannapadā* (Pras; ed. de La Vallée Poussin, Delhi 1992: 58,14–59,1):²⁹

²⁸ Cf., e.g., *Divyāvadāna* (ed. Vaidya, Mithila 1959) 432,17: *śramaṇo gautama evam āha – gambhīro me dharmo gambhīrāvabhāso durdṛṣo duranubodho 'tarko 'tarkāvacaṛaḥ, sūksmo nipuṇapaṇḍitavijñavedanīyaḥ; Aśaṅga's Mahāyānasāṅgraha* (ed. Lamotte, Louvain 1973, Tome I) 85,15–17 (on *dharmakāya*): *bsam gyis mi khyab pa'i mtshan nīd ni de bzin nīd rnam par dag pa de so so rañ gis rig par bya ba dan | 'jig rten na dpe med pa dan rtog ge pa'i spyod yul ma vin pa'i phyir ro* || (transl. in Tome II, p. 274); Sthiramati's *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya* on Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā* k. 30 (Hartmut Buescher, *The Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya of Sthiramati ...* Vol. I. Ph. D. Dissertation, Univ. of Copenhagen, 2002) *53,5 (on *anāsravo dhātuḥ* being a characteristic of *dharmakāya*): *acintyas tarkāgocaravāt pratyātmavedyatvād dṛṣṭāntābhāvāc ca*. Finally I would like to mention Bhāviveka's *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* (*MHK*) 3.285cd (speaking of *dharmakāya*): *savikalpāvikalpena jñānenāpy eṣa durdṛṣaḥ* l. Here, Bhāviveka is clearly in accordance with Dignāga, for *savikalpajñāna* stands for inference (*anumāna*) and *nirvikalpajñāna* for perception (*pratyakṣa*), as is explained in the *Tarkajvālā*; cf. Christian Lindtner, Linking up Bhartṛhari and the Bauddhas. *Asiatische Studien* 47/1 (1993) [195–213]: 210 n. 49. Lindtner's assumption (p. 211) that Bhāviveka's "terminology is a reaction against the epistemology of Yogācāra *sākāravāda*" seems to be an over-interpretation. For other passages in the *MHK* expressing the idea that the *dharma* is not an object of *tarka*, cf. Lindtner 1993: 208–210.

²⁹ This passage is translated in Dan Arnold, Candrakīrti on Dignāga on *svalakṣaṇa*. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 26 (2003) [139–174]: 156–157; in this paper Candrakīrti's critique of Dignāga's notion of *svalakṣaṇa* is discussed. A critical edition of the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* together with a translation is under preparation by Anne McDonald, Vienna. References to earlier treatments of this passage can be found there.

atha syāt – eṣa eva pramāṇaprameyavyavahāro laukiko 'smābhiḥ śāstreṇānuvarṇita itī, tadanuvarṇanasya tarhi phalaṃ vācyam. kutārkikāiḥ sa nāśito viparītalakṣaṇābhīdhānena tasyāsmābhiḥ samyaglakṣaṇam uktam itī cet, etad apy ayuktam ...

If [the following objection] were to be [brought forth by Dignāga]: Exactly this practice in regard to means of valid cognition and the object cognized (*pramāṇaprameyavyavahāra*) belonging to the world[ly level] has been explicated by us via the treatise (*śāstra*), [we would reply:] Then the advantage (*phala*) to its explication should be stated. [Opponent:] This [worldly practice in regard to means of valid cognition and the object cognized] has been ruined by poor logicians (*kutārkika*) through [their] stating of an erroneous characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*). We have asserted the correct characteristic of it. [Reply:] This too is incorrect ...

That Dignāga is Candrakīrti's opponent in this passage is also corroborated by the unknown author of the **Lakṣaṇaṭīkā (LT)*, recently edited by Yoshiyasu Yonezawa, a text consisting of notes on the *Prasannapadā*, the *Madhyamakāvātārabhāṣya* and the *Catuhśatakaṭīkā*. The relevant passages read: ... *asmābhir* (Pras 58,14) *dignāgādibhiḥ ... kutārkikair* (Pras 58,15) *itī dignāgaḥ ... (LT 142,15–17)*.³⁰ That is to say, “by us” means “by Dignāga, etc.” and in the statement beginning with the words “by poor logicians”, “Dignāga” is speaking.³¹

Dignāga's direct purpose for the composition of the PS(V) is, as we have seen above, “to establish valid cognition” (*pramāṇasiddhi*) which is explicated as meaning “to refute the *pramāṇas* of the opponents” (*parapramāṇa-pratiśedha*) and “to reveal the good qualities of one's own *pramāṇas*” (*svapramāṇaguṇodbhāvana*). However, he said nothing about the object of cognitions (*prameya*), as mentioned by Candrakīrti. Candrakīrti's mentioning of *prameya* is nevertheless justified. For Dignāga, after having said that the detailed refutation of the proofs (*sādhana*), refutations (*dūṣaṇa*) and their pseudo-forms (*ābhāsa*) – these are referred to by 'di or *de dag gi* (cf. n. 32) – can be found in his *Nyāya*-, *Vaiśeṣika*- and *Sāṅkhyaparīkṣā*, states that the *prameya* (*gṣal bya*) of all Tīrthikas can be known only through *tarka*. But as their *tarka* does not stand a critical analysis, as he has shown in the *PSV*, the object too is refuted, although not explicitly.³² The *kutārkikas* referred to by

³⁰ Yoshiyasu Yonezawa, **Lakṣaṇaṭīkā – Sanskrit notes on the Prasannapadā (1)*. *Journal of Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies* 27 (2004) 115–154. The entire passage is translated in Arnold 2003: 157 n. 43 (cf. n. 29).

³¹ It is thus clear that *kutārkika* may indeed not refer to Dignāga, as was proposed in David Seyfort Ruegg, *Two Prolegomena to Madhyamaka Philosophy*. Wien 2002: 43 n. 42.

³² *PSV Peking* 5702, 176b6–8: 'di rgyas par dgag pa dañ gṣal bya dgag pa ni rigs pa can dañ bye brag pa dañ grañs can brtag pa rñams las śes par bya'o || mu stegs can thams cad kyi gṣal bya ni rtog ges rtogs pa yin te | de dag gis brtags pa'i don rñams ni mñon sum gyi yul ma yin pa'i phyir ro || rtog ge de yañ de ltar brtag bzod pa ma yin no || de'i phyir gṣal bya dgag pa ma byas kyañ byas pa ñid yin no || = *PSV Derge* 4204, 85a7–

Candrakīrti are thus all Tīrthikas who were refuted by Dignāga in his *PSV*, i.e., the adherents of the schools of the Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya and Mīmāṃsā. Thus we can say that Candrakīrti presents the position of Dignāga correctly, summarizing only the main points.

Let us now, after this digression, have a brief look at Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter, the aim of which is to prove that the Buddha can metaphorically be said to be *pramāṇa*, which at first glance seems not to correspond to Dignāga's understanding of the role of *pramāṇa*. In this chapter Dharmakīrti explains that the Buddha is reliable and makes new states of affairs known, and that by being endowed with these qualities, which are the defining characteristics of a valid cognition (*pramāṇa*) on a conventional level, i.e. perception and inference, he is metaphorically called *pramāṇa*.³³ In addition he also demonstrates that the *pramāṇas* assumed by the heretical schools such as the Veda or an eternal God (*īśvara*) cannot in fact be regarded as *pramāṇa*. That is to say, his *pramāṇasiddhi* consists of "refuting the *pramāṇas* of the opponents" (*parapramāṇapratīṣedha*) and "revealing the good qualities of one's own *pramāṇas*" (*svapramāṇaguṇodbhāvana*). The main addressees of his undertaking are certainly not Buddhists, but his heretical contemporaries,³⁴ for to prove to a Buddhist audience that the Buddha is *pramāṇa* would constitute the fault of proving what is already established (*siddhasādhana*).³⁵ Thus, although Dharmakīrti does touch on soteriological

85b1: *de dag gis* (read: *gi*) *so sor dgag pa dañ gzal bya so sor dgag ba rgyas par ni bye brag pa'i rigs pa dañ | rkañ mig pa'i rigs pa brtag pa dag las šes par bya'o || mu stegs can thams cad kyi gzal bya go bar byed pa ni rtoḡ ge tsam ste | des yoñs su brtags pa'i dños po rñams ni mñon sum gyi yul ma yin pa'i phyir ro || de yañ de bzin du brtags na dpyad mi bzod do || gal te 'di gañ gañ gis na don la gzal bar bya ba bkag ce na |*. Jinen-drabuddhi's comment ms B258b1–4 (Derge 312a3–6 = Peking 352b1–5): *na kevalam nyāyaparīkṣādiṣu prameyapratīṣedhaḥ kṛtaḥ, ihāpy arthataḥ, kṛta iti darśanāt^a. sarve-ṣāṃ cetyādi. kasmāt punaḥ pratyakṣagamyam na bhavati ūha – tatparikalpitapadārthānām ityādi. pradhānapuruṣadikkālasamavāyādīnām apratyakṣataya^b liṅgenāstitivavasthāpanāt tarkagamyatvam. na vimardakṣama iti na vicāram arha ity arthaḥ. yathā ca vicāram na sahate, tathā pratīpādītam. ata iti. yasmād evam na parīkṣākṣamas tarkaḥ, tasmāt tadgamyasya^c prameyasypy arthataḥ pratīṣedho 'tra kṛta eva vedītavya iti. ^a kṛtaḥ, ihāpy arthataḥ, kṛta iti darśanāt em.: kṛta ity āhāpy arthataḥ | kṛta iti darśanāt* ms ('di yañ don gyis byas pa'o źes ston pa gsuñs pa T) ^b mñon sum yin pa ñid kiyis T ^c tadgamyasya em.: tat*gamyasyāpi ms (api n.e. T)*

³³ Cf. Helmut Krasser, On Dharmakīrti's understanding of *pramāṇabhūta* and his definition of *pramāṇa*. *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 45 (2001) 173–199.

³⁴ Similarly, texts which prove the existence of an eternal God (*īśvarasiddhi*) are written to convince those who do not believe in God, such as the Buddhists.

³⁵ Buddhists are addressed by such statements as to be found at the end of the chapter (*PV* 283–286; cf. Tilmann Vetter, *Der Buddha und seine Lehre in Dharmakīrtis Pramāṇavārttika*. Wien 1990: 172f.) According to the commentators Prajñākaragupta and

matters in order to establish the Buddha having become a *pramāṇa*, this is not in contradiction to Dignāga's intention, but certainly an extension thereof.

How Dharmakīrti himself conceives of the role of *pramāṇa* is clearly formulated at the beginning of his *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (*PVin*) and at the end of its first chapter. In the opening section he states that he will compose the *PVin* in order to explain what correct cognition is to those who do not know, as this cognition is necessary for attaining that which is beneficial and for abstaining from that which is detrimental.³⁶ While it is clear already from this statement that Dharmakīrti writes for those who do not understand correct cognition, in his closing section he is very explicit that he follows the same line as Dignāga. As the Sanskrit text – a critical edition of the first chapters is under preparation by Ernst Steinkellner – allows for a new interpretation of this final passage³⁷ and as it also shows Dharmakīrti's cautious approach as to whether external objects exist, I will present more than is necessary to illustrate Dharmakīrti's view of the role of *pramāṇa*. In the last *kārikā* he states that even if one assumes the existence of an object external to cognition, this cognition has two forms, i.e., that of the object and that of cognition. Moreover, he says that the existence of this external object could be established on account of the cognition's absence when this object is absent.³⁸ On this he comments as follows:

The fact that the effect consisting in cognition is not brought about even when all other effective causes are present shows that [one] other cause is missing. This could be the

Manorathanandin, these verses are intent on demonstrating that Buddha used only two *pramāṇas*, perception and inference, and also that the definition of inference is in accordance with Buddha's teaching. Dharmakīrti does not speak about the definition of perception, as Dignāga himself already has shown that it is in accordance with the Abhidharma; cf. Masaaki Hattori, *Dignāga on Perception*. Cambridge, Massachusetts 1968: 88 n. 1.36. If we understand these verses as addressing, e.g., Mādhyamikas who claim that writing works on *pramāṇa* is futile and who accept four *pramāṇas*, then the circle in the "ECTE circle" and other circles become less round. For these circles, cf. John D. Dunne, *Foundations of Dharmakīrti's philosophy*. Boston 2004: 233–245.

³⁶ *PVin* (ed. Vetter, Wien 1966) 1.30,12–14: *hitāhitaprāptiparihārayor niyamena samyag-jñānapūrvakatvād aviduṣāṃ tadvyutpādanārtham idam ārabhyate*.

³⁷ In addition to Vetter 1966 (cf. n. 36), the passage has been dealt with in Christian Lindtner, *Marginalia to Dharmakīrti's Pramāṇaviniścaya I-II*. *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 28 (1984) [149–175]: 156f.; in Esho Mikogami, Śubhagupta's theory of sense-perception. Disputes between realists and the Vijñānavādins. In: N.K. Wagle and F. Watanabe (eds), *Studies on Buddhism in honour of Professor A.K. Warder*. Toronto 1993 [86–99]: 93, and in Dunne 2004: 315–317 (cf. n. 35).

³⁸ *PVin* 1.59 (the Sanskrit text is according to Steinkellner's critical edition under preparation): *bāhye 'py arthe tato 'bhedo bhāsamānārthatadvidoh | dvairūpyaṃ tad dhiyo bāhyasiddhiḥ syād vyatirekataḥ ||*

external object, unless someone [i.e. a Vijñāna- or Vijñaptivādin]³⁹ were to assert that the absence of the effect is caused by the absence of a particular material cause [i.e. a particular imprint (*vāsanā*)]. [Question:] Inasmuch as he claims the object of every cognition to be lacking (*vyatirecayan*), how can he assert that a disturbed cognition (*upaplava*) and [its] opposite are a means of correct cognition and [its] opposite, since there is then no difference [between them]?⁴⁰ [Answer:] When seeing an action that is untrustworthy, due to the deficiency of the imprints of a disturbed cognition not being connected [to the desired result], even to he who is not awakened, [he who is asked in this manner] could declare the one [cognition] to be *apramāṇa*. The other [cognition], which, as long as *saṃsāra* endures, has an uninterrupted connection [with the result] because its imprints are firm, [could be declared] here [in the world], dependant on its reliability in actions, to be *pramāṇa*. And it is this nature of the conventional means of valid cognition that has been explained. [Not only with regard to the ultimate means of valid cognition, but] also with regard to this [conventional cognition], others who are confused lead the world astray. Those, however, who cultivate the very wisdom born of reflection realize the ultimate *pramāṇa*, which due to its being devoid of error is immaculate [and] without return. Indeed, this too has been explained to some extent.

satsu samartheṣv anyeṣu hetuṣu jñānakāryāṇispattiḥ kāraṇāntaravaikalyaṃ sūcayati. sa bāhyo 'rthaḥ syāt, yady atra kaścīd upādānaviśeṣābhāvakṛtaṃ kāryavyatirekaṃ na brūyāt. so 'pi kathaṃ sarvajñānānāṃ viśayaṃ vyatirecayann upaplavetarayoḥ pramāṇetaratām brūyāt, viśeṣābhāvāt. upaplavavāsanāvisandhidoṣād aprabuddhasyāpy anāśvāsikaṃ vyavahāram utpaśyann ekam apramāṇam ācakṣīta, aparam ā saṃsāram aviśliṣṭānubandhaṃ dṛḍhavāsanatvād iha vyavahārāvisaṃvādāpekṣayā pramāṇam. sāmvyavahārikasya caitat pramāṇasya rūpam uktam, atrāpi pare mūdhā visaṃvādāyanti lokam iti. cintāmayīm eva tu prajñām anuśīlayanto vibhramavivekanirmalam anapāyī pāramārthikapramāṇam abhimukhīkurvanti. tad api leśataḥ sūcitam eveti.

Dharmakīrti does not state explicitly, as Dignāga did, that he wants to turn those who follow incorrect teachings away from them, and that the *dharma* of the Buddha is not in the realm of *tarka* or *sāmvyavahārikapramāṇa*. The addressees, however, are the same: those in the world who have been led astray by the opponents. As he mentions that *pāramārthikapramāṇa* is realized by cultivating that very wisdom born of reflection, it is clear that he shares the view that the *dharma* of the Buddha is not in the realm of *tarka*. For *sāmvyavahārikapramāṇa* operates on the level of *cintāmayī prajñā*, whereas *pāramārthikapramāṇa* can be gained only through *bhāvanāmayī*

³⁹ Cf. Jñānaśribhādra's explanation (*PVinT* Derge 4228, 201b6–7; Peking 5728, 239b4–5): *ldog pas phyi rol sgrub pa 'dis gañ gi tshes rnam par śes par smra ba dag nañ gi ñe bar len pa'i dños po'i bye brag gis byas pas 'bras bu sñon po śes pa ldog pa yin par mi smra na phyi rol 'grub par 'gyur ro ||*

⁴⁰ *pramāṇa* and *itara* of the compound *pramāṇetaratām* are to be construed with *itara* and *upaplave* of *upaplavetarayoḥ* respectively.

prajñā.⁴¹ Thus, valid conventional cognition is a tool for correctly analyzing, distinguishing and determining what one has heard or learned before. This is the procedure that Dharmakīrti has shown in the passage to which he probably refers, among others, with the words *tad api leśataḥ sūcitam eveti*, i.e., *PVin* 1.28 with his explanation and the verses quoted from the *Pramāṇavārtika* (*PVin* 1.29–31).⁴²

Dharmottara, the last author I would like to consider here, makes both points very clear. Commenting on *atrāpi pare mūdhā viśamvādayanti lokam* he says that it would be correct to explain only the definition of ultimate cognition if the world were not confused about conventional cognition. However, as long as those who are confused with regard to conventional cognition also continue to confuse others, there is no chance to introduce them to the ultimate way (*don dam pa'i tshul*). Thus, conventional cognition has to be taught to them in order to lead them to the ultimate way.⁴³ He explains how this is possible to the ultimate way as follows: The cause for realizing ultimate cognition is cultivation (*bhāvanā*). This cultivation operates with affairs that have been settled by conventional cognition. Thus, this conventional cognition, with the objects tested by it, is, when properly established, cause for ultimate cognition. However, objects of incorrect cognitions, when being cultivated in terms of their eternal aspects as taught by the heretics, are not cause for ultimate cognition. Therefore people, in order to introduce them to the ultimate way, first have to be turned away from their errors.⁴⁴

⁴¹ On the soteriological impact of *sāṃvyavahārikapramāṇa* according to Dharmakīrti and his commentators, cf. § 2 “Épistémologie et sotériologie” in Vincent Eltschinger, *Études sur la philosophie religieuse de Dharmakīrti* (II): *L'āśrayaparivṛtti* (forthcoming).

⁴² *bhāvanābalaṭaḥ spaṣṭam bhayādāv iva bhāsate* |
yaj jñānam aśamvādi tat pratyakṣam akalpakam || *PVin* 1.28
yoginām api śrutamayena jñānenārthān gṛhītvā yukticitāmāyena vyavasthāpya bhāvayatām tanniṣpattau yat spaṣṭāvabhāsi bhayādāv iva, tad avikalpakam avitathaviṣayam pramāṇaṃ pratyakṣam, āryasatyadarśanavad yathā nirṇītam asmābhiḥ pramāṇavārtike ..., translated in Vetter 1966: 73f. (cf. n. 36). The Sanskrit text is according to Stein-kellner's critical edition under preparation.

⁴³ *PVinT* Derge 4299, 167b2–3 = Peking 5727, 195b4–5: *gal te tha sñad la rab tu sbyor ba'i śes pa 'di la yañ 'jig rten rmoñs par ma gyur na ni don dam pa'i śes pa 'ba' zig gi mtshan ñid bśad par rigs pa yin na | gañ gi tshe 'di la yañ gzan dag bdag ñid rmoñs śin | gzan yañ rmoñs par byed pa de'i tshe de dag don dam pa'i tshul la 'jug pa'i skabs ga la yod || don dam pa'i tshul la 'jug par bya ba kho na'i phyir kun tu tha sñad pa'i śes pa bśad pa yin no ||*

⁴⁴ *PVinT* Derge 167b6–168a1 = Peking 196a2–5: *pāramārthikam api pramāṇaṃ na nirhetukam. na ca bhāvanāvyaṭirikto hetuḥ. bhāvanā ca sāṃvyavahārikapramāṇaparichinnārthaviṣayā. tataś ca tat sāṃvyavahārikaṃ pramāṇaṃ samyag nirūpitaṃ pāramārthikajñānahetuḥ sampadyate. tatas tadviśayo yatnaḥ paramārthaviśaya eva. mithyājñānena hi viśayakīrtā bhāvā nityādibhir ākārair bhāvyaṃānā na pāramārthikajñānani-*

Up to now we have seen that these philosophers of the Buddhist epistemological tradition had a clear idea about what they were doing and for whom they were writing. The question as to whether they saw their activity in the framework of the five *vidyāsthānas* as outlined above cannot be answered with certainty. I have been unable to gain clarity concerning this understanding from the texts of the Indian tradition that follow Dignāga. Support for such an interpretation can be gained, however, from no less than Sa skya Paṇḍita, who puts the study of *pramāṇa* into the framework of the five branches of sciences. In the opening section of his “Entrance gate for the wise” (*mKhas pa rnam kyī ’jug pa’i sgo*) – “the wise” being no one other than those who are omniscient⁴⁵ – he tells us that the topics to be studied by the wise are the five *vidyāsthānas*, and to support this, quotes the very passage from the *MSA* that we have linked to Dignāga, i.e., *MSA* 11.60.⁴⁶

In conclusion we can thus sum up Dignāga’s, Dharmakīrti’s and Dharmottara’s concept of the role of epistemology as follows:

- 1) The addressees of epistemological works are primarily non-Buddhists.
- 2) The aim of these works is not to introduce the opponents to the teaching of Buddha, but to turn the adherents of heretical views away from these views by revealing the faults in the *pramāṇa* theories of the heretics and by revealing the good qualities of one’s own *pramāṇas*.
- 3) Although the Buddhist *dharma* is not subject to a critical analysis by means of conventional valid cognitions (*pramāṇa*), it has to be examined

bandhanaṃ bhavanti. anityādibhis tv ākārair bhāvyaṃ nibandhanaṃ bhavanti eva. tasmād ato vyāmohaṃ vyāvartya paramārthanaye ’vaiśrayitavyo jaṇaḥ, sthūlavaiśayatvād asya vyāmohasya. etadvyāmohanivṛttipūrvikā ca paramārthaprāptiḥ. The Sanskrit text quoted in the *Dravyālaṅkāraṅkārikā* (ed. Jambūvijaya, Ahmedabad 2001, 77,19–25) is presented in Jambūvijaya 1981: 137 (P. 120) and identified in Lindtner 1984: 157 n. 23 (cf. n. 37).

⁴⁵ *mKhas ’jug* (Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan, *mKhas pa rnam ’jug pa’i sgo* ’zes bya ba bstan bcos. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khañ 1981) 5,10–11: *mKhas pa ’zes bya ba gañ yin ze na | ’ses bya thams cad phyin ci ma log par ’ses pa yin la | ...* A similar idea is found in *MSA* 11.2 where the wise man, here *dhīmān*, is said to obtain awareness of all modes of reality (*dhīmān sarvākārajñatām eti*), the wise man being paraphrased as *Bodhisattva* in the commentary thereon (*bodhisattvaḥ sarvajñatām prāpnoti*); cf. Griffiths 1990: 100 (cf. n. 24).

⁴⁶ *mKhas ’jug* 5,13–6,1: *mKhas pa des bslab bar bya ba’i yul ni rig pa’i gnas lha ste | ... de’añ mdo sde rgyan las | rig pa’i gnas lha dag la mkhas par ma byas par || ’phags mchog gis kyañ thams cad mkhyen ñid mi ’gyur te | gzan dag tshar gcad rjes su gzuñ bar bya phyir dan || rañ ñid kun ’ses bya phyir de la de brtson byed || MSA 11.60 ces gsuñs pa ltar ro ||*

as long as confused opponents lead the world astray. Wisdom born of reflection (*cintāmayī prajñā*) operates with conventional valid cognitions, and hence they are indirectly a cause for the realization of the ultimate *pramāṇa*.

Thus it is clear that in the intention of the promoters of *pramāṇa* studies this system apparently had a strong connection with Buddhism as a religion, i.e., as the teaching of a path towards salvation, and that they never considered themselves to be involved in non-Buddhistic activities.

