

## Opening speech

### News from the manuscript department

Ernst Steinkellner, Vienna

First of all I would like to thank all of you for participating in this conference and thereby demonstrating the continued vigour and interest in the study of Dharmakīrti's works and thought. I feel quite safe in stating that these Dharmakīrti conferences, which have taken place in Japan and Austria since 1982, have indeed substantially furthered our understanding of Dharmakīrti's philosophical and religious motives and achievements, as well as those of his tradition and his predecessors. Secondly, I would also like to thank my four colleagues who decided to convene this fourth Dharmakīrti meeting with the inestimable help of Ms. Peck-Kubaczek. I am particularly grateful to all of them, not only taking the stress connected with such an undertaking off my shoulders, but also for the more significant reason of letting me see the promising continuation of the efforts to preserve the works and understand the ideas of this most remarkable Indian philosopher. I consider, not without emotion, the presence of so many young scholars at this second Vienna meeting to be clear proof that our previous efforts have been successful at ensuring future interest and research.

As a rule and in time-honoured fashion, scholars on the brink of retirement either fascinate or bore their colleagues with summaries of the advancements in their favourite field of study or of their own past enquiries therein. I will do neither. The recent developments are too exciting to talk of anything but the future and the work that is waiting to be done. We are now truly in the position described in my preface to the proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dharmakīrti conference, held in 1989, where I wrote of a "fascinating phase of Dharmakīrti studies." "On the one hand," I said, "some of Dharmakīrti's works are still not available in critical editions nor completely interpreted." And "on the other hand, the penetration of Dharmakīrti's thought is deep enough by now for us to realize that we have relinquished the doxographic attitude which has governed most of our work so far" and that "we are finally starting to follow the path of Dharmakīrti's thought as it developed and moved from problems to solutions and then on to new problems. Work towards providing critical editions and authoritative, careful and clear translations will be one of the tasks of our research in the future. The other will be to trace in detail the arduous progress of Dharmakīrti's rigorous thought in developing his theories and theorems."

Already then we were tantalized by the knowledge that Sanskrit manuscripts of his *Pramāṇaviniścaya* and *Hetubindu* still existed, but as we had no access to these originals, for the next few years we still had to make do with that which was available in Sanskrit, and with frag-

ments and Tibetan translations for that which was not. Nevertheless, in-depth studies of Dharmakīrti's world of thought, his concepts and theories were increasingly published, indeed promoting our understanding of the master to a considerable degree and setting earlier errors right. But all this is well known to you, and as I have said above, I do not plan to discuss even the more important and admirable new results that have been achieved in the last years.

I would rather like to use this occasion to give you a very short overview of the latest developments regarding the availability of original Sanskrit texts of the Buddhist epistemological tradition, the "*pramāṇa*-school," which from a long-held pipe dream has only just become reality. My presentation will be in several parts: First, I will tell you which works are already available and have meanwhile entered a work-in-progress state. Next, I will list what may become available either in the near or at a later date, and finally I will let you know the prospects of making other works we are certain exist becoming available.

This information needs a short introduction and some remarks on caution. In the second part of my Gonda Lecture *A Tale of Leaves*<sup>1</sup> held in November 2003, I gave a survey of the various attempts undertaken since the early 1980s to gain access to manuscripts in the Tibetan Autonomous Region as well as of the latest steps, since June 2002, that have moved towards the realization of this goal. I also discussed my ideas about the direction this movement should take in the future. This is the appropriate point to state that this access would not have come about had it not been for Prof. Lhagpa Phuntshogs, the Director-General of the China Tibetology Research Center (CTRC) in Beijing, who not only understands scholarly work and its motivation, but also sees the signs of change in the regional and global socio-political world. He has understood our scholarly desires and he was able to recognize the right moment to fulfil them and acted accordingly. He is what I would like to call a *kṣaṇajñā*. We owe him our sincere gratitude.

On 9 January, 2004, the "General Agreement on Cooperative Studies on the Copies of Sanskrit Texts and Joint Publication between the China Tibetology Research Center and the Austrian Academy of Sciences" was signed.<sup>2</sup> Its clumsy title revealing some of the difficulties in its preparation, this agreement provides: 1) access to the photocopies of Sanskrit manuscripts held by the CTRC in Beijing, 2) joint editorial work and research on selected texts from this collection, 3) within the framework of a new series, "Sanskrit Texts From the Tibetan Autonomous Region" (STTAR), joint publication in Beijing of the results by the publishing houses of the CTRC and the Austrian Academy of Sciences, and the books to be offered at reasonable prices, and finally 4) as part of this agreement, the possibility to incorporate work done on such texts by scholars associated with our institute in Vienna. That all this is no mere fantasy has been well demonstrated by the first volume of the series, which arrived by airmail just in time for this conference.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ERNST STEINKELLNER, *A Tale of Leaves. On Sanskrit Manuscripts in Tibet, their Past and their Future*. 2003 Gonda Lecture. Amsterdam 2004: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences [The text can be downloaded from the website of the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia under "www.oew.ac.at/ias/Mat/steinkellner\_leaves.pdf"].

<sup>2</sup> From 9 August, 2006, the agreement was extended for another three-year period. [It was meanwhile again extended until January 2012.]

<sup>3</sup> This volume is a critical and diplomatic edition of the first chapter of Jinendrabuddhi's *Pramāṇasamuccaya-īkā*. In the interim, a second volume in the series has been published in 2007: a critical edition of Dharmakīrti-

We will have to calmly wait for the reactions of both the scholarly world and the wider international public, as well as for the reactions within the PRC. I am, however, quite confident that the reactions will be such that the decision-makers in the PRC will see the enormous value of efforts aimed towards regaining not only important parts of the Buddhist past, but also especially of the Tibetan cultural heritage.<sup>4</sup>

Considering the specific social and political context of this enterprise, it is easy to see that all further developments will depend on how carefully it unfolds. The speed we must move forward has aptly been characterized as “step-by-step”. I should also add at this point: access has so far been granted only to the photocopies in the CTRC collection. No access to the actual manuscripts in Tibet is implied in our agreement.

Most of the information we have today on the original materials in the Potala, the Norbulingka, the Tibet Museum, Drepung Monastery, and Tsethang is based on the pioneering work of Prof. Luo Zhao, who from September 1983 to July 1985 prepared the first descriptive list of these manuscripts for the Tibetan Government. Notwithstanding their imperfections, Luo Zhao’s descriptions are an astonishing achievement given the conditions under which this work was done. In the meantime we have come to an agreement with him to use his lists as the basis for a “Vienna Catalogue of Tibetan Sanskrit Manuscripts” that is planned to be made available in the future.<sup>5</sup>

This much only introduces the latest news. The following short survey will present those items that are really new, in the sense of texts that had not been known to still exist in their original Sanskrit, or of texts that had been completely unknown. Naturally, a number of manuscripts of already known texts will also become available, and these eventually will have to be considered in relation to the existing editions, a good example being Śāntarakṣita’s *Vādanyāyaṭīkā*.

1. A number of texts of major importance to our work have been named in a first sub-agreement as the subjects of our cooperation:
  - a. Jinendrabuddhi’s *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā*: complete and unique manuscript in Norbulingka (now possibly in the Tibet Museum). The first two chapters as well as the fifth are being edited by Helmut Krasser, Horst Lasic, and me. Shoryu Katsura is working with his team in Kyoto on the third chapter and has the option to continue his work with the fourth and sixth.
  - b. Dharmakīrti’s *Hetubindu*: again a unique manuscript in the Potala. Its edition is being worked on by Helmut Krasser.

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ti’s *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, Chapters 1 and 2. [By the end of 2010 the series will count eight volumes.]

<sup>4</sup> To date, however, only one review of the first volume has appeared (by Eli Franco in *JIPh* 34, 2006, 221-227). Considering the importance of this new series for Buddhist studies, it is a pity that other colleagues in the field are reacting only slowly, if at all, with their reviews. The PRC policy-makers are evidently keen on international public affirmation of their new attitude towards traditional Tibetan culture, a policy that international scholarship is benefiting from. [So far only two reviews have appeared altogether.]

<sup>5</sup> This catalogue uses the “MASTER standard” for describing the manuscripts. It was adapted for this specific purpose at our institute by Birgit Kellner and Horst Lasic. Due to identification and listing projects currently being conducted in the TAR, for the time being a comprehensive description of the CTRC collection has been postponed.

- c. Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*: two complete manuscripts are available, another contains the entire first and second chapters, and two larger fragmentary manuscripts are available for the third. The third chapter will be edited by Pascale Hugon, Toru Tomabechi and Tom Tillemans,<sup>6</sup> and I am editing the first and second myself.<sup>7</sup>
  - d. An anonymous commentary on the *Santānāntarasiddhi*, which is being studied by Chu Junjie and more material for this *Siddhi* can be expected in the future.
  - e. Śāṅkaranandana's works: partly fragmentary materials of verse and prose texts are available and are being edited by Vincent Eltschinger (more on these last two projects will be presented in their lectures).
2. Now we can look at those texts that we know to exist in CTCRC's collection and which may become available if our cooperation is extended after its first short three-year period:
    - a. Dharmottara's *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā*, Chapter 2: incomplete manuscript of 72 ff. which begins with commentary on the prose after PVin 2.32cd.
    - b. Dharmottara's *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā*, Chapter 3: complete manuscript of 120 ff.
    - c. Yamāri's *Pramāṇavārttikālaṅkāranibandha*, Chapter 1: complete manuscript of this chapter with 205 ff.
    - d. A wholly unknown commentary on Arcaṭa's *Hetubinduṭīkā* by an unknown author, the *Hetubinduṭīkāṭātparyavyākhyā* of a certain Jayabhadra (?), the reading of the first *akṣara* being quite uncertain. His epithet in the colophon is interesting, however: *mahāmaṇḍalācāryyapaṇḍitarājaguru* may indicate a scholar belonging to Nepalese royalty. In fact a sixth generation ancestor of Jayasthiti Malla (reigned 1382-1395) is mentioned by this name.<sup>8</sup> This is a complete manuscript of 123ff.
    - e. Finally, approximately ten unidentified, mostly fragmentary manuscripts of between 8 and 120 ff. contain texts that Luo Zhao assumed as belonging to the *pramāṇa* tradition. Numerous stray leaves may be considered possibly belonging to the same, for at least one has already been identified as the last folio of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* manuscript E.
  3. The last group of texts belongs to the upper limits of our access possibilities as we currently see them. From Luo Zhao's lists we know of the existence of a bundle of paper manuscripts in the Potala that contains fifteen identified texts and one stray leaf. This bundle seems to consist in a collective manuscript. It is written on Bhutanese paper, and Luo Zhao states that "almost a quarter of the right edge is burnt" and that "the left side is also slightly burnt." This flawed condition and the fact that it is "merely" a paper manuscript were probably the reasons why this bundle was not later photographed. The CTCRC, therefore, has no photocopies of this bundle in its library. The texts listed are, however, exciting, notwithstanding their partial incompleteness. From the *pramāṇa* tradition the following texts are included:

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<sup>6</sup> [Published Beijing 2010 (STTAR 8).]

<sup>7</sup> [Published Beijing 2007 (STTAR 2).]

<sup>8</sup> Cf. LUCIANO PETECH, *Mediaeval History of Nepal (c. 750-1480)*. Roma 1958, 151.

- a. Dignāga's *Nyāyamukha* (5 ff.)
- b. Śāṅkarasvāmin's *Nyāyapraveśaka* (2 ff.)
- c. Dharmakīrti's *Sambandhaparīkṣākārikā* (3 ff.)
- d. Dharmakīrti's *Santānāntarasiddhiprakaraṇa* (2 ff.)
- e. Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścayakārikā* (2 ff.)
- f. Dharmakīrti's *Nyāyabindu* (3ff.)
- g. Vinītadeva's *Sambandhavicārabhāṣya* (8 ff.)
- h. Vinītadeva's *Hetubinduṭīkā* (31 ff.)
- i. Vinītadeva's *Śiṣyahitā Nyāyabinduṭīkā* (14 ff.)
- j. Vinītadeva's *Santānāntarasiddhiṭīkā* (6 ff.)
- k. Ācārya Manoratha's *Nyāyahṛdayakārikā* (7 ff.)

At the moment we are trying to motivate our partners in Beijing to also organize the photographing of this valuable bundle. We'll see what comes of it.<sup>9</sup>

In conclusion I would like to let you know simply and clearly what our possibilities and policies in the present circumstance are.

First of all, we are trying to help the CTRC to develop the necessary expertise among their staff for cooperation in these matters as well as to convince the CTRC of the need to make a detailed and up-to-date description of their photocopy collection. This will inevitably involve changes in the present arrangement of the copies and their signatures.<sup>10</sup> Eventually this description could be used to identify and organize the original manuscripts in the TAR as well.

Secondly, we will try to get access to as many texts as possible.

Thirdly, we will try to publish as many texts as quickly as possible.

Under such marvellous prospects let me wish you a successful meeting with interesting papers and lively discussions!

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<sup>9</sup> Because this depends on institutions in Lhasa, as of September 2007 the result has been: Nothing. [By the end of 2010: still no changes.]

<sup>10</sup> In May 2007 the copies were kept in numbered boxes and had been given paper tags starting with "1".

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## Contents

Frontispiece: Participants at the conference .....	v
Preface.....	ix
Account of the Fourth International Dharmakīrti Conference in Vienna, August 23–27, 2005	
Program .....	xi
List of participants .....	xv
Ernst Steinkellner, Opening speech – News from the manuscript department .....	xvii

### Proceedings

Piotr Balcerowicz, Dharmakīrti’s criticism of the Jaina doctrine of multiplexity of reality ( <i>anekāntavāda</i> ).....	1
Junjie Chu, Sanskrit fragments of Dharmakīrti’s <i>Santānāntarasiddhi</i> .....	33
Vincent Eltschinger, Studies on Dharmakīrti’s religious philosophy (3): Compassion and its role in the general structure of PV 2 .....	43
Koji Ezaki, Can we say that everything is ineffable? Udayana’s refutation of the theory of <i>apoha</i> .....	73
Eli Franco, Perception of yogis – Some epistemological and metaphysical considerations .....	81
Toru Funayama, Kamalaśīla’s view on yogic perception and the bodhisattva paths .....	99
Brendan S. Gillon, Dharmakīrti on inference from effect. A discussion of verse 12 and the <i>Svavṛtti</i> of the <i>Svārthānumāna</i> chapter of the <i>Pramāṇavārttika</i> .....	113
Klaus Glashoff, Problems of transcribing <i>avinābhāva</i> into predicate logic .....	131
Keijin Hayashi, Prajñākaragupta’s interpretation of mental perception .....	139
Yoshichika Honda, Bhoja and Dharmakīrti .....	151
Pascale Hugon, Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge’s views on perception .....	159
Masahiro Inami, Nondual cognition .....	177
Hisataka Ishida, On the classification of <i>anyāpoha</i> .....	197
Takashi Iwata, Compassion in Buddhist logic – Dharmakīrti’s view of compassion as interpreted by Prajñākaragupta .....	211



Kyō Kanō, Dichotomy, <i>antarvyāpti</i> , and <i>dṛṣṭānta</i> . . . . .	231
Kei Kataoka, Manu and the Buddha for Kumārila and Dharmakīrti . . . . .	255
Shoryu Katsura, From Abhidharma to Dharmakīrti – With a special reference to the concept of <i>svabhāva</i> . . . . .	271
Yohei Kawajiri, A critique of the Buddhist theory of <i>adhyavasāya</i> in the Pratyabhijñā school . . . . .	281
Birgit Kellner, Dharmakīrti’s criticism of external realism and the sliding scale of analysis . . . . .	291
Hisayasu Kobayashi, On the development of the argument to prove <i>viññaptimātratā</i> . . . . .	299
Taiken Kyuma, On the (im)perceptibility of external objects in Dharmakīrti’s epistemology . . . . .	309
Lawrence McCrea, Prajñākaragupta on the <i>pramāṇas</i> and their objects . . . . .	319
Shinya Moriyama, <i>pramāṇapariśuddhasakalatattvajñā</i> , <i>sarvajñā</i> and <i>sarvasarvajñā</i> . . . . .	329
Yasutaka Muroya, Bhāsarvajña’s Interpretation of <i>bhāva eva nāśaḥ</i> and a related chrono- logical problem. . . . .	341
Hiroshi Nemoto, The proof of impermanence in the dGe lugs pa’s <i>pramāṇa</i> theory . . . . .	363
Miyako Notake, The concept of <i>samayābhoga</i> in the refutation of the existence of universals. . . . .	375
Hideyo Ogawa, On the term <i>anupalabdhi</i> . . . . .	395
Masamichi Sakai, Śākyabuddhi and Dharmottara on the inference of momentariness based on the absence of external causes of destruction . . . . .	407
Kiyokuni Shiga, <i>antarvyāpti</i> and <i>bahirvyāpti</i> re-examined . . . . .	423
John Taber, Did Dharmakīrti think the Buddha had desires? . . . . .	437
Tom J.F. Tillemans, Dignāga, Bhāviveka and Dharmakīrti on <i>apoha</i> . . . . .	449
Toshikazu Watanabe, Dharmakīrti’s intention to quote <i>Pramāṇasamuccaya</i> III 12 . . . . .	459
Jeson Woo, Vācaspatimiśra and Jñānaśrīmitra on the object of <i>yogipratyakṣa</i> . . . . .	469
Zhihua Yao, Non-cognition and the third <i>pramāṇa</i> . . . . .	477
Chizuko Yoshimizu, What makes all the produced impermanent? Proof of impermanence and theory of causality . . . . .	491
Kiyotaka Yoshimizu, Reconsidering the fragment of the <i>Bṛhaṭṭīkā</i> on restriction ( <i>niyama</i> ) . . . . .	507