

On Dharmakīrti's Understanding of *pramāṇabhūta* and His Definition of *pramāṇa**

At the outset of the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter of his *Pramāṇavārttika* which Dharmakīrti devotes to the explanation of the *maṅgalaśloka* of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, he comments on the term *pramāṇa-bhūta*¹ which, among other terms, is assigned by Dignāga as an epithet to the Buddha. The aim of his undertaking is to prove that the Bhagavat, in contrast to other concepts such as God (*īśvara*) or the Veda conceived by opposing traditions, is the highest authority. For this purpose he first (PV 2.1-6) defines *pramāṇa* and explains some problems involved. Then he equates the Bhagavat (PV 2.7a) with a *pramāṇa*. Thereupon he interprets the term *bhūta* as having been applied by Dignāga in order to exclude eternal *pramāṇas* such as God, etc.,² and shows (up to k. 28) that such concepts, even under the condition that they were assumed to be non-eternal, cannot be accounted for.³

The problem with the notion of *pramāṇa* in the compound *pramāṇa-bhūta* which has been dealt with extensively by modern scholars and which also did not escape Dignāga's and Dharmakīrti's commentators is, how can the Bhagavat be said to be a *pramāṇa*, and *pramāṇa*, in its

* I would like to thank Prof. Karin Preisendanz for reading the manuscript of this paper so meticulously, and for her many valuable comments and suggestions. – This paper is a revised version of the one presented at the XXXVIth International Congress of Asian and North African Studies, Montréal, Aug. 27 – Sept. 2, 2000.

¹ The meaning of the term *pramāṇabhūta* has been discussed quite frequently; cf., e.g., Seyfort Ruegg 1994, 1995 and recently Hakamaya 2000 (without knowing Seyfort Ruegg's articles, however).

² I do not subscribe to Prajñākara's interpretation of *bhūta* as being used to dispel error (*bhrāntinivṛttyartham* PVA₀ 84,5). Its interpretation of most of the Indian commentators as *jāta*, *utpanna* and the like seems to be more probable, as I consider this the starting point for Dharmakīrti's digression on the refutation of eternal *pramāṇas* in PV 2.8-28.

³ For an analysis of the chapter, see, e.g., the table of contents and introduction in Vetter 1990: 5 and 13-35, Inami – Tillemans 1986, or the first chapter in Franco 1997: 15-43.

turn, to be cognition?⁴ It is obvious that the Bhagavat is not knowledge or cognition, at least on a conventional level,⁵ and there is no room for doubt that *pramāṇa* is considered to be cognition, for Dignāga himself states in his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* that there are only two kinds of cognition that can be considered as *pramāṇa* (*pratyakṣam anumānam ca pramāṇe – de gñis kho na ste* [PS 1.2ab and Vṛtti]), whereas Dharmakīrti defines it as being reliable cognition (*pramāṇam aṣaṃvādi jñānam* [PV 2.1ab]). Moreover, both consider *pramāṇa* to be the resultant cognition, i.e. *pramāṇaphala*.

In order to account for this problem, roughly two kinds of solution have been proposed:

- 1) *pramāṇa* should be understood either in an extended sense, as authority, or metaphorically or
- 2) *bhūta* should be understood in the sense of a comparison.

Thus, *pramāṇabhūta* is translated either as “[he] who has become authoritative”,⁶ or as “[the Bhagavant] who is (like ?) a (means of) correct knowledge”.⁷ The first interpretation of *pramāṇa* as being employed in an extended sense has been strongly argued for by Tillemans (1993: 5-9), whereas Dunne suggests a metaphorical interpretation (1999: 254-262),⁸ and the second has been argued for by Seyfort Ruegg in his papers of 1994 and 1995. Seyfort Ruegg (1994: 315), of course being aware of Dharmakīrti’s comment on *bhūta*,⁹ relates his rendering of

⁴ This question is explicitly raised in a *pūrvapakṣa* in Śākyabuddhi’s PVT (quoted and translated below p. 179f.): *mñon sum dañ rjes su dpag pa ni tshad ma yin pa de bas na | ji ltar na bcom ldan ‘das de’i rañ bžin can ma yin pa la de skad du ce na*.

⁵ On an absolute level, however, he is considered to consist of perception. Śākyabuddhi, for example, presents the idea that the Bhagavat, on account of his being stainless, non-conceptual and unerring wisdom, actually is *pratyakṣapramāṇa* in a *pūrvapakṣa* and agrees with the Bhagavat’s description (cf. below, p. 179f.; for the Sanskrit as preserved by Vibhūticandra cf. below n. 22: *bhāvanābala-niṣpannānirmalāvikalpābhrāntajñānātmakatvād bhagavataḥ pratyakṣapramāṇasvabhāvatā śākṣād asty eva*). This concept is also shared by Prajñākaragupta (*pratyakṣarūpa eva bhagavān pramāṇam*; cf. below, n. 31).

⁶ Tillemans 1993: 3.

⁷ Seyfort Ruegg 1995: 819.

⁸ References to and discussion of earlier “literal” interpretations such as Steinkellner’s “[he] who has become a means of valid cognition” are to be found here. Dunne leaves the term *pramāṇabhūta* untranslated.

⁹ *abhūtaṇivṛtaye | bhūloktiḥ* (PV 2.7bc) “The mention of *bhūta* serves to avert [the wrong supposition of *pramāṇas*] that did not come into existence”.

pramāṇabhūta as “*pramāṇa*-like” to Dignāga’s understanding only, although he is of the opinion that “the use of ‘*bhūta*’ in the meaning ‘like’ ... is found even in some of the post-Dharmakīrti commentaries of the Buddhist *Pramāṇa*-school known to us either from the surviving Sanskrit texts or from their Tibetan translations”.¹⁰ Both Tillemans and Dunne derive their understanding from Devendrabuddhi’s commentary (and similar passages in other texts) on the phrase *tadvat pramāṇam bhagavān* (PV 2.7a) presuming that the metaphorical meaning is conveyed by the word *tadvat*. Seyfort Ruegg, on the other hand, bases his statement that the use of ‘*bhūta*’ in the meaning “like” is found even in post-Dharmakīrtian texts on passages such as the aforementioned explanation by Devendrabuddhi.

As an explanation in Jinendrabuddhi’s *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā* (PST)¹¹ dealing with this very topic sheds new light on the problem, I first will have a closer look at this explanation, then reconsider the translations of the passages at stake in Devendrabuddhi’s *Pramāṇavārttikapañjikā* (PVP), then propose a new interpretation of PV 2.7a and finally reconsider the meaning of the two qualifications of *pramāṇa*, *aṣaṃvādi jñānam* and *ajñātārthaprakāśa*, in PV 2.1ab and 5c respectively.

The passage where Jinendrabuddhi explains *pramāṇabhūta* of PS 1.1a runs as follows (1b4-2a1):

pramāṇabhūtyetyādi. yathā

tvaṃ merus tvaṃ samudro ‘si nātha tvaṃ kalpapādapaḥ |

tvaṃ suvaidyaḥ pradīpas tvaṃ tvaṃ eva¹² paramaḥ plavaḥ ||

ity atrevaśabdaprayogam antareṇāpi tadartho gamyate, tatkehāpīti bhagavān pramāṇam iva pramāṇam. ¹³*yathā hi pratyakṣādīpramāṇam puruṣārthopayogino ‘nadhigatasārthasya prakāśakam aṣaṃvādakam ca, tathā bhagavān api yatra paraḥ puruṣārthaḥ pratibaddhaḥ caturāryasatyalakṣaṇe tattve tadviṣayaṃ jñānam āśādyā niḥśreyasārthināṃ tasyānadhigatasya prakāśako ‘viṣaṃvādakaś ca. tasmāt pramāṇasādharmyāt pramāṇam. bhūto jātaḥ, utpanna ity arthaḥ. bhūtavacanam abhūtasya nitya-syeśvarādeḥ pramāṇasya paraparikalpitasya pratiśedhārtham. pramāṇaṃ cāsau bhūtaś ceti pramāṇabhūtaḥ, tasmai pramāṇabhūtyā.* ^{13>14}

¹⁰ Seyfort Ruegg 1994: 311 (references to the texts are given here); the same idea is expressed in Seyfort Ruegg 1995: 821.

¹¹ Until now only the Tibetan translation of dPañ lotsāva Blo gros brtan pa (1276-1342) was available.

¹² *eva* has no equivalent in Tibetan.

¹³ Cf. Vibhū 518,29-519,4 (cf. Steinkellner 1980: 100).

¹⁴ The text is rendered in Tibetan in the following way (PST_{tib} D2a1-2b1 = Q2b-7): *tshad mar gyur pa zes pa la sogs pa ste | ji ltar | khyod ni ri rah rgya mlsho*

[On] “*pramāṇabhūṭāya*”, etc. Just as in this [praise]

You are [mount] Meru; You are the ocean; oh Lord, You are the wishing-tree (*kalpapādapa*); You are the perfect healer; You are the light; You are the best boat (*plava*)!

the meaning of the [word “like”] is understood, even without the employment of the word “like” (*iva*), it is also the case here [in the compound *pramāṇabhūṭa*]. Thus, the Bhagavat is **valid cognition** [inasmuch as he is] like [i.e. similar to] a valid cognition. Just as a valid cognition, namely perception and so on, illuminates an unknown object (*artha*) that is useful for a human purpose (*artha*) and is reliable [with regard to that object], in the same way the Bhagavat, too, after he has gained a cognition of that to which the highest human purpose is bound, [i.e.] the reality characterized by the four noble truths, illuminates that [reality] which is not known to those striving for the highest good (*nīḥśreyasa*) and is reliable [with regard to that]. Therefore [he is said to be] a *pramāṇa* due to [his] similarity to valid cognitions [the word *iva* being self-understood]. *bhūṭa* [means] “he has come into existence” in the sense of “he has arisen”. The mention of *bhūṭa* serves to negate *pramāṇas* that have not come into existence (*abhūṭa*), [i.e.] that are eternal, such as God (*īśvara*), inasmuch as they are assumed by others [i.e. non-Buddhists]. [The compound] *pramāṇabhūṭa* [is a *karmadhāraya* meaning] “he is a *pramāṇa*, and he has come into existence”.¹⁵ [Having paid obeisance] to him who is **valid cognition** (*pramāṇabhūṭa*) **and has come into existence**.

According to this explanation of Jinendrabuddhi, the word *pramāṇa* is applied to the Buddha not in an extended sense but metaphorically and

khyod || mgon khyod dpag bsam rkañ 'thun ste || sman pa bzañ khyod sgron ma khyod || khyod ni sgrol byed dam pa'o || zes pa 'di 'dra ba'i sgra sbyar ba med par yañ de'i don rtoḡs pa de ltar 'dir yañ no zes pas tshad ma dan 'dra bas bcom ldan 'das tshad ma'o || gañ gi phyr ji ltar mñon sum la sogs pa'i tshad ma ni skyes bu'i don la ñe bar mkho ba snar ma rtoḡs pa'i don gsal bar byed cin mi bslu ba yin pa de ltar | bcom ldan 'das kyañ gañ la skyes bu'i don gyi mchog rag las pa 'phags pa'i bden pa bzi'i mshan ñid kyi de kho na ñid la de'i yul can gyi ses pa bskyed nas | ñes par legs pa don du gñer ba rnams la | khoñ du ma chud pa de gsal bar byed pa dan mi bslu ba de'i phyr tshad ma dan chos mshuñs pa ñid kyi phyr tshad ma'o || gyur pa ni skyes pa ste byuñ ba zes pa'i don to || gyur pa'i tshig ni ma byuñ ba rtag pa dbañ phyug la sogs pa'i tshad ma gzan gyis yonñ su brtags pa dgag pa'i don du'o || tshad ma yañ 'di yin la gyur pa'añ yin pas tshad mar gyur pa ste | tshad mar gyur pa de la'o ||

¹⁵ That the analysis of the compound is to be understood as that of a *karmadhāraya* and not as that of a *dvandva* as suggested in Steinkellner 1989: 181, was expressed to me by Steinkellner himself in the meantime and is also stated in Franco 1997: 16, n. 3. Instances of *karmadhāraya* compounds are collected in Hakamaya 2001.

does not require any qualification in order to be understood as metaphor. Thus, at least if one follows his interpretation, there is no need to assume that the metaphorical meaning is conveyed by *tadva*, and it is also clear that his explanation does not support the interpretation of “*bhūṭa* as “like”.¹⁶

Jinendrabuddhi's exposition provides us with a key that opens the door to a better understanding of the Tibetan translation of Devendrabuddhi's remarks. It not only enables us to look with another eye upon these materials, but, as the words *pramāṇam iva* are rendered by *tshad ma dan 'dra bas* (PST_{tib} D2a3; cf. above, n. 14), it also draws our attention to the fact that in other texts, too, the phrase *tshad ma dan 'dra bas* may represent a Sanskrit *pramāṇam iva*. If we now take the Tibetan *tshad ma dan 'dra bas na* in Devendrabuddhi's PVP as equivalent to *pramāṇam iva*, his introductory remarks on PV 2.1ab where *pramāṇa* is defined, namely (PVP D1b2-3 = Q2a1-3):

tshad mar gyur pa zes bya ba ni tshad mar 'khrunñs pa'o || tshad ma dan 'dra bas na tshad ma ste bcom ldan 'das (PV 2.7a) so || tshad ma'i no bo de ci zig yin na | gañ gis de dan 'dra bar dam bca' bar byed ce na |

tshad ma slu med can ses pa || (PV 2.1ab)

zes bya ba smos te |

can be translated as

[The compound] *pramāṇabhūṭa* [in PS 1.1 means] “[the Bhagavat] is a *pramāṇa*, and he has come into existence” (*tshad mar 'khrunñs pa =*

¹⁶ The last point is made clear by an interesting note of Vibhūticandra who, when rephrasing the last part of the above-mentioned passage of Jinendrabuddhi's PST, explicitly declares that *bhūṭa* does not have the meaning of *iva*. This is interesting inasmuch as it is the only remark I am aware of that indicates a possible understanding of *bhūṭa* in *pramāṇabhūṭa* as meaning “like” (*iva*) and thus supports Seyfort Ruegg's supposition. The statement is meaningful only when it is understood as being directed against someone who holds the view that *bhūṭa* means *iva*. Cf. Vibhū 519,2-4: *bhūṭa utpannaḥ. bhūṭavacanam aprajātasyeśvaradeḥ paraparikal-pitasya pratishedhārtham. ivārthas tu sāmāthyagata iti na ladartham elad iti vakṣyate. “bhūṭa [means] ‘has arisen’. The mention of *bhūṭa* serves to negate [*pramāṇas*] such as God (*īśvara*) that have not come into existence (*aprajāta*), inasmuch as they are imagined by others [i.e. non-Buddhists]. The meaning ‘like’ (*iva*) is understood due to the adequacy [of just this meaning in the present context]. Thus it will be explained that [the mention of *bhūṭa*] does not have that meaning”. – This remark of Vibhūticandra and a part of the Tibetan translation of PST quoted above (n. 14) have been referred to by Seyfort Ruegg (1994: 311, n. 39) in corroboration of his interpretation.*

pramāṇajātaḥ).¹⁷ The **Bhagavat** is valid cognition [inasmuch as he is] similar to a valid cognition. What is this nature of *pramāṇa* so that it is asserted that [the Bhagavat] is similar to it? [Reply:] Valid cognition is reliable cognition.¹⁸

On the interpretation of *tshad mar 'khrunṣ pa* as a *karmadhāraya* see Śākyabuddhi's explanation and the Sanskrit text of Śākyabuddhi's comments on this passage preserved in Vibhūticandra's notes (reproduced below, n. 20). The sentence *tshad ma dan 'dra bas na tshad ma ste bcom ldan 'das* so probably corresponds to a Sanskrit text as available in Jinendrabuddhi's PST: *bhagavān pramāṇam iva pramāṇam = tshad ma dan 'dra bas bcom ldan 'das tshad ma'o* (PST_{lib} D2a3). This is also corroborated by Śākyabuddhi's explanation of this sentence according to which the word *pramāṇa* implies a similarity (PVT D71b5-72a2 = Q86b4-87a2).¹⁹

²⁰ *de la 'grel pa mdzad pa bdag nid kyis tshigs su bcad pa'i 'grel pa mdzad cin | tshad mar gyur pa zes bya ba de 'chad pa la | tshad mar 'khrunṣ pa zes bya bar gyur pa'i sgra ni 'khrunṣ pa'i don to ||*²⁰ ²¹ *tshad ma yañ de yin la*

¹⁷ This interpretation of *bhūta* is also known to Ravigupta (PVV^R 294a1): *de lla bur gañ gyur pa de ni tshad mar 'khrunṣ pa zes bya'o ||*.

¹⁸ This passage is partly referred to in Tillemans 1993: 6f., n. 7; the whole passage is quoted and translated in Seyfort Ruegg 1994: 312 and Dunne 1999: 255, n. 7.

¹⁹ As a further piece of evidence preserved in the Sanskrit original that this line of commentators used the wording *pramāṇam iva* in this context, another note of Vibhūticandra referred to in Dunne 1999: 255f., n. 7 may be adduced (Vibhū 521.28-30): *sarvaś ca śabdo 'nyatra prayujyamāno 'ntarbhūtopamārthaḥ prayujyate ity āha – pramāṇam iveti. pramāṇaśabdo jñāne mukhyaḥ. ilaratra tu kena sādhar-myenopamānopameyatvam ity āha – avisamvādīti*. “And any word inasmuch as it is employed for something different [from what it primarily denotes] is employed referring to an implied similarity. Therefore he says: ‘like a *pramāṇa*’. The word *pramāṇa* primarily [denotes] cognition (*jñāna*). By which similarity now is in the other case [when it is metaphorically applied to the Bhagavat] [the cognition] that to which [the Bhagavat] is represented as similar and [the Bhagavat that which is] similar [to it]? [In response to this question] he says: ‘reliable’”. I have not been able to identify the source of this note and it is possible that Vibhūticandra put together bits and pieces from different passages in the manuscripts available to him, combining them with his own words.

²⁰ Cf. Vibhū 521.26-27: *tad atra vṛttikāraḥ ślokapātanikāṃ kurvan pramāṇabhū-lāyety (PS 1.1a) elat svayaṃ vyācāṣte – pramāṇajāta* iti bhūtaśabdaḥ prādurbhā-vārthaḥ* (* Vibhū 521.27 reads *pramāṇam jāta iti* ... which seems very unlikely. The emendation is based on the Tibetan translation *tshad mar 'khrunṣ pa*): cf. Steinkellner 1981: 290 (frag. 4).

²¹ Cf. PST 2.8: *pramāṇam cāsau bhūtaś ceti pramāṇabhūtaḥ*; cf. Steinkellner 1980: 100.

*gyur pa yañ de yin pas na tshad mar gyur pa'o ||*²¹ *de lla na tshad ma rtag par rlog pa bsal (D: gsal) ba yin no || mñon sum dan rjes su dpag pa ni tshad ma yin pa de bas na | ji lla na bcom ldan 'das de i rañ bzin can ma yin pa la de skad du ce na tshad ma dan 'dra bas na tshad ma ste zes bya ba smos te | tshad ma'i sgra dpe nan du 'dus pa can yin no zes bya ba'i don to ||*²² *gal te bsgoms pa'i stobs las grub pa dri ma med pa rnam par mi rlog pa 'khrul pa med pa'i ye ses kyi bdag nid can yin pa'i phyir bcom ldan 'das ni mñon sum gyi tshad ma'i rañ bzin can nid du dños su bzugs pa nid yin na ñe bar blags pa la brten pas ci zig bya ze na | 'di la skyon yod pa ma yin te | rlog pa dan bcas pa'i ses pa'i gnas skabs la dgoṇs nas brjod pa'i phyir ro zes bya ba ni gzan dag gi yin no || 'dir gal te bcom ldan 'das ni ji skad du bsad pa'i tshad ma'i bdag nid can yin pa de lla na yañ de lla rab tu grags pa ma yin no || de bas na tha sñad du byas pa'i tshad mas dper mdzad pa yin no zes bya ba 'di ni rigs pa yin no ||*²²

By relating (*'pātanikāṃ kurvan*) this [i.e. PV 2.1ab, etc.]²³ to the *śloka* [i.e. PS 1.1] the Vṛttikāra [i.e. Devendrabuddhi] himself explains the [expression] *pramāṇabhūta* [PS 1.1c] [with the phrase] *pramāṇajāta*, [which means] that the word *bhūta* has the meaning of “coming into existence”. [The compound *pramāṇabhūta* is to be understood as a *karmadhāraya* in the sense of:] He [i.e. the Bhagavat] is a *pramāṇa*, and he has come into existence. In this way the assumption (*rlog pa*) of an eternal *pramāṇa* is rejected. [Opponent:]²⁴ *pramāṇas* are direct perception and inference. Thus, how can the Bhagavat who is not of their nature be said to be this [i.e. *pramāṇa*]? [Therefore Devendrabuddhi] says: “[The Bhagavat is] valid cognition inasmuch as he is similar to a valid cognition”. This means that the word *pramāṇa* implies a similarity. [Opponent:]²⁵ “The Bhagavat essentially is stainless, non-concep-

²² Cf. Vibhū 522.1-5: *nanu bhāvanābalaniṣpannanirmalāvikalpābhrāntajñānāt-makatvād^a bhagavataḥ pratyakṣapramāṇasvabhāvatā sāksād asty eva. kim upacā-rāśrayeṇeti cet, adoṣo 'yam, savikalpajñānāvasthāśayenābhīdhanād^b ity eke. idaṃ tv atra yuktaṃ – yady api yathoktapramāṇātmakeḥ sadā^c bhagavān, lathāpy asaṃvya-vahāriko 'sāv avasthābhedaḥ. tataḥ sāmvyavahārikapramāṇenopamīyate* (^a This is the reading proposed in Steinkellner 1981: 290 [frag. 5]; cf. also Dunne 1999: 256, n. 9. Vibhū 522.1 reads: *bhāvanābalaniṣpannananiṣkalpā vikalpā vikalpābhrāntajñānātma-katvād*. – ^b The emendation of *āśrayeṇā* [Vibhū 522.3] to *āśayenā* is based on the Tibetan *dgoṇs nas*. – ^c *sadā* has no equivalent in Tibetan and may be an addition of Vibhūticandra).

²³ *atra = de la* refers to PV 2.1ab just mentioned by Śākyabuddhi in the preceding sentence (PVT D71b5): *tshad ma zes bya ba la sogs pas zes bya ba ni tshad ma slu med can ses pa zes bya ba la sogs pas so ||*.

²⁴ The remaining section of the text is also referred to and translated in Inami 1994: 29f., n. 2.

²⁵ The remaining section of the text is also referred to and translated in Dunne 1999: 256 and 258, n. 10.

tual and unerring wisdom that has been accomplished by force of his meditational practice. Hence his being by nature a *pramāṇa*, namely perception, applies (*asty eva*) directly, so why does one need to rely on a metaphor?²⁶ Some say that this is not a fault because [he] is said [to be *pramāṇa*] intending a state of conceptual cognition. But here the correct [response is as follows]: Even if the Bhagavat has the nature of the aforementioned *pramāṇa*, he is nevertheless not commonly known as such. Therefore he is represented as similar to a conventional (*sāṃvya-vahārika*) *pramāṇa*.

The material presented so far clearly shows that both Devendrabuddhi as well as Śākyabuddhi interpret *pramāṇa* in *pramāṇabhūta* in the same way we have seen with Jinendrabuddhi, as implying a similarity, and that its metaphorical use is thus justified. Then, how can we understand Dharmakīrti's remark *tadvat pramāṇaṃ bhagavān* (PV 2.7a) meaningfully? Until now, scholars have unanimously understood *tadvat* in a comparative sense. However, their interpretations of *tad* differ: the anaphoric pronoun is either specified as referring to PV 2.1-6 or specified as relating to the defining characteristics in PV 2.1ab and 5c, or it remains unspecified. A list of translations I am aware of, in chronological order, displays the following variety:

Such a valid knowledge-instrument is the Blessed One.	Nagatomi 1957: 15
In such a way is the Blessed One an authority.	Jackson 1988: 343
The Lord [Buddha] is a means of valid cognition such as that [which we have discussed in PV II.1-6].	van Bijlert 1989: 158
<i>sore to dōyō ni</i> ... ("Similar to that ...")	Inami 1994: 17
(Translating from Sanskrit:) Like that, the Illustrious One is a <i>pramāṇa</i> . (Translating PV 2.7a as rendered into Tibetan in PVP [s. below, p. 182: <i>de bzin bcom ldan tshad ma ñid</i>]:) Similarly the Illustrious One is a <i>pramāṇa</i> .	Tillemans 1993: 6
So [in view of what is stated in verses 1-6], the Lord [being] (a means of) correct/efficacious knowledge ...	Seyfort Ruegg 1995: 820
The Exalted One is such a means of knowledge.	Franco 1997: 56

²⁶ This *pūrvapakṣa* displays the position which is normally attributed to Prajñākaragupta: cf. below, n. 31.

The Blessed One is a <i>pramāṇa</i> like that [aforementioned definition].	Dunne 1999: 261, n. 15
(Free rendering:) ... like the two preceding items also the Buddha is a <i>pramāṇa</i> .	Oetke 1999a: 249
<i>so no yō ni</i> ... (= Like this ...)	Hakamaya 2000: 316

Before I proceed to look at Devendrabuddhi's commentary, it should be noted that *-vat* in *tadvat* is usually understood by the Tibetan translators in a possessive sense, so that PV 2.7a is rendered into Tibetan corresponding to Sa skya paṇḍita's and Śākyasrībhadrā's translation of the *Pramāṇavārttika* itself²⁷ as *de ldan bcom ldan tshad ma ñid*.²⁸ An exception to this is the rendering by Subhūtiśrīśānti and dGe ba'i blo gros who were responsible for the first translation of the *Pramāṇavārttika* (not preserved in the bsTan 'gyur) together with Devendrabuddhi's Pañjikā (included in the bsTan 'gyur)²⁹ where *tadvat* is rendered as *de bzin*.³⁰ It also may be mentioned that Prajñākaragupta favors a possessive meaning of *-vat* in *tadvat* and a literal interpretation of *pramāṇa* in *pramāṇabhūta*.³¹

²⁷ For an overview on the various translations of the PV and its commentaries into Tibetan cf. Mejer 1991: 179-193.

²⁸ PVA_{tib} 27b6; PVAT 39a1, 39b2, 102b3, 40a3 (only *de ldan*); PVP^R 305a6; cf. also Inami 1994: 30, n. 2. As Śākyabuddhi does not comment on *tadvat* we have no translation.

²⁹ Cf. Mejer 1991: 180f.

³⁰ This fact was already noticed by rGyal tshab rje; see Tillemans 1993: 7, n. 7: "*rNam 'grel thar lam gsal byed* Vol. I, p. 236,10-11: *lha dbang blo'i 'grel pa'i 'gyur ltar na | de bzhin zhes dpe dang sbyar ro ||* 'Following the translation of Devendrabuddhi's commentary, *tadvat* ('like that') is the connection with an example.' rGyal tshab then proceeds to argue *against* Devendrabuddhi". More precisely, rGyal tshab argues against the interpretation as proposed by these translators. In Jackson's translation (1993: 188) "according to Devendrabuddhi" 'gyur is not considered.

³¹ Cf. his comment on PV 2.7a (PVA_o 84,1-2): *tadvat pramāṇaṃ bhagavān || tathāgato hi bhagavāṃs tadvān iti kṛtvā pratyakṣarūpa eva bhagavān pramāṇam*. "The Bhagavat is a *pramāṇa* which possesses those [two defining characteristics]. For having in mind (*kṛtvā*) that the Tathāgata, [here called] the Bhagavat, possesses those [two defining characteristics] [Dharmakīrti said that] the Bhagavat, indeed being of the nature of perception, is *pramāṇa*". This passage is also referred to by Tillemans 1993: 7, n. 7, Inami 1994: 30, n. 2 and Franco 1997: 17, n. 3. Based on this formulation Franco unnecessarily considers the possibility that Prajñākaragupta read *tadvān* instead of *tadvat* in PV 2.7a. I agree with Franco that in Seyfort Ruegg's translation of *pratyakṣarūpa eva bhagavān pramāṇam* as "the Bhagavat being similar to (or: of the nature of) *pratyakṣa* is *pramāṇa*" (1994: 311) the variant

Keeping this in mind I will now look at Devendrabuddhi's explanation, leaving, for the time being, PV 2.7a untranslated (PVP D6b4-7 = Q7b1-5):

³²<³³ji skad du bsad pa'i mtshan ñid rnam pa gñis kyis³⁴ bstan³⁵ pa'i ño bo can gañ yin pa de ni tshad ma yin no ||³³>

de bzin bcom ldan tshad ma ñid ||³²> (PV 2.7a)

'di tshad ma dan yañ ci zig mtshuñs na | gañ gis na³⁶ tshad ma dan 'dra bas tshad ma ñid yin | tshad ma'i mtshan ñid rnam pa gñis ñid dan mtshuñs pa yin no || ³⁷ji ltar mñon par 'dod pa bzin du bsgrub³⁸ par bya ba'i don la mi slu ba'i phyir dan | mi ses pa'i don gsal bar byed pa'i phyir³⁷ tshad ma ñid yin no || de ltar na bcom ldan 'das kyañ ñes par legs pa la sogs pa'i mtshan ñid can gyi skyes bu'i don la mi slu bar mdzad pa dan | rlogs pa pos³⁹ skyes bu'i don bsgrub par bya ba mi ses pa ston par mdzad pa'i phyir tshad ma ñid yin no || ⁴⁰tshad ma ñid kyi chos mthun pa ñid can 'chad par 'gyur ba yañ grub par byas nas⁴¹ dper byas pa yin no ||⁴⁰>

proposed in parentheses is to be preferred. The rendering of *pratyakṣarūpa* as "being similar to *pratyakṣa*" does not take into account that Prajñākaragupta considers the Bhagavat to be *pāramārthikapramāṇa*.

³² Cf. PVV 9.15: *yathoktadvividhalakṣaṇam uktam yat pramāṇam, tadvad bhagavān pramāṇam*. "A *pramāṇa* has been taught [by Dharmakīrti] as possessing the twofold defining characteristic as explained [in PV 2.1ab and 5c]. The Bhagavat is a *pramāṇa* [just] like this (*tadvat*) [*pramāṇa* as just determined, and not in an other sense]". If this text as transmitted is accepted, one has to assume that Manorathanandin is the only commentator who, without giving any further explanation, understood *-vat* as having a comparative meaning. On the other hand, Manorathanandin normally follows the interpretation of Devendrabuddhi. Thus, a corruption of the text cannot be excluded. However, as there is no evidence for this being the case and because it is possible that Manorathanandin here deviates from Devendrabuddhi, there is no basis for a correction of the text. The reading as suggested by Inami (1994: 29, n. 1) and Dunne (1999: 280, n. 62) which is also found in the edition of the PVV prepared by Ram Chandra Pandeya (Delhi 1999, p. 5.24), namely *yathoktadvividhalakṣaṇayuktam* instead of *'lakṣaṇam uktam*, does not contribute to a possible solution of the problem.

³³ Cf. Vibhū 9, n. 7: *dvividhena yathoktena lakṣaṇena nirdiṣṭam yat, etat pramāṇam*; identified in Frauwallner 1960: 121.

³⁴ Cf. *dvividhena* Vibhū 9, n. 7; DQ: *rnam pa gñis*.

³⁵ Cf. *nirdiṣṭam* Vibhū 9, n. 7; D: *brten*.

³⁶ Q om. *na*.

³⁷ Cf. PVV 9.12: *yathābhīhitasya satyacatuṣṭayaśyāvisamvādanāt tasyaiva parair ajñātasya prakāśanāc ca*.

³⁸ D: *sgrub*.

³⁹ D: *po'i*.

⁴⁰ Cf. Vibhū 9, n. 7: *pramāṇasādharmyaṃ tu sādhaṃśyamānam siddham kṛtvodāhṛtam*; identified in Frauwallner 1960: 121.

⁴¹ D: *'chad par 'gyur bar byas nas*.

pramāṇa is that whose nature is indicated by the twofold defining characteristic as explained before.⁴²

... ..

In what way is he similar to a *pramāṇa* so that, inasmuch as he is similar to a *pramāṇa* (*tshad ma dan 'dra bas, pramāṇam iva*), he is [said to be] *pramāṇa*? He is similar in having the twofold defining characteristic. Just as [a cognition] is [said to be] a *pramāṇa* because it is reliable (*mi slu ba = avisamvādin*) with regard to a [human] purpose to be accomplished as intended, and because it illuminates a [previously] unknown state of affairs (*mi ses pa'i don gsal bar byed pa = ajñālārthaprakāśana*), in the same way the Bhagavat too [is said to be] a *pramāṇa* because he is reliable with regard to the human purpose defined as the highest good (*ñes par legs pa, *niḥśreyasa*) and so on, and because he makes known [these previously] unknown human purposes to be accomplished by the [person] who [now] realizes [these purposes].

The [Bhagavat's] similarity to a *pramāṇa*, however, which will be established [in the remaining part of the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter], was applied (*udāhṛta*) [by Dharmakīrti in PV 2.7a], taking (*kṛtvā*) it for granted (*siddha*).

This passage confirms the results gained from Devendrabuddhi's introductory remarks on PV 2.1ab treated above (p. 177f.), namely that the metaphoric use of *pramāṇa* is self-understood without any further requirements. It also stresses the fact that the Bhagavat is similar to a *pramāṇa* because he is *avisamvādin* and because he makes known a previously unknown state of affairs, in other words, he possesses these defining characteristics of a *pramāṇa*. If we now look at Devendrabuddhi's introductory sentence to PV 2.7a, namely *ji skad du bsad pa'i mtshan ñid rnam pa gñis kyis bstan pa'i ño bo can gañ yin pa de ni tshad ma yin no*, it is quite clear that he understood *-vat* in *tadvat* not in a comparative but in a possessive sense. The rendering of *tadvat* into *de bzin* by Subhūtiśrīśānti and dGe ba'i blo gros thus is obviously based on their misunderstanding of Devendrabuddhi's intention, and this mistake has been corrected later on by Sa skya paṇḍita and Śākyaśrībhadra.

Thus, following Devendrabuddhi's interpretation of *tadvat pramāṇam bhagavān* (PV 2.7a), which also has been accepted by Jinendrabuddhi

⁴² This sentence is also referred to in Dunne (1999: 280, n. 62) who, like Inami (1994: 29, n. 1), prefers the reading *rnam pa gñis brten pa'i ño bo can* instead of *rnam pa gñis <kyis> bstan pa'i ño bo can* and translates "A *pramāṇa* is that whose nature depends upon the aforementioned two kinds of characteristics".

and the Tibetan tradition at least from Sa skya paṇḍita onwards, I would propose the following translation: “The Bhagavat is a *pramāṇa* that has the [twofold defining characteristic]”,⁴³ for *pramāṇabhūta* I suggest the rendering “one who has come into existence being a *pramāṇa*”.⁴⁴ In both cases I understand *pramāṇa* as “valid cognition” in a metaphorical sense.

If we now consider Devendrabuddhi’s concluding remark in the statement treated above, namely that the Buddha’s similarity to a *pramāṇa* will be established later in the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter (*tshad ma ṅid kyi chos mthun pa ṅid can ’chad par ’gyur ba grub par byas nas dper byas pa yin no* || PVP D6b7 [see above, p. 182] = *pramāṇasādharmyaṃ tu sādhaṃśyamānaṃ siddhaṃ kṛtvodāhṛtam* Vibhū 9, n. 7), this can only refer to the section which Dharmakīrti devotes to the proof that the Bhagavat is *pramāṇa*-like, i.e. the section beginning with PV 2.7b and continuing to the end of the chapter. Thus, the interpretation arrived at by Inami and Tillemans (1986: 128) and based upon dGe ’dun grub pa’s topical outlines (*sa bcad*) of his commentary on PV 2 could equally be based upon Devendrabuddhi’s understanding of the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter and should not be considered as “curious” at all:

We are thus led to the rather curious result that in Dharmakīrti’s chapter devoted to *Pramāṇasiddhi* it is only k. 1-6 which speak about actual *pramāṇa*; the main subject of PV II is *pramāṇa* taken in the metaphorical sense of *pramāṇabhūta* or *tshad ma’i skyes bu*.

If this result is accepted, and I think this is the reading of PV 2 to be preferred, one also has to assume that Dharmakīrti himself considered the two defining characteristics provided by him in PV 2.1ab (*pramāṇam avisaṃvādi jñānam*) and 5c (*ajñātārthaprakāśo vā*) as being necessary and sufficient conditions for a cognition’s being a *pramāṇa*.⁴⁵

⁴³ By subsuming the Buddha under the concept of *pramāṇa* on account of his similarity to *pramāṇa* qua cognition endowed with these two defining characteristics, Dharmakīrti is inspired by Dignāga who states that authoritative words / words of a credible person (*āptavāda*) can be called inference because they are similar in being reliable (*avisaṃvāda*): *yid ches tshig kyan mi slu bar* || *mtshuṅs phyir rjes su dpag pa ṅid* || (PS 2.5ab) *yid ches pa’i tshig ṅid bzuṅ nas kyan mi bslu bar mtshuṅs pa’i phyir de yaṅ rjes su dpag pa ṅid du brjod do* || (PS-Vṛtti [D 4204] 29a2f.); for the Sanskrit version of PS 2.5ab (*āptavādāvisamvādasāmānyād anumānatā*), cf. below, n. 51.

⁴⁴ It goes without saying that my earlier rendering of *tshad mar gyur pa* as “[er], der zum Erkenntnismittel geworden ist” (Krasser 1991: 19) has to be corrected.

⁴⁵ For a discussion of the issue as to whether Dharmakīrti provides a definition by these two characteristics, and if so, whether they are necessary and/or sufficient

Otherwise the whole enterprise of proving that the Bhagavat due to his similarity to a *pramāṇa* can be subsumed in a metaphorical sense under the concept of *pramāṇa* would be ill-founded. This also implies, at least to my understanding, that both characteristics refer to a conventional (*sāṃvṛtyavahārika*) *pramāṇa*, for absolutely (*pāramārthika*) speaking the Buddha is considered to be *pramāṇa*. Such an interpretation is attested to by Śākyabuddhi.⁴⁶

In the following section I would like to present some statements of Dharmakīrti either from his *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter or scattered in his other works that can be adduced as evidence in order to substantiate the results presented by me above. For the sake of convenience let me recall Dharmakīrti’s definition of *pramāṇa*:

pramāṇam avisaṃvādi jñānam (PV 2.1ab) ... *ajñātārthaprakāśo vā* (PV 2.5c)

pramāṇa is a reliable cognition ... or the illumination of an unapprehended object.

The first remarks I would like to adduce are taken from the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter and refer to the Bhagavat:

heyopādeyatattvasya sābhyaupāyasya vedakaḥ / *yaḥ pramāṇam asāv iṣṭo na tu sarvasya vedakaḥ* || (PV 2.32)

The one who makes known the nature of what is to be avoided and what must be appropriated as well as the means [thereof], is considered as *pramāṇa*, not the one who makes known everything.⁴⁷

tāyaḥ svadṛṣṭamārgoktiḥ (PV 2.145a) ... *tataḥ pramāṇam tāyo vā catuḥsatyaprakāśanam* / (PV 2.146ab)

[The Bhagavat’s] protection [consists in] stating the way [to liberation] which he has seen himself. ... Because of this he is a *pramāṇa*. Or, protection [consists in] making known the four noble truths.⁴⁸

dayayā śreya ācaṣṭe jñānād bhūtaṃ sasāadhanam / *tac cābhiyogavān vaktuṃ yatas tasmāt pramāṇatā* || (PV 2.282)

conditions, in connection with the problem of the meaning of the disjunctive particle *vā* in PV 2.5c, see the dispute between Oetke (1999a, 1999b) and Franco (1999); cf. also Katsura 1984, Dreyfus 1991 and Dunne 1999: 279-281 and 343f.

⁴⁶ Cf. PVT D72a (quoted above, p. 179): *de bas na tha sñad du byas pa’i tshad mas dper mdzad pa yin no zes bya ba ’di ni rigs pa yin no* ||.

⁴⁷ Translated in Nagatomi 1957: 40.

⁴⁸ PV 2.145-146 is translated in Nagatomi 1957: 148, Vetter 1990: 52 and Franco 1997: 26.

Due to compassion he proclaims salvation, because of knowledge [he proclaims] truth, and because he exerts himself to impart that⁴⁹ together with the means [thereof], [the Bhagavat] is *pramāṇa*.⁵⁰

In these passages it is clear that the Buddha is considered to be a *pramāṇa* because he makes known what is to be avoided, etc., in other words, because he is teaching the four noble truths. This amounts to a correspondence to the second definition of a *pramāṇa* qua cognition, namely *ajñātārthaprakāśa*. That is to say, the Bhagavat can be called a *pramāṇa* because he possesses this defining characteristic. It remains to be noted that nowhere in the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter is the Buddha explicitly said to be *avisamvādin*.

However, already in the first chapter, when explaining why Dignāga considers *āgama* to be a *pramāṇa*,⁵¹ he stated that this is due to the fact that authoritative words / words of a credible person are said to be *anumāna* also with regard to imperceptible (*parokṣa*) objects because they are similar in being reliable (*āptavādāvisamvādasāmānyād anumānatā* / PV 1.218ab) to those authoritative words whose truth can be checked by means of perception and inference.⁵² It should be mentioned, however, that cognition based on *āgama*, although it is grounded in words, is different from normal cognition based on words because it does not make known just the speaker's intention,⁵³ but a real state of affairs. Thus it is reliable with regard to this real state of affairs.⁵⁴

So far I have treated two instances of *pramāṇa*, namely the Buddha and his teaching, which are special inasmuch as they are not cognitions. Let me now turn to the regular conventional *pramāṇas*, perception and inference. The first passage is from the beginning of the *Pratyakṣa*

⁴⁹ Truth or salvation or knowledge? Cf. Franco 1997: 22, n. 16.

⁵⁰ Translated in Nagatomi 1957: 256, Vetter 1990: 171 and Franco 1997: 21f.

⁵¹ Cf. PVSV 108,1-2: *yaḥ tarhīdam *āptavādāvisamvādasāmānyād anumānatā** *ity āgamasya prāmāṇyam anumānavam uktam tat katham* (* = PS 2.5ab [= PV 1.218ab]; cf. above, n. 43).

⁵² For a detailed treatment of these passages, see, e.g., Yaïta 1987, Tillemans 1993: 10-11 or the section "The Question of Credibility" in Dunne 1999: 263-277.

⁵³ Cf. PV 2.1c-2 (*avisamvādanam śābde 'py abhiprāyaṇivedanāt || vaktṛvyāpāraviṣayo yo 'rtho buddhqu prakāśate || prāmāṇyam tatra śābdasya nārthatattvanibandhanam* ||) where knowledge derived from words is said to be reliable, because it indicates the speaker's intention. The validity of words is, however, not based on reality.

⁵⁴ Cf. PVSV 109,10-11: *tataḥ śābdaprabhavāpi satī na śābdavad abhiprāyam ni-vedayaty evety arthāvisamvādād anumānam api*.

chapter of his *Pramāṇaviniścaya* where Dharmakīrti *grosso modo* states that there are two kinds of *pramāṇa* for which he uses the synonym *samyagjñāna*, namely perception and inference, because only these kinds of cognition are reliable:

yaṅ dag pa 'i śes pa de ni rnam pa gñis te | mñon sum dan ni rjes su dpag | ces. bya'o || na hy ābhyām arthaṃ paricchidya pravartamāno 'rtha-kriyāyām visamvādyale. (PVin 1.30,15-18)

Correct cognition (**samyagjñāna*) is of two kinds, "perception and inference", because one who acts having ascertained the object by means of these two [kinds of cognition] is not betrayed with regard to the fulfillment of [his] purpose.

mñon sum yaṅ don la mi slu ba ñid las tshad ma yin no || (PVin 1.38,10)

Perception, too, is a *pramāṇa* because it is reliable with regard to the object.⁵⁵

de las dños po 'i ran bzin la mi slu ba ñid ni 'di 'i yaṅ tshad ma yin no || (PVin 2.3,21-23)

Therefore, the validity (*tshad ma*, **prāmāṇya*) of it [i.e. *anumāna*] also is the reliability with regard to the nature of the real thing.

abhiprāyāvisamvādād api bhrānteh pramānatā | (PV 3.56ab)

[Inference which is] an erroneous cognition is [nevertheless] a *pramāṇa* because it is reliable with regard to the intention.

These passages may suffice to show that both conventional *pramāṇas* are assumed by Dharmakīrti to be *avisamvādin*. With regard to the second defining characteristic, *ajñātārthaprakāśo vā* (PV 2.5c), Dharmakīrti himself, in a digression in his *Hetubindu*, supplies us with the necessary material as to how it should be understood. The passage of PV which I want to read side by side with the digression in the *Hetubindu* reads:

ajñātārthaprakāśo vā svarūpādhigateḥ param || prāptam sāmānyaviññānam aviññāte svalakṣaṇe | yaj jñānam ity abhiprāyāt svalakṣaṇavicārataḥ || (PV 2.5c-6)

⁵⁵ In another passage perception is said to be a reliable non-conceptual cognition: *śes gaṅ slu ba can min pa | rlog med de ni mñon sum mo ||* (PVin 1.28cd). The Sanskrit text as available in NBhū 171,13 has *pramāṇa* for *mñon sum* (*pratyakṣa*): *yaj jñānam avisamvādi, tat pramāṇam akalpakam*. In his comments on 28cd Dharmakīrti again states that *pratyakṣa* is a *pramāṇa* because of its reliability: ... *tat pratyakṣam. tac cāvisamvāditvāt pramāṇam*. Both Sanskrit passages are identified in Steinkellner 1972: 203.

Or [*pramāṇa* is] illumination of an unapprehended object.⁵⁶ [Objection:] [According to this definition] the cognition of a universal [arising] subsequent to the cognition of the particular (*svārūpa*) would be [*pramāṇa*]. [Answer:] [No.] because it is [our] intention that [*pramāṇa* is] a cognition with regard to an unapprehended particular, for the particular is examined [here].

The digression in the Hetubindu (HB 2,18-4,2 = HB_{tr} 35-37)⁵⁷ shows why the conceptual cognitions which arise immediately after the first moment of seeing a particular have to be excluded from the realm of *pramāṇa*. Otherwise there would be an over-extension (*ativyāpti*) of the definition. Dharmakīrti states (HB 2,18-19):

tatra yad ādyam asādhāraṇaviśayaṃ darśanam, tad eva pramāṇam.

There [i.e. of the first moment of seeing and the subsequent affirmative and negating conceptual cognitions]⁵⁸ only the first [moment of] seeing which relates to the particular (*asādhāraṇa*) is a *pramāṇa*.

Here it is worthwhile to point out that, according to Arcaṭa, with the phrase *ādyam asādhāraṇaviśayaṃ darśanam* Dharmakīrti is referring to Kumārila's *ālocanājñānam prathamam*;⁵⁹ if *ālocanājñānam* is understood as *asādhāraṇaviśayaṃ darśanam*, the over-extension mentioned above could be avoided. In this way, Dharmakīrti goes on, the conceptual cognitions subsequent to the first moment of seeing the particular are excluded from being a *pramāṇa*, because they do not cognize a new object (*apūrvārthādhigamābhāvāt*), as the real entity that is capable of fulfilling a purpose (*arthakriyā*) has already been cognized through this first moment of seeing. Moreover, contrary to inference, the subsequent conceptual cognitions do not cognize an entity that has not already been seen and which fulfills such a purpose.⁶⁰ As Arcaṭa explicates,

⁵⁶ If, as suggested by Kimura (1997: 252), *ajñātārthaprakāśo vā* is not understood as a defining characteristic of *pramāṇa*, but of *śāstra* in PV 2.5b (*śāstram mohanivartanam* /) and *artha* in *ajñātārtha* as referring to the meaning explained in the *Pramāṇasiddhi* chapter starting from k. 8, then k. 5d-6 cannot be understood at all.

⁵⁷ The central part of this digression (HB 2,18-3,16) is also translated in Dunne 1999: 472-475.

⁵⁸ Cf. HBT 25,11-12: *tatra teṣu darśanavidhipratīṣedhavidhikalpeṣu.*

⁵⁹ Cf. HBT 25,12-17: *tad ādyam yad etat – asti hy ālocanājñānam prathamam* [ŚV Pratyakṣa 112ab] *ity ādau vikalpapravṛtter bhavam iti ādyam ākhyātam asādhāraṇaviśayaṃ svalakṣaṇaviśayaṃ darśanam, tad eva pramāṇam, na vidhipratīṣedhavidhikalpāu api, tasyaiva pramāṇalakṣaṇayogād ilarayō ca tadasambhavad.*

⁶⁰ HB 2,24-3,1: *... apūrvārthādhigamābhāvād arthakriyāsādhanaśya darśanāt, adṛṣṭasya punas tatsādhanaśvabhāvasya vikalpenāpratīpalleś cānumānavat.*

inference, although its direct object is the universal (*sāmānya*), is nevertheless indirectly connected with the real entity and thus a *pramāṇa*.⁶¹ In the process of discussion Dharmakīrti rephrases the definition of PV 2.5c and explains how the over-extension can be avoided (HB 3,8-9):⁶²

tasmād anadhigatārthaviśayaṃ pramāṇam ity apy anadhigate svalakṣaṇa iti viśeṣaṇīyam.

Therefore, [the definition] “*pramāṇa* is [a cognition] which relates to an unapprehended object”, too, is to be qualified [by the words] “with regard to an unapprehended particular”.

If one keeps in mind that the aim of this digression in HB is to ensure that only the first moment of seeing (*ādyam darśanam*) is *pramāṇa* and to exclude the conceptual cognitions subsequent to this moment from the realm of *pramāṇa*, it becomes clear that Dharmakīrti here raises the very same problem which is addressed in the *pūrvapakṣa* in PV 2.5d-6a (*svārūpādhigateḥ param || prāptam sāmānyaviññānam*; cf. above, p. 187f.). The solution of the problem provided by Dharmakīrti in HB, namely to specify the definition (*anadhigate svalakṣaṇa iti viśeṣaṇīyam*), corresponds to that of PV 2.6bc (*aviññāte svalakṣaṇe / yaj jñānam ity abhiprāyāt*). Thus it is obvious that the qualification of a *pramāṇa* in the HB-passage (*anadhigatārthaviśayaṃ pramāṇam*) corresponds to that of PV 2.5c (*ajñātārthaprakāśo vā*).⁶³

If this correspondence between the digression in the HB and PV 2.5-6 is accepted, and I cannot see any reason why this should not be done, it can be concluded safely that this second qualification *ajñātārthaprakāśa*, when understood as qualified by *aviññāte svalakṣaṇe*, is a necessary

⁶¹ Cf. HBT 27,28-28,5: *anumānavad iti vaidharmyadṛṣṭāntaḥ. yathā pratyakṣe-nārthakriyāsādhane pradeśākhye dharmīṇy adhigate 'py anadhigalasyāgner arthakriyāsādhanaśyāsāmānyākāreṇa parokṣasya svalakṣaṇākāreṇa pratipattum āśakyatvāt pratīpatih, naiva vidhivikalpena sāmānyākāreṇānadhigalam arthakriyāsādhanaṃ adhigamya, tasyālocanājñānenaivādhigamāt*; cf. further HBT 28,28-29,4: *sarvam eva tu sāmānyam na kāñcid arthakriyām upakalpayati. yat tu sāmānyam anumānavikalpagrāhyam, tat kāraṇavyāpakasambaddhalinganiścayadvārāyātam sambaddhasambandhād anadhigatārthakriyāsādhanaśyāṃ arthakriyām upakalpaya-ti tadviśayo vikalpaḥ pramāṇam.*

⁶² PV 2.6d (*svalakṣaṇavicārataḥ*) is explicated in HB 3,13-14: *arthakriyāyogyaviśayavāt tadarthīnām pravṛtteḥ, arthakriyāyogyalakṣaṇam hi vastu*

⁶³ This is also how Steinkellner understood it; cf. HB_{tr} 36: “Deshalb muß man auch [die Bestimmung] ‘Maßgebliche Erkenntnis ist, was eine nichterkannte Sache zum Objekt hat.’ [durch den Zusatz] ‘sofern ein Individuelles nicht erkannt ist’ differenzieren”. In his n. 36, Steinkellner refers to PV 2.5c.

condition for a conventional cognition's being a *pramāṇa*.⁶⁴ From this it follows that Prajñākaragupta's interpretation of *artha* in *ajñātārthaparakāśo vā*, as referring to absolute reality consisting in the cognition's non-duality, and of PV 2.1ab and 5c as presenting conventional and absolute definitions respectively,⁶⁵ is not in accordance with Dharmakīrti's own intention.⁶⁶

So far we have seen that the Bhagavat is proven to be a *pramāṇa* in terms of the second definition, while *āptavāda*, *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* are shown to be *pramāṇas* in terms of the first definition. Moreover, from among conventional cognitions only *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* refer to an unapprehended (*avijñāta*) particular (*svalakṣaṇa*). Thus it is clear that both *pramāṇas*, perception and inference, are considered by Dharmakīrti as being both *avisamvādin* and *ajñātārthaparakāśa*. This is also how Devendrabuddhi and Jinendrabuddhi understand it when they explicate that the Bhagavat is said to be a *pramāṇa* because he, like *pramāṇas* qua cognition, is reliable and because he makes known an unapprehended state of affairs.⁶⁷ From this it can be concluded that the two qualifications, although not conceptually identical, are equivalent in the sense that exactly the same ranges of objects are subsumable

⁶⁴ That *anadhigatārthaviśaya* qualifies a conventional cognition is also confirmed by another statement of Dharmakīrti's with regard to mental cognition (*manovijñāna*): 'di tshad ma śna ma'i yul 'dzin pa yañ ma yin te | tshad ma ni ma rtogs pa'i yul can yin pa 'ñid kyi phyir te | gzan du na ka can thal ba'i phyir ro || (PVin 1.60,17-19) "This does not grasp the object of the previous *pramāṇa* either because a *pramāṇa* relates to something unapprehended; if not, this would lead to absurd consequences".

⁶⁵ Cf. PVA₀ 79,15-19: *atha vārthasābdenātra paramārtha ucyate. ajñātārthaparakāśa iti paramārthaparakāśa ity arthah. paramārthasādvaitarūpatā. tatprakāśanam eva pramāṇam. tathā ca pratyapādi – svarūpasya svato gatir iti. uktaṃ ca – prāmāṇyam vyavahāreṇeti. tatra pāramāthikapramāṇalakṣaṇam elat, pūrvaṃ tu sāmvyavahārikasya.*

⁶⁶ Thus, of the three possibilities of combining PV 2.1ab and 5c as proposed in Oetke 1999a: 250, the second one can be excluded: "... Thus the two specifications might not be extensionally equivalent, and Dharmakīrti's definitional enterprise could be paraphrased by expressions of the form: '*Pramāṇa*, in so far as it relates to empirical reality, is equivalent to F, and *pramāṇa*, in so far as it relates (also) to absolute reality, is equivalent to G'".

⁶⁷ Cf. above, p. 182: *ji ltar ... mi slu ba'i phyir dan | mi ses pa'i don gsal bar byed pa'i phyir tshad ma 'ñid yin no || de ltar na bcom ldan 'das kyañ ... mi slu bar mdzad pa dan | ... don ... mi ses pa ston par mdzad pa'i phyir tshad ma 'ñid yin no ||*, and p. 175: *yathā hi pratyakṣādipramāṇam ... anadhigatasārthasya prakāśakam avisamvādakam ca, tathā bhagavān api ... tasyānadhigatasya prakāśako 'visamvādakaś ca.*

under them,⁶⁸ that they constitute both necessary and sufficient conditions for a cognition's being a *pramāṇa*,⁶⁹ and that it is sufficient to prove and formulate only one of them in a specific context.⁷⁰ That Dharmakīrti considers it sufficient to prove one of them can be seen from the passages referred to above (p. 185-187) where either the one or the other is applied.⁷¹ This also implies that the particle *vā* in PV 2.5c which connects the two defining characteristics can only be understood as carrying a disjunctive meaning ("or"), not a conjunctive meaning ("and"),⁷² because otherwise, if *pramāṇa* were defined as both X and Y, it would by no means be sufficient to prove only X or only Y for a specific claimed

⁶⁸ This corresponds to Oetke's first proposal (1999a: 250): "First, even if the specifications represented by *avisamvādi* and *ajñātārthaparakāśo* were equivalent in the sense that exactly the same ranges of objects are subsumable under them, they are not conceptually identical and their equivalence is not trivial or self-evident".

⁶⁹ In view of the material presented so far, the claim that Dharmakīrti does not provide a general definition in the initial verses of PV 2 as formulated in Franco 1997: 45f., in his second chapter "The Initial Verses: On the Absence of a Definition of Means of Knowledge in Dharmakīrti's Writings", has to be reconsidered.

⁷⁰ I do not agree with van Bijlert's interpretation (1989: 151) that PV 2.5c "complements the definition of a *pramāṇa* given in PV II 1ab" and "only refers to direct perception, for only through direct perception it is possible to directly cognize new objects, previously unknown particulars". If the qualification in 5c did not constitute a sufficient condition but only complemented the first one, the disjunction *vā* would be difficult to account for. Besides, on account of his correspondence to the specification in 5c, the Bhagavat is subsumed under the concept of *pramāṇa* which – as in the case of *āptavāda* – can only mean that he represents an instance of *anumāna*. Moreover, if *anumāna* did not relate to and indicate a previously unknown particular (cf. PV 3.81-82), even though indirectly, it would be excluded from the realm of *pramāṇa*, like the conceptual cognitions subsequent to the first moment of seeing.

⁷¹ The fact that in his *Pramāṇaviniścaya* Dharmakīrti distinguished valid from non-valid cognitions by their reliability only, without referring to *ajñātārthaparakāśa*, led Go rams pa to the conclusion that PV 2.1ab (*pramāṇam avisamvādi jñānam*) is a complete definition. This is in accordance with Sa skya Paṇḍita who considers the two defining characteristics as having the same intention (*dgonṣ pa gcig*). For references and also for the differing views of the dGe lugs paś. cf. Kimura 1997: 257-256 (also Kimura 1995: 176-175).

⁷² Based on such statements of Devendrabuddhi as the one treated above (cf. p. 182: *ji ltar ... mi slu ba'i phyir dan | mi ses pa'i don gsal bar byed pa'i phyir tshad ma 'ñid yin no || de ltar na bcom ldan 'das kyañ ... mi slu bar mdzad pa dan | ... don ... mi ses pa ston par mdzad pa'i phyir tshad ma 'ñid yin no ||*) Dunne (1999: 343f., n. 185) strongly argues against a disjunctive and for a conjunctive meaning of *vā*. All the passages he adduces for his argument, however, smoothly can be read assuming a disjunctive meaning of *vā*.

instance of *pramāṇa*. This is sufficient only under the condition that X and Y are different concepts that have the same impact with regard to a cognition's being a *pramāṇa*. That is to say, when a cognition is *pramāṇa* it not only is reliable but reveals an unknown object. However, to define *pramāṇa* as being X and Y would not be appropriate if Y is thus already implied in X and *vice versa*.

This leads us to the next question, namely as to why Dharmakīrti provides us with these two defining qualifications at all. Would it not suffice to give only one definition? An answer to this question can be found in Arcaṭa's commentary on the digression in the HB I have discussed above (p. 188-189), in his explanation of HB 3,8-9:

tasmād anadhigatārthaviṣayaṃ pramāṇam ity apy anadhigate svalakṣaṇa itī viśeṣaṇīyam.

Therefore, [the definition] "*pramāṇa* is [a cognition] which relates to an unapprehended object", too, is to be qualified [by the words] "with regard to an unapprehended particular".

Arcaṭa comments on this passage as follows (HBT 33,8-21):

tad evaṃ nīlaṃ dṛṣṭvā nīlam itī jñāne pratibhāsamānaṃ sāmānyam na kāñcid arthakriyāṃ upakalpayatīti prasādhyanarthakriyākāriviṣaya-syāpi vikalpasya pratyakṣaprṣṭhabhāvinaḥ prāmāṇyaprasaṅgād alivyāp-tir itī latrāpūrvārthavijñānam itī pramāṇalakṣaṇe mīmāṃsakair viśeṣa-ṇam upādeyam itī darśayann āha – tasmāt. yata evaṃ anarthakriyāsā-dhanaviṣayatayā darśanaprṣṭhabhāvino vikalpasya prāmāṇyam ayuklam, tasmād asmadabhimataṃ pramāṇam avisaṃvādi jñānam [PV 2.1ab] itī pramāṇalakṣaṇam vyudasya, anadhigatārthaviṣayaṃ pramāṇam, latrā-pūrvārthavijñānam pramāṇam ity api, etasminn apy āhopuruṣikayānyas-min pramāṇalakṣaṇe kriyamāṇe 'livyāptiparihārāya viśeṣaṇīyam viśeṣa-ṇam upādeyam. katham viśeṣaṇīyam anadhigate svalakṣaṇa itī. anena hi viśeṣaṇenānumānavikalpasya ca prāmāṇyam sidhyati, ālocanājñāna-prṣṭhabhāvinaś ca vikalpasya prāmāṇyam vyudasyata itī sarvaṃ suṣṭham.

Having thus demonstrated that a universal which appears after one has seen blue in a [conceptual] cognition [in the form] "[this is] blue" does not fulfill any purpose, [Dharmakīrti] says "therefore" in order to show that the Mīmāṃsakas must employ a qualification in [their] definition of *pramāṇa* [namely] "there [i.e. of them] [*pramāṇa*] is a cognition with regard to a new object", as (itī) [otherwise] there would be an over-extension [of the definition], because there obtains the [undesired] consequence that a conceptual cognition that is subsequent (*prṣṭhabhāvin*) to perception, although it has an object which does not fulfill any purpose, would be a *pramāṇa*. Because in this manner, inasmuch as it has an object which does not fulfill any purpose, it is not appropriate that a

conceptual cognition subsequent to the [first moment of] seeing is a *pramāṇa*, therefore [Dharmakīrti], putting aside (*vyudasya*) the definition of *pramāṇa* maintained by us, [i.e.] "*pramāṇa* is a reliable cognition", [said] that [the definition] "*pramāṇa* is [a cognition] that relates to an unapprehended object" [which corresponds to] "there [i.e. of them] *pramāṇa* is a cognition with regard to a new object", too, is to be qualified, [i.e.] also in this other definition of *pramāṇa* when being made due to great self-confidence, a qualification is to be employed in order to exclude this over-extension. Why is it to be qualified [by the words] "with regard to an unapprehended particular"? Because by this qualification on the one hand the validity of the conceptual cognition consisting in inference is established, on the other hand the validity of the conceptual cognition that is subsequent to the perceptive awareness is excluded. Thus, everything stands well.

The major points of Arcaṭa's position that can be derived from this explanation are:

- > The Buddhist definition of *pramāṇa* is *avisaṃvādi jñānam*.
- > The definition of the opponent addressed by Dharmakīrti with *anadhigatārthaviṣayaṃ pramāṇam* is that of the Mīmāṃsakas formulated as *apūrvārthavijñānam pramāṇam*.
- > This definition is correct when it is understood in a modified way.

If we now, basing ourselves on this information provided by Arcaṭa, combine the two pertinent passages

tasmād anadhigatārthaviṣayaṃ pramāṇam ity apy anadhigate svalakṣaṇa itī viśeṣaṇīyam. (HB 3,8-9)

and

*ajñātārthaprakāśo vā svarūpādhigateḥ param ||
prāptam sāmānyavijñānam avijñāte svalakṣaṇe |
yaj jñānam ity abhiprāyāt svalakṣaṇavicāralaḥ ||* (PV 2.5c-6)

I feel justified to suggest that already Dharmakīrti's second definition of *pramāṇa* as *ajñātārthaprakāśa* in PV 2.5c corresponds to that of the Mīmāṃsakas, namely *apūrvārthavijñānam pramāṇam*, in a modified form because Dharmakīrti explicitly understands his definition here as including the qualification (*avijñāte svalakṣaṇe ... abhiprāyāt*) which, according to his statement in the later HB, must be added in the definition of the opponent.⁷³ If the scenario thus derived from Dharmakīrti's

⁷³ The aim of the digression in the HB therefore is not, as suggested by Steinkellner (cf. above, n. 63), to show that Dharmakīrti's own definition of PV 2.5c should be specified, but to show that the definition of the Mīmāṃsakas is faulty

own statements and presupposed by Arcaṭa is correct, then the opponent whose definition is at stake here would be, as in many other cases in Dharmakīrti's work, Kumāṛila. The formulation of the definition which Arcaṭa equates with Dharmakīrti's in the HB is, as we can gather from a quote by Ratnakīrti, most probably taken from Kumāṛila's *Brhaṭṭikā* (BT):

lathā brhaṭṭikāpi

latrāpūrvārthavijñānaṃ niścitaṃ bādhavarjitaṃ /
aduṣṭakāraṇārabdhaṃ pramāṇaṃ lokasaṃmatam //

(R 113,10-12)⁷⁴

There [i.e. of them] [only] a decisive cognition with regard to a new object, that is free of sublation [and] that is brought about by faultless causes, is assumed in the world to be a *pramāṇa*.⁷⁵

Now, if PV 2.5-6 were related to this definition in the BT or in some other Mīmāṃsā work of the time, we would expect to find some echo of this in the commentaries on the pertinent passage in the PV. Devendrabuddhi and Śākyabuddhi are silent on this point. Prajñākaragupta quotes the BT-verse, however not in connection with PV 2.5-6, but in his introduction to PV 2.3 (cf. PVA₀ 53,4-5). The reason for this may be

and has to be modified. Dunne, too, does not relate this digression to the Mīmāṃsakas, for he introduces his translation of HB 2,13-3,16 with the remark: "... This leads Dharmakīrti to more general considerations concerning the characteristics of a *pramāṇa*" (1999: 472).

⁷⁴ Without mention of its source the verse is also quoted in PVA₀ 53,4f.; TBV 13,24f., 318,25f., 394,16f.; TR 126,21; cf. Mimaki 1976: 88f. and 284f.

⁷⁵ If Dharmakīrti in PV 2.5-6 is referring to this passage from the *Brhaṭṭikā* and if Frauwallner's assumption that the *Brhaṭṭikā* is a remake of the *Ślokavārttika* under the influence of Dharmakīrti's first work which Frauwallner calls *Hetuprakaraṇa is correct (1962: 332-335), then the *Brhaṭṭikā* must have been accomplished between the composition of the *Hetuprakaraṇa and PV 2. As Frauwallner (1954: 148) assumes that PV 2-4 have been written directly after the *Hetuprakaraṇa which then had been incorporated as chapter 1 into the *Pramāṇavārttika*, we are thus led to the very unlikely scenario that Dharmakīrti wrote his *Hetuprakaraṇa which he gave to Kumāṛila who rewrote his *Ślokavārttika* and presented the results to Dharmakīrti who then started to compose his second work PV 2-4. Thus, one of the above assumptions cannot be correct and has to be reconsidered. This question, however, is not our concern here. I would further like to point out that although the idea that *pramāṇa* should be related to a new object can be found in the *Ślokavārttika* in such statements as *sarvasyānupalabdhe 'rthe prāmāṇyaṃ smṛtir anyathā* (ŚV Autpattika 11ab; referred to in Franco 1997: 62, n. 38), it is not reflected in the definition of *pramāṇa* in the *Ślokavārttika* (*tasmād dr̥ḍhaṃ yad utpannam nāpi samvādam* [v.l.: *na viśamvādam*] *rcchati* / *jñānāntareṇa vijñānam lat pramāṇaṃ pratiyātām* // ŚV Codanā 80).

that he favors the interpretation of *ajñātārthaprakāśa* as representing a definition of *pramāṇa* in the absolute sense (*pāramārthikapramāṇalakṣaṇa*; cf. above, p. 190 with n. 65), an interpretation which is obviously not supported by the mention of *lokasaṃmata* in the BT. However, a possible relationship between the two definitions is corroborated by Ravigupta's commentary which quotes the definition of the BT and states that PV 2.6d is directed against it.⁷⁶

Before drawing conclusions I would like to consider whether Arcaṭa's remark that *avisaṃvādi jñānam* is the Buddhist definition of *pramāṇa* can be substantiated. If we look at the passages of Dharmakīrti's work referred to above (p. 185-187) it is obvious that only the Bhagavat is said to be a *pramāṇa* on account of his revealing the four noble truths, etc., which amounts to a correspondence to *ajñātārthaprakāśa*, while *āptavāda*, *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* are *pramāṇas* on account of their being reliable (*avisaṃvādin*). I have not yet been able to locate a passage in his works where the validity of perception or inference is derived in terms of *ajñātārthaprakāśa*. Moreover, Dignāga, too, considers *āptavāda* to be a *pramāṇa* in terms of its reliability (cf. above, n. 51). Therefore we do not have any reason to doubt Arcaṭa's attribution.

Thus, coming back to the question as to why Dharmakīrti provides us with a second alternative definition, the only possible answer I can see is that he adopted the modified definition of the BT in order to prove to the Mīmāṃsakas that, even according to their own definition when understood properly, not the Veda, but the Buddha is to be regarded as a *pramāṇa*.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ PVV^R 304b1f.: *de lta na mtshan ñid ni* | *de la sñon med don śes pa* || *ñes te gnod pa spaṅs pa daṅ* || *skyon med pa las skyes pa ni* || *tshad mar 'jig rten pa 'dod do* || *śes zer ba de 'dir bzlog par bya ba'i phyir* | *raṅ gi mtshan ñid dpyad phyir ro* || (PV 2.6d) *śes bya ba la* | *yod pa ñid daṅ* | *med pa ñid kyi gñal bya mthoṅ ba'i śes pa ni tshad mar brjod do* ||.

⁷⁷ Thus, Oetke's third proposed possibility (1999a: 250) does not differ greatly from my results: "Thirdly, one could suppose that both alternative specifications are equivalent in Dharmakīrti's eyes, but that nevertheless the fact of their equivalence depends on certain theoretical assumptions, in particular epistemological theorems. More specifically, the first definition could be considered as tailored to Dharmakīrti's own theoretical assumptions whereas the second alternative represents a more general explication".

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