

News From the Manuscript Department

**(Opening Speech, 4th International Dharmakīrti Conference,
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by
Ernst Steinkellner, Vienna

First of all I would like to thank all of you for participating in this conference and thereby demonstrating the continuing vigour and interest in the study of Dharmakīrti's works and thought. I feel quite safe to state that these Dharmakīrti conferences that have taken place in Japan and Austria since 1982 have indeed furthered our understanding of his philosophical and religious motives and achievements as well as those of his tradition, but also of his predecessors. Then, I would also like to thank my four colleagues who decided to convene this fourth Dharmakīrti meeting with the inestimable help of Mrs. Peck-Kubaczek. I am particularly grateful to all of them, first for the personal reason of being able this time to escape the additional stress connected with such an enterprise, and then for the transpersonal reason of being able to observe the promising continuation of these specific efforts in preserving and understanding the work and context of this most remarkable Indian philosopher. The presence of so many young scholars at this second meeting in Vienna I consider not without emotion to be a clear proof to the success of our previous efforts.

As a rule and in time-honoured tradition, scholars on the brink of retirement fascinate or bore their colleagues with summaries, either of the progress in their favourite field of study or with their own studies therein. I will do neither. The recent developments are too exciting to talk of anything but the future and the work which waits to be done. It is true, in my preface to the proceedings of the 2nd Dharmakīrti conference in 1989 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 his *Pramāṇaviniścaya* and *Hetubindu* existed, but for the next few years we still had to make do with the available Sanskrit editions, with fragments and Tibetan translations. Increasingly, however, in-depth studies of Dharmakīrti's world of thought, concepts and theories were coming forth, have indeed promoted our understanding of the master considerably, and have set earlier errors right. All this is well known to you and, as I said, I will not discuss even the more important and admirable new results that have been achieved.

I would rather use this occasion to tell you about the latest developments regarding the availability of original Sanskrit texts of the Buddhist epistemological tradition, the "*pramāṇa*-school", which from a long pipe dream has recently 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 tell what may become available in the near or farther future, and finally I will tell you about our prospects of making other works whose existence we are certain of available.

This information needs a short introduction and some remarks on caution. In the second part of my Gonda Lecture of November 2003, *A Tale of Leaves*,¹ I gave a survey of the various attempts towards gaining access to the manuscripts in the TAR that had taken place since the early 1980 and the latest stages that have moved towards realizing access since June 2002, together with my ideas on the direction this movement should be focused. This is also the narrative place to state that nothing would have come about had it not been for Prof. Lhagpa Phuntshogs, the Director-General of the China Tibetology Research Center in Beijing, who not only understands scholarly work and 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 and act accordingly. He is what I would like to call a *kṣaṇajña*. We owe him our sincere gratitude.

¹ 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 [can be downloaded from the website of the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia under "www.oeaw.ac.at/ias/Mat/steinkellner_leaves.pdf"].

On January 9th, 2004 a “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. Its clumsy title revealing some of the difficulties in its preparation, this agreement provides 1) access to the photocopies of the Sanskrit manuscripts held by the CTRC, 2) joint editorial work and research on selected texts from this collection, 3) joint publication of the results in Beijing by the publishing houses of CTRC and the Austrian Academy of Sciences within the frame of a new series “Sanskrit Texts From the Tibetan Autonomous Region” and at costs affordable to everyone, and finally 4) the possibility to incorporate into this agreement the work on such texts by scholars associated with our institute in Vienna. That all this is no mere fantasy is well demonstrated by the first volume which just came in by airmail in time for this conference.

We will have to calmly wait for the reactions of 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 that are aimed towards regaining not only important parts of the Buddhist past, but also and especially of the Tibetan cultural heritage.

Considering the specific social and political context of this enterprise, it is easy to see that all further developments will depend on how carefully this enterprise unfolds. The speed we must move forward has aptly been characterized as “step-by-step”. And I should add at this point: access has been granted so far 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. Meanwhile 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 being prepared for the future.

This much only to introduce my news. My following short survey will be limited, however, and only cover items that are really new, in the sense of texts that were not yet known in Sanskrit, or texts that were as yet completely unknown. Naturally a number of manuscripts of already known texts will also become available and eventually will have to be considered in order to improve the existing editions, a good example being Śāntarakṣita's *Vādayāyikā*.

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 *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭikā*: a complete and unique ms. in Norbulingka (now possibly in the Tibet Museum). The first two chapters and the fifth are being edited by Krasser, Lasic, and myself. Shoryu Katsura is working 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. Krasser is working on its edition.
- c. Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*: two complete manuscripts are available, another contains the complete first and second chapters, and two larger fragmentary mss are available for the third. The third chapter will be edited by Pascale Hugon, Toru Tomabechi, and Tom Tillemans, and I am editing the first and second myself.
- 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 CTRC's collection and which may become available if our cooperation is extended after its short first three years period:

- a. Dharmottara's *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭikā*, chapter 2: an incomplete ms of 72 ff. which begins with commentary on the prose after PVin 2.2cd.
- b. Dharmottara's *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭikā*, chapter 3: a complete ms of 120 ff.
- c. Yamāri's *Pramāṇavārttikālāṅkāranibandha*, chapter 1: complete ms for this chapter of 205 ff.

- d. A completely unknown commentary on Arcaṭa's *Hetubinduṭīkā* by a completely 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 an 6th generation ancestor of Jayasthiti Malla (reigning 1382-1395) is mentioned by this name.² This is a complete ms of 123ff.
- e. Finally, ca 10 unidentified, mostly fragmentary manuscripts of between 8 and 120 ff. contain texts that Luo Zhao assumed to belong to the *pramāṇa* tradition. Numerous stray leaves also are to be considered as possibly belonging to the same, for at least one has already been identified as the last folio of PVin's 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 which contains fifteen identified texts and one stray leaf. This bundle seems to consist of 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 CTRC, 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:

- a. Dignāga's *Nyāyamukha* (5 ff.)
- b. Śaṅkarasvāmin's *Nyāyapraveśaka*
- 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.)

² Cf. LUCIANO PETECH, *Medieval History of Nepal (c. 750-1480)*. Roma 1958, 151.

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.

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 convince the CTIRC 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. 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 possible.

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

This leads to my final remarks: The capacities of our small group in Vienna are limited. We are only eight at the moment: Chu Junjie, Vincent Eltschinger, Birgit Kellner, Helmut Krasser, Horst Lasic, Toru Tomabechi, Vinita Tseng, and myself, and will be nine next year when Pascale Hugon joins us. As said before, our agreement with CTIRC which will hopefully be continued after January 2007, allows us to incorporate associate researchers into this cooperation. We have already been joined by Shoryu Katsura who has established a group of his own in Kyoto to work on the *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā*, and by Prof. Nobuchiyo Odani, Kyoto, and Dr. Jowita Kramer, Göttingen, to work on two unique manuscripts of Sthiramati's Abhidharma commentaries, as well as by Dr. Li Xuezhong, CTIRC, who will edit Vasubandhu's *Pañcaskandhakaparakaraṇa*.

In short, to come to the point: we would welcome your interest in cooperation and in joining us in this editorial work by choosing one of these texts to work upon in accordance with your experience, expertise, interest, eagerness, and possibilities. Some texts are small and are suitable for a single person's work; for those that are large I would advise looking for partners and forming editorial teams. It is of utmost importance to produce results as quickly as possible, but this is not easy in addition to our average university lives.

If you wish to join and choose an item, contact me or Dr. Krasser. We will then try to get access to the item wished. That is all for the moment. If you have any questions, please be

free to ask, now, or later during this week, or in the future. We will be happy to share the responsibility involved in this great task with any serious colleague.