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A NEW ERA IN THE STUDY OF BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

Review of:

Ernst Steinkellner, Helmut Krasser and Horst Lasic, *Jinendrabuddhi's Viśālāmalavatī Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā Chapter I*. Part I: Critical Edition. lx + 209. Part II: Diplomatic Edition. xxxviii + 161. With a Manuscript Description by Anne MacDonald. Sanskrit Texts from the Tibetan Autonomous Region 1/I + 1/II. China Tibetology Publishing House/Austrian Academy of Sciences Press. Beijing - Vienna 2005 (39.00 Euro for both volumes).

The publication of the first chapter of Jinendrabuddhi's *Viśālāmalavatī Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā* marks a new era in Buddhist philosophical studies, comparable in its importance to the one that began with the sensational discoveries of Buddhist manuscripts by Rahula Sankrityayana and Giuseppe Tucci in the 1930s and 40s.

It has been known for some time that a large number of rare Sanskrit manuscripts of works belonging to the Buddhist epistemological tradition are preserved in Lhasa. Already in 1995 Steinkellner and Much mention the following works:¹

In the Norbulingka palace: *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā*, *Vādanyāyaṭīkā* of Śāntarakṣita and a certain *Pramāṇagrantha*; in the Potala: *Nyāyamukha*, *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, *Nyāyapraveśaka*, *Nyāyabindu*, *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (four manuscripts), *Hetubindu*, *Vādanyāya*, *Sambandhaparīkṣārikā*, *Santānāntarasiddhi*, *Hetubinduṭīkā* of Arcaṭa, *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā* of Dharmottara, *Pramāṇavārttikālāṅkāra*, *Sahopalambhaniyamasamarthana* (two manuscripts), *Vyāp-ticarcā*, *Apohasiddhi* (two manuscripts) and *Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi* (two manuscripts) of Jñānaśrīmitra, *Jātivāda* (two manuscripts), *Bhavikāraṇavāda*, *Dvijātidūṣaṇa*, *Śrutikarṭṣiddhi*, *Nairātmyasiddhi* of Jitāri, *Pramāṇavārttikālāṅkāraṭīkā* of Yamāri, *Nyāyahṛdayakārikā* of Manoratha, and several other works of unknown authors.

¹ Cf. E. Steinkellner and M.T. Much, *Texte der erkenntnistheoretischen Schule des Buddhismus*. Goettingen 1995: xix–xx.

When the Tibetan Research Center, now called the China Tibetology Research Center, was established in 1986, its first director, Professor Dorje Cedan, recognized the importance of Sanskrit palm-leaf manuscripts preserved in various monasteries in Lhasa, and arranged for a large number of them to be photographed and photocopied. Most of the above mentioned works and many others were photocopied. The sheer quantity of the manuscripts and the complexity of their contents – the texts range from *Vinaya*, *Mahāyānasūtras*, Tantric works and *Pramāna* texts to Indian grammar, poetics, etc. – proved to be a vast challenge for the China Tibetology Center and the directors of the Center wisely decided to expand their resources by way of an international cooperation. On January 9, 2004, a “General Agreement on Cooperative Studies on the Copies of Sanskrit texts and Joint Publication” was signed between The China Tibetology Research Center and the Austrian Academy of Sciences.² The research on the manuscripts is planned to be carried out by the Institute for Religious Studies of the China Tibetology Research Center and the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The authorities of The China Tibetology Center are to be warmly congratulated for their judicial choice. In view of the large number of manuscripts pertaining to the Buddhist epistemological tradition, the Austrian Institute, currently headed by Ernst Steinkellner and counting among its research fellows a considerable number of outstanding scholars specializing in this area of studies, is the ideal cooperation-partner for this joint venture.

In addition to the remaining chapters of the *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā*, some of the most important works mentioned above are currently being edited by members and associates of the Vienna Institute, including Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (by Ernst Steinkellner and Tom Tillemans), *Hetubindu* (by Helmut Krasser), and a collective manuscript of Śāṅkaranandana's works (by Vincent Eltschinger), and one eagerly awaits their publication in the series inaugurated by the publication of the present volumes. It is obvious that over the next 10 – 20 years, a number of seminal philosophical texts – some that until now were not even known to exist, others mere names, still others only available in Tibetan translations – will

² One can hardly say that this agreement was easy to bring about; it took a number of abortive attempts and almost 20 years of delicate negotiations before it could be reached. Cf. E. Steinkellner, *A Tale of Leaves. On Sanskrit Manuscripts in Tibet, their Past and their Future*. 2003 Gonda Lecture. Amsterdam 2004.

become accessible for the first time in the original Sanskrit and in masterfully edited critical editions; they will form a new philological foundation for the study of Indian and Buddhist philosophy.

The volumes under review here are the first fruit of the successful cooperation between the two institutions. Jinendrabuddhi's *Pramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā* is the only extant commentary on Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, the foundational work of the Buddhist epistemological tradition.³ It is of crucial importance not only as an elucidation of Dignāga's terse statements, but also as the most important source for the reconstruction of the *mūla* text, which does not seem to have survived in the original Sanskrit (in spite of its mention in the above list) and is only available in two late and rather mediocre Tibetan translations by Vasudhararakṣita and Kanakavarman.⁴ (The Chinese translation of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* seems also to be irretrievably lost.) Indeed, large portions of *Pramāṇasamuccaya* chapter 1 (on perception) have already been reconstructed – and the rest of the text re-translated into Sanskrit – by Ernst Steinkellner and can be downloaded, free of charge, from www.oeaw.ac.at/iasMat/dignaga_PS_1.pdf. When one compares Steinkellner's reconstructions with previous attempts, such as those by Hattori and Jambuvijaya,⁵ it becomes immediately clear what a giant leap forward has been achieved with the help of Jinendrabuddhi's text. The remaining chapters of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* are currently being reconstructed by Horst Lasic and Shoryu Katsura, and thus one hopes that a more complete and reliable text of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* will become available before long. Professors Jun Takashima, Motoi Ono and Masamichi Sakai have produced a KWIC (Key Word In Context) index of the critical edition which will soon be available online at www.aa.tufs.ac.jp/?tjun/.

Part I of the publication under review contains a very learned and informative introduction by Steinkellner and a critical edition of the text (by all three editors) in Devanāgarī script, which will facilitate its

³ Cf. E. Steinkellner and T. Much, *op. cit.*: 78–79.

⁴ The first chapter of both translations was edited by Hattori in *Dignāga, On Perception*. Cambridge 1968. A new edition of the translation preserved in the sKu-'bum edition, which differs considerably from the canonical translation, was recently published in H. Yaita, “Tibetan Text of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, sKu-'bum Edition.” *Journal of Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies* 27 (2004): 77–114.

⁵ Cf. Jambuvijaya, *The Vaiśeṣikasūtra of Kaṇāda with the Commentary of Candrānanda*. Baroda 1961, and *Dvādaśāraṇa Nayacakram of Ācārya Śrī Mallavādi Kṣamāśramaṇa with the Commentary Nyāyagamānūsārīṇi of Śrī Siṃhasūri Gaṇi Vādi Kṣamāśramaṇa*. Part II. Bhavanagar 1976.

use in India. The edition contains not only references to the corresponding passages in Dignāga's basic text, but also a large number of references to quotations and paraphrases from various works transmitted both in Sanskrit and Tibetan. The largest number of references, as could be expected, are to Dharmakīrti's works and those of his commentators, mostly Devendrabuddhi, but there are also many references to Brahminical literature. A bibliography and very useful indices (which unfortunately do not cover the introduction) of modern authors, of names of persons, schools and texts, and an index locorum conclude this exciting volume. Part II, in Roman transliteration, consists of a diplomatic edition of the *codex unicus*, preceded by a detailed manuscript description and palaeographical notes by Anne MacDonald (pp. vii–xxxiv). Both volumes have been meticulously edited, and the editors deserve the admiration and lasting gratitude of anyone interested in the Buddhist epistemological tradition.

Although one may speak of a *codex unicus*, the edition is based, in fact, on two manuscripts, named A and B by the editors. Manuscript A is in Newari script, while manuscript B, which is obviously of a later date, is written in Proto-Bengali script. Anne MacDonald dates both manuscripts to the late 12th or 13th century. Manuscript B begins where manuscript A breaks off, and was obviously added to manuscript A in order to create a complete version of the text. The end of manuscript B reproduces the colophon of one of its ancestors written by a scribe named Gahana in the 14th year of King Rāmapāla, i.e., 1089 or 1101 (cf. Part I, p. xxxvi and notes 47–48). At the end of his colophon, Gahana mentions that he salvaged the work that had fallen out of use by retrieving it from an old rat-damaged manuscript (...*ākhuḥsunṇapurāṇapustakagatām abhyuddharann āptavān*). It is clear from the colophon that Gahana identified the author of the *Ṭīkā* with Jinendrabuddhi the grammarian, the author of *Nyāsa*. After discussing the previous conjectures and arguments about the identity of the two authors, brought forth already by Hayes,⁶ Funayama⁷ and others, Steinkellner concludes (p. xlii) that

⁶ Cf. R. Hayes, "Jinendrabuddhi." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983): 709–717.

⁷ Cf. T. Funayama, "Kamalaśīla's Interpretation of 'Non-Erroneous' in the Definition of Direct Perception and Related Problems." In: S. Katsura (ed.), *Dharmakīrti's Thought and its Impact on Indian and Tibetan Philosophy. Proceedings of the Third International Dharmakīrti Conference. Hiroshima, November 4 – 6, 1977.* Wien 1999: 73–99.

the identity of the two authors is very likely and supports Funayama's hypothesis that Jinendrabuddhi was an elder contemporary of Śāntarakṣita, who may be assigned to ca. 710–770.

Jinendrabuddhi's style of explanation is thorough and comprehensive. He indicates the purpose of Dignāga's statements, offers etymologies for and synonyms to the words used, analyses compounds, and in less obvious cases quotes the Pāṇinian rules. Whenever possible, he draws heavily on Dharmakīrti's and Devendrabuddhi's statements, often repeating them verbatim. Further, Jinendrabuddhi quotes and paraphrases extensively from pre-Dharmakīrtian sources on the Brahminical philosophies criticized by Dignāga, and thus enriches our knowledge about Sāṃkhya, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā in the little-known period of the fourth and fifth centuries. Groundwork on the lost work of the Sāṃkhya master Vārṣaganya has already been accomplished by Steinkellner in his collection of new fragments from the *Ṣaṣṭitantra* quoted in Jinendrabuddhi's text.⁸ However, Steinkellner argues convincingly (p. xlvi) that Jinendrabuddhi did not have direct access to the works of Dignāga's Brahminical opponents, but rather used Dignāga's own polemical treatises, such as the *Nyāyaparīkṣā*, *Vaiśeṣikaparīkṣā* and *Sāṃkhyaparīkṣā*, for this purpose.

Philosophically speaking, the most important innovation that can be attributed to Jinendrabuddhi⁹ is the theory of partial validity, termed *aṃśasaṃvādavāda* by Durvekamiśra.¹⁰ As is well known, in his *Pramāṇaviniścaya* and subsequent works Dharmakīrti modified Dignāga's definition of perception (*pratyakṣam kalpanāpoḍham*) by adding the word *abhrāntam* to it in order to exclude errors that result from the senses and are free from conceptual construction from the realm of the definition. Jinendrabuddhi, however, rejected Dharmakīrti's modification and maintained that the word *abhrānta* should be dropped from the definition and that one should revert to Dignāga's original definition. This is the only case in this volume where he argues directly against Dharmakīrti. His reasons for considering the word *abhrānta* to be superfluous in the definition, however, are not faithful to Dignāga's thought. Dignāga saw no need to include a word such as *abhrānta* or *avyabhicārin* in his

⁸ Cf. E. Steinkellner, "The *Ṣaṣṭitantra* on Perception. A Collection of Fragments." *Asiatische Studien* 53 (1999): 667–677.

⁹ Cf. T. Funayama 1999 as in n. 7 above.

¹⁰ Cf. Paṇḍita Durvekamiśra's *Dharmottarapradīpa*. Ed. D Malvania. Patna 1971: 35.22f., 45.20f.

definition because, in all probability, he attributed all errors to the mind, and none to the senses.¹¹ For Jinendrabuddhi, on the other hand, the definition of perception should cover awarenesses that are partially false. For instance, he argued, the awareness of a yellow conch-shell by a person who suffers from jaundice is perception, even though the conch-shell is really white. Such an awareness is a means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), Jinendrabuddhi says, because it is trustworthy; it does not belie its promise (*avisamvādin*): A person who would act upon that awareness would obtain a conch-shell, albeit not of the perceived colour. According to Jinendrabuddhi, it is precisely for this reason that Dignāga did not use the word *abhrānta* in his definition. Thus, Dharmakīrti's understanding of the word *sataimira* in *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.8ab is mistaken because here the word *taimira* does not refer to an awareness of someone who is affected by the *timira* disorder. The word *timira* rather means 'ignorance' (*ajñāna*), just as in the statement 'and destroying the ignorance of the dull-minded.'¹² *taimira* is then explained as something occurring only in ignorance (*timira eva bhavaḥ*), and is identified with belying one's promise or untrustworthiness (*visamvāda*). Unfortunately, this potentially interesting theory was criticized by Dharmottara,¹³ Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, and that was the end of it.

I will not discuss here technical details such as variants readings and emendations, nor dwell on the complex philological and philosophical considerations behind them. This short review merely aims to draw attention to a major publication which has come about by way of a fruitful cooperation between the Chinese and the Austrian scholarly institutions mentioned above, and which – together with the subsequent volumes now under preparation – will truly revolutionize the study of Indian philosophy in general and of Buddhist philosophy in particular.

¹¹ Cf. M. Hattori [as in n. 4]: 97, n. 1.53; E. Franco, "Once Again on Dharmakīrti's Deviation from Dignāga on *Pratyakṣābhāsa*." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 14 (1986): 79–97.

¹² Cf. p. 64.8–9: *timiraśabdo 'yam ajñānavacano yathā timiraghnaṃ ca mandānām ityādau vākye*. For more details cf. the extensive discussion in J. Chu, "A Study of *Sataimira* in Dignāga's Definition of Pseudo-Perception (PS I.7cd-8ab)." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* XLVIII (2004): 113–150.

¹³ Cf. H. Krasser, *Dharmottaras kurze Untersuchung der Gültigkeit einer Erkenntnis. Laghuprāmānyaparīkṣā*. Vol. 2: 73f., and further references in n. 140 thereon.

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