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

Helmut Krasser

The question as to whether Buddhist logic and epistemology (pramāṇavāda) is of any relevance for the Buddhist striving for liberation still seems to be a controversial one. The controversy on this issue was initiated by the great Russian scholar Theodor Stcherbatsky in his famous Buddhist Logic, namely in the statements that pramāṇavāda "is a doctrine of truth and error. In the intention of its promoters the system had apparently no special connection with Buddhism as a religion, i.e., as the teaching of a path towards Salvation" (p. 2) and that according to Sa skya Paññita (1182–1251) "logic is an utterly profane science, containing nothing Buddhist at all, just as medicine and mathematics" (p. 46). The role of epistemology has subsequently been dealt with in several contributions including Ernst Steinkellner's "The Spiritual Place of the Epistemological Tradition in Buddhism" of 1982 (cf. n. 1) and "Tshad ma'i skyes bu" of 1983, Seiji Kimura's "The Position of Logic in Tibetan Buddhism" of 1986, Leonard van der Kuijp's "An Early Tibetan View of the Soteriology of Buddhist Epistemology" of 1987, David Jackson's "The Status of Pramāṇa Doctrine According to Sa skya Paññita and Other Tibetan Masters" of 1994 and David Seyfort Ruegg's "Ordre spirituel

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2 Ernst Steinkellner, Tshad ma'i skyes bu: Meaning and Historical Significance of the Term. In: Ernst Steinkellner and Helmut Tauscher (eds), Contributions on Tibetan and Buddhist Religion and Culture, Wien 1983: 275–284.
"et ordre temporel" of 1995, to mention only the most important. Roughly speaking, in these contributions, in the various positions attributed to the Buddhist scholars, the science of epistemology and logic (hetuvidyā) is considered to be a Buddhistic science, a non-Buddhistic science, or – more conscientiously – a profane secular science that is common to the Buddhist and other Indian non-Buddhist schools such as the Naiyāyikas.

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

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

1. naṃ rig pa = adhyātmavidyā “Science intérieure”
2. gtan tshigs rig pa = hetuvidyā “épistémologie et logique”,
3. sgra rig pa = sābdavidyā (vyākaraṇa) “grammaire”

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(4) gso ba’i rig pa = cikitsāvidyā “médecine”
(5) bzo rig pa = karmasthānavidyā (śilpa) “arts, métiers et techniques”.

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

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

... de dag la sogs pa rtog ge’i bstan bcos mnams bod mnams mnon pa’i sde snod du smra ba ni mi ’thad te l rtog ge gtan tshigs rig pa’i bstan bcos yin la l mnon pa ni naṅ rig pa’i bstan bcos yin pa’i phyir ro l l ... (Chos ’byun 17b(666)4–5)8

He corroborates this with a quotation from Vasubandhu’s Vyākhyāyukti9 and another from the Mahāyānasūtrālakāra (MSA 1.12) and by two quotes from Dignāga’s PS(V).

tshad ma kun las bus par yin l tshad ma dan gzal bya ne bar brjod pa niṅ kyi’u stegs pa’i ’dod pa sūn po med pa’i phyir l der žen pa mnams ldog pa’i don du ‘di brtams pa yin gyi l ’di tsam gyis de bzin gṣegs pa’i bstan pa la gzug pa’i don du ni ma yin te l de’i chos ni rtog ge’i yul ma yin pa’i phyir ro l ldog pa las ni ston pa’i’i chos niṅ thos nas ’bad pa med par rtogs par ’gyur te l bar du ma bskal ba’i phyir ro l10

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7 On the different positions of Tibetan scholars regarding the role of pramāṇa, cf., e.g., Jackson 1994 (cf. n. 5).
10 = PSV Peking 5702, 176b8–177a2 (translated by Kanakavarmar and Mar thun Dad pa’i šes rab). The translation prepared by Vasudhararākṣita and Ža ma ser rgyal reads (Derge 4204, 85b1–3): gzal bar bya ba dan l ’jal bar byed pa sgrub dka’ ba niṅ kyi’u mu stegs can ’di la sūn po med par bstan pa’i phyir daṅ l de la spro ba mnams bzhog par bya ba’i don du ’di brtams so l l ’di las de bzin gṣegs pa’i bstan pa la ’jug pa ma yin te l de’i chos rtog ge’i spyod yul ma yin pa’i phyir ro l l log na ni ston pa’i’i chos niṅ ne bar mūn nas dka’ sla med pa thob par ’gyur ro l l riṅ du bskal pa’i phyir ro l l
Both passages to which Bu ston refers are, as already mentioned, from the end of the PS(V). In his Chos 'byun, the translation of the first passage corresponds exactly to the translation of the PSV prepared by Kanakavarman and Mar thun Dad pa'i ses rab, while the text of the verse is exactly the same as that found in Vasudhararaksita and Ža ma Seň ge rgyal mtshan’s translation of the PS that is available only in the Derge edition (4203). The verse text that is incorporated into the translation of the PSV by the same translator team differs slightly.\(^{13}\)

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

\(^{11}\) = PS Derge 4203, 85b3–4, translated by Vasudhararaksita and Ža ma seň rgyal; variant reading for dpnyad par bya ba’i rigs in PSV (by the same translator team) Derge 4204 85b4: dpnyad par bya ba’i ’os. In the translation by Kanakavarman and Mar thun Dad pa’i ses rab the verse reads (Peking 5700, 12b8–13a2): thub pa’i dban po’i bstan pa las ni yun ri n īams gyur ba ll gañ rin byed ma yin ll de lta na yan de bzin gzegs pa’i rtog ge’i mtshan niid ni ll gal te rnam par ’gyur bar ’gro bar byed dam rtog par ’gyis ll

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

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

\(^{13}\) In a different reading this verse is also quoted by dPa’ bo gTsug lag phren ba in his mKhas pa’i dga’ ston and erroneously attributed to the Pramāṇaviniscaṭaya; cf. Jackson 1994: 100 n. 31 (cf. n. 5): “... rnam nes las rtog ge’i lam gyis chos niid la khrig na ll bde gzegs bstan las cher bsims īams pa yin ll ston pa bla na med pa’i bstan pa yan ll gal te gzan du gyur na dpny ad pa’i rig l” = mKhas pa’i dga’ ston 852.6–8.
and that it also displays incorrect translations. In the following table the major different readings are listed.\textsuperscript{14}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chos ’byun/PSV$^K$</th>
<th>PSV$^V$</th>
<th>PST$^T$,\textsuperscript{15}</th>
<th>PST ms B 258b4ff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ņe bar brjod pa ņid kyis</td>
<td>sgrub dka’ ba ņid kyis</td>
<td>byed dka’ ba ņid kyis</td>
<td>&quot;durvihitatvena&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’di isam gyis ma yin</td>
<td>’di las ma yin</td>
<td>’di isam gyis ma yin</td>
<td>na tv iyatā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ldog pa las ni</td>
<td>ldog na ni</td>
<td>log pa rnams ni</td>
<td>vyāvrūtaś tu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bar du ma bskal pa’i phyir</td>
<td>rin du bskal pa’i phyir</td>
<td>bar śīn tu rin ba’i phyir</td>
<td>vipraḵṛṣṭantaravāt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pratikas in PST: pramāṇaprameyadurvihitatveneti; na tv* iyatet; ... ity āha – taddharmasyātarkagocaratvā; vyāvrūtaś tv iti; vipraṅkṛṣṭantaravād iti (tat punah suvihita-durvihitatvena). * na tv em.: nanvānasyāms

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

\textsuperscript{14} The first row shows the text of Bu ston and the translation of the PSV by Kanakavaran and Mar thun Dad pa’i šes rab. The second row contains the readings of the translation prepared by Vasudharaśkita and Za ma Šen ge rgyal mtsshan. In the third and fourth row one finds the corresponding Tibetan and Sanskrit texts of Jinendrabuddhi’s commentary thereon.

\textsuperscript{15} Derge 4268, 312b1–6 = Peking 5766, 352b8–353a7.
stood upon hearing the teaching of the Buddha, i.e. dharmatā as an object of cognition is near (antara), whereas it cannot be understood upon hearing the assumptions of the heretics, because it is remote (viprakṛṣṭa). Dignāga’s formulation of the indirect purpose for the composition of his PS(V) can thus be understood roughly as follows:

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

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

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

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

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16 Jinendrabuddhi on this verse (PSṬ ms B259b2–6; PSṬ, Derge 4268, 313a5–313b3 = Peking 5766, 353b8–354a6): sudūranāṣṭas tv iti, umārgapraṇītratvāt. sudīraḥ naṣṭas te munīndraśāsanaḥ, ye tarkapatha dharmatām niścinvanti, tasyā atarkaviṣayatvāt. yady api eya evam tathāpi tathāgatadharmaṇaḥ bhavanti, parikṣajātām yady upayāti vikriyāṁ tathāgataparakipātpadārthavat. etad uktam bhavati – tarkaviṣayatvānabhyupaga-taṁ api tīrthikair āṁṣayāḥ padārthāḥ tarkena vicāryamāṇaḥ vikriyante, yathā śāstre tṛṣṭe vayavsthāpūtās tathā nāvatistiṁta ity arthaḥ. tathāgata-pravṛtti-tadṛśaḥ aviparītah svabhāvo natāṁśādārthām vicāryamāṇaḥ na vikriyate. yathā darśito vyavāhārīkenānaṁ tathātva-pratyabhijñata ity arthaṁ. etena yady api tarkaḥ paramārthaśayo na bhavati, tathāpi yathāvasthitam vastu sāmānyarūpaṇa sūcayanam tatvādhiśamānukālo bhavatīti sūcitam. Underlined words may have been taken from Dignāga’s verse.

17 For the text cf. below, n. 32.
plies that dharmatā is the object of perception, and such an interpretation is corroborated by Jinendrabuddhi. When commenting on the phrase taddharmasya tarkagocaratvāt he says that here tarka is a synecdoche for correct cognitions on a pragmatic level, i.e., the perception and inference of normal people, and that the dharma is an object only of the supra-mundane correct cognition.¹⁸ Moreover, the entities (padārtha) assumed by the heretics (tīrthika) to be the object of logic (tarka) such as the soul (ātman) still undergo a change when being analyzed (vicāryamāṇa) by tarka, because in the way they are taught by the heretics these objects do not exist. The nature of the entities made known by the Tathāgata such as selflessness (nairātya), however, does not undergo a change when being analyzed. He concludes that although the nature of entities is thus not the realm of tarka, an entity (vastu) that is made known as it is in its general form (sāmānyarūpena) is helpful to understand reality (tattvādhigamānukūla).

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

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

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

¹⁸ PSṬ ms B258b6-7; PSṬr Derge 312b1-2 = Peking 353a1-2: ity aha – taddharmasya tarkagocaratvāt. tarkagrahaṇam vyāvahārikapramāṇopalaśanārtham. lokottara-saiva hi pramānasya viśayo bhāgavato dharmāḥ pratyātmaṇedvāḥ, na vyāvahāri-kasyety arthāḥ.
¹⁹ Unfortunately the BoBhū does not say which texts should be regarded as belonging to hetuvidyā, etc.
(vyādhisāktis).\textsuperscript{20} The term bāhyaka is used in Buddhist texts to refer to the outsiders, the heretics, as opposed to the Buddhist insiders (ābhyanantaraka). This is confirmed, e.g., by Yaśomitra who, following Vasubandhu, divides normal human beings into insiders and outsiders, the insiders being included in the group of the Buddhists and the outsiders not.\textsuperscript{21} This characterization of epistemology as a science of the heretics may be regarded as a possible source of confusion not only for modern scholars, but also as a source for the assumption as found in the later Tibetan tradition that epistemology is a science shared by both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. While this passage from the BoBhū may have been a basis for a negative attitude towards epistemology, I, on the contrary, consider it to provide the clue for placing the study of epistemology into a wider context. It is also stated here that a Bodhisattva is engaged in, or strives for, all five sciences (... imāni pañcavidyāsthānāni, yāni bodhisattvāḥ paryeṣate). And he has to study and master all of them in order to obtain omniscience.\textsuperscript{22} The aim of his study of hetuvidyā is, among others, to defeat the teachings of the opponents.\textsuperscript{23} Thus, although it is an external science, it is being practiced by a Bodhisattva.


\textsuperscript{21} Yaśomitra’s AKV (ed. Shastri, Varanasi 1987) 150,15–16 (on AKBh [ed. Pradhan, Patna 1975] 42,28–43,1): prthujano vā dvividha iti. ābhyanantarakaḥ ca bāhyakaḥ ca. asa-mucchinakusalamūla ṣāḥyantarakaḥ, bauddhasaṅgrāhītvāt. samucchinakusalamūla tu bāhyakaḥ, tadviparyayāt. Also a passage from the BoBhū itself suggests that the term bāhyaka is used to mean heretics (BoBhū\textsc{w} 222,6–8 = BoBhū\textsc{d} 152,20–21; cf. n. 20): ito bāhyakesu tirthikesu pūrvaḥ ca tirthakṣaṇaṁ ca satteṣu artha-caryām bodhisattvāṁ duṣkaṁ.

\textsuperscript{22} BoBhū\textsc{w} 105,24–106,2 = BoBhū\textsc{d} 74,19–21 (cf. n. 20): sarvāni cautāni pañca vidyāsthānāni bodhisattvāḥ paryeṣate ’nuttarāyaḥ samyaksambodher mahājñānasambhārārapriśānāṁ. na hi sarvatraivaṁ aśīkṣāmaṇāḥ kramaṁ sarvajñānāṁ anāvāraṇaṁ pratibhāhate.

\textsuperscript{23} BoBhū\textsc{w} 105,13–16 = BoBhū\textsc{d} 74,11–13 (cf. n. 20): hetuvidyāṁ bodhisattvāḥ paryeṣate tasyāvā prabhūṣṭadurlaputatāyā yatābhūṣṭaṁ āparaṁ sātmānaṁ parāvaṁ āneyaṁ hārthāṁ cāpasannāṁ asmīṁ chāsane prasādāya prasannāṁ ca bhūyobbhāvāya.
Let us now, following this path, take a look at another locus classicus for the formulation of the notion of the five sciences, namely, Mahāyānasūtra-lanākāra (MSA) 11.60, ascribed to Maitreyā, with its commentary, the Bhāṣya (MSABh). It reads:25

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

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

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

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

25 vidyāsthāne pañcavidhe yogam akṛtvā sarvajñatvaṁ nātī kathaṇcit paramāryaḥ ity anyeṣaṁ nirgrahatvānugrahaṇaṁ svājñārtham vā tatra karoty eva sa yogam 11 (MSA 11.60) pañcavidhena vidyāsthānam – adhyātmavidyā hetuvidyā śabdavidyā cikitsāvidyā śilpakarmasthānavidyā ca. tad yadartham bodhisattvāna paryesitavam, tad darśayati. sarvajñatvāprāpyārtham abhedenā sarvam. bhedena punar hetuvidyām śabdavidyām ca paryesate nirgrahārtham aneyeṣaṁ tadanaḍhimuktaṁ. cikitsāvidyām śilpakarmasthānavidyām canyeṣaṁ anugrahartho tadarthikānām. adhyātmavidyām svayam ājñārtham. MSA(Bh) (ed. Lévi, Paris 1907) 70,14–18.
26 The idea that a Buddhist adept has to study grammar, logic, etc., or even the doctrines of the heretical schools is also found in the Abhidharma mahāvibhāṣā (大毘婆沙論), extant in Chinese translation only. I owe this information to Ikuhisa Takigawa, M.A., Tokai
Now the question remains as to whether Dignāga’s account regarding his aim for composing the $PS(V)$ relates to and fits into this frame. To begin with, I have, as expected, not been able to locate any explicit statements, neither in Dignāga’s writings nor in the texts of the scholars belonging to the Buddhist epistemological tradition, that clearly express such a relationship. However, if we look at Dignāga’s aim, namely, turning the opponents away from their incorrect views, and at the aim of the study of epistemology as formulated in the passages of the BoBhū and the MSAbh, namely defeating non-Buddhists, the two aims are somewhat in harmony. Also Dignāga’s other concept, namely that the dharma of the Tathāgata is not in the realm of logic, has its corresponding passage in the MSA(Bh). The same idea is formulated in MSA 1.12, where we read that logic is assumed to be a basis for the foolish, and thus, that it [i.e. Mahāyāna] is not in its realm (... bālaśrayo matas tarkas tasyāto viṣayā na tat). This idea that the dharma or the dharmakāya of the University, who also provided the translations: Taishō 27, 885b09-13: 受持諦誦誦恒伽必須摩阿毘達磨, 通達文義分別誦說。又能勝通世俗諸論, 所謂記論因論王論諸 議論論工巧論等。或復善外道諸論, 所謂勝論 數論 明論 順世論 與觀論等。 “[One should] keep and read Sūtras, Vinayas and Abhidhammas, and, versed in their meanings, discriminate and explain them. Moreover, one can learn secondary secular sciences, namely, grammar (記論 vyākaraṇa), logic (因論 hetuśāstra), politics (王論 rājaśāstra), medicine (醫學論 cikitsāśāstra), technology (工巧論 śilpakarmasthānāśāstra) and so on. Or one may study heretical doctrines, namely, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Veda, Lokāyata, Nirgrantha and so on.” Cf. also Taishō 27, 905a11-15: 開四無礙論加行云何？答有說，法無礙解以習數論為加行，義無礙解以習佛語為加行，詞無礙解以習聖論為加行，辯無礙解以習因論為加行。於此四處若未善巧，必不能生無礙解故。 “Question: What are the preparations (加行 prayoga) for the four unhindered abilities (無礙解 pratisamvid)? Someone answers: Learning calculation is the preparation for the unhindered ability of teaching (法無礙解 dharmapratisamvid), learning Buddha’s words for the unhindered ability of understanding (義無礙解 arthapratisamvid), learning śabdavidyā for the unhindered ability of speech (詞無礙解 niruktipratisamvid), and learning hetuvidyā for the unhindered ability of explanation (辯無礙解 pratiḥāna-pratisamvid), because unhindered abilities will never arise unless one is already skilled in these four preparations.” The parallel passage in the AKBh reads (419,20–420,2): āśaṃ ca kila pratisamvidam ganaḥ buddhavacanam sadabdavyā hetuvidyā ca pūr-vaprayogyo yathākramanam, nāpy etasya akṛtaśakalas tā upādāyam śaknito, buddhavac- canam eva tu sarvāśaṃ prayogam varṇayanti, yasya caikā śāsāvāyam cetasraḥ pratisamvidā bhavantī. 27 Cf. also MSAbh (ed. Lévi, Paris 1907) 3,10–11, where agocarāt of MSA 1.7 is explained: nāyam evam uññāto gambhāra ca dharmana sārākāntām gocarāh, śīrṣhikāśāstra- sū tu prakārānupalambhad iti; cf. also MSA 1.17 with Bhūṣya.
Buddha cannot be known through *tarka* or is *acintya* is not limited to the MSA, but is shared by probably all Buddhists.\(^{28}\)

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

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\(^{28}\) Cf., e.g., *Divyāvadāna* (ed. Vaidya, Mithila 1959) 432,17: *śramaṇo gautama evam āha – gambhīro me *dharma* gambhīrāvabhāso durārādō durāmudhō *tarko* *tarkāvacarāḥ*, sūkṣmo nipuṇapañcitaśīvīnavedanīyaḥ; Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasaṅgṛaha* (ed. Lamotte, Louvain 1973, Tome 1) 85,15–17 (on *dharma-kāya*): *bsam gyis mi khyab pa’i mtshan ṃīd ni de bzin ṃīd rnam par dag pa de so so raṇ gis rig par bya ba daṅ i ḫig ṇten na ḫpe med pa daṅ ṇtso ge pa’i sphyod yul ma sbyin pa’i phyic ro il* (transl. in Tome II, p. 274); Sthiramati’s *Trīṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya* on Vasubandhu’s *Trīṃśikā* k. 30 (Hartmut Buescher, *The Trīṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya of Sthiramati* ... Vol. I. Ph. D. Dissertation, Univ. of Copenhagen, 2002) *53,5* (on *anāsra*vo *dhātuḥ* being a characteristic of *dharma-kāya*): *acintyasya *tarkāgocaravāya* pratvānvedayavād dyāṃtābhāvāca ca. Finally I would like to mention Bhāviveka’s *Madhyamakahādyayākārikā* (MHK) 3.285cd (speaking of *dharma-kāya*): *suvikalpavikalpana jñānenāpy eṣa durśāḥ|. Here, Bhāviveka is clearly in accordance with Dignāga, for *suvikalpajñāna* stands for inference (*anumāṇa*) and *nirvikalpajñāna* for perception (*pratyakṣa*), as is explained in the *Tarkajñāla*, cf. Christian Lindtner, Linking up Bhartrhari and the Baudhās. *Asiatische Studien* 47/1 (1993) [195–213]: 210 n. 49. Lindtner’s assumption (p. 211) that Bhāviveka’s “terminology is a reaction against the epistemology of Yogācāra sākāravāda” seems to be an over-interpretation. For other passages in the MHK expressing the idea that the *dharma* is not an object of *tarka*, cf. Lindtner 1993: 208–210.

\(^{29}\) This passage is translated in Dan Arnold, Candrakīrti on Dignāga on *svalaksana*. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 26 (2003) [139–174]: 156–157; in this paper Candrakīrti’s critique of Dignāga’s notion of *svalaksana* is discussed. A critical edition of the first chapter of the Prasannapadā together with a translation is under preparation by Anne McDonald, Vienna. References to earlier treatments of this passage can be found there.
aiha syāt – eśa eva pramāṇaprameyāvyavahāro laukikō 'smābhīḥ āstreneṇuvarṇīta
iti, tadacevaśyāmasya tarhī phalaṁ vācyam. kutārkikāhī sa nāśito viparīṭalakṣaṇābhi
dhāhānena tasyāsmābhīḥ samyaglakṣaṇam uktam iti cet, etad apy avuktam ...
If [the following objection] were to be [brought forth by Dignāga]: Exactly this prac
tice in regard to means of valid cognition and the object cognized (pramāṇaprameyāvya
vahāra) belonging to the worldly level has been explicated by us via the treatise (śāstra), [we
would reply:] Then the advantage (phala) to its explication should be
stated. [Opponent:] This [worldly practice in regard to means of valid cognition and
the object cognized] has been ruined by poor logicians (kutārikā) through [their]
statement of an erroneous characteristic (lakṣaṇa). We have asserted the correct characteristic
of it. [Reply:] This too is incorrect ...

That Dignāga is Candrakīrti’s opponent in this passage is also corroborated by the
unknown author of the *Lakṣaṇaṭikā (LT), recently edited by Yoshiyasu Yonezawa, a text
consisting of notes on the Prasannapadā, the Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya and the Catuḥśatakaṭikā. The relevant passages read: ...
asmābhīḥ (Pras 58,14) dignāgadibhiḥ ... kutārikākār (Pras 58,15) iti
dignāgah ... (LT 142,15–17).30 That is to say, “by us” means “by Dignāga,
etc.” and in the statement beginning with the words “by poor logicians”,
“Dignāga” is speaking.31

Dignāga’s direct purpose for the composition of the PS(V) is, as we have
seen above, “to establish valid cognition” (pramāṇasiddhi) which is explici
ted as meaning “to refute the pramāṇas of the opponents” (parapramāṇa-
pratiseñha) and “to reveal the good qualities of one’s own pramāṇas” (sva-
pramāṇagunodbhāvana). However, he said nothing about the object of cog
nitions (prameya), as mentioned by Candrakīrti. Candrakīrti’s mentioning of
prameya is nevertheless justified. For Dignāga, after having said that the de
tailed refutation of the proofs (śādhana), refutations (dīśaṇa) and their
pseudo-forms (ābhāsa) – these are referred to by ’di or de dag gi (cf. n. 32) –
can be found in his Nyāya-, Vaiśeṣika- and Saṅkhyaaparikṣā, states that the
prameya (gزال bya) of all Tirthikas can be known only through tarka. But as
their tarka does not stand a critical analysis, as he has shown in the PS(V), the
object too is refuted, although not explicitly.32 The kutārikās referred to by

30 Yoshiyasu Yonezawa, *Lakṣaṇaṭikā – Sanskrit notes on the Prasannapadā (1). Journal of
lated in Arnold 2003: 157 n. 43 (cf. n. 29).
31 It is thus clear that kutārikā may indeed not refer to Dignāga, as was proposed in David
32 PSV Peking 5702. 176b6–8:’di rgyas par dyag pa dan gzal bya dyag pa ni rigs pa can
dan bye brag pa dan grants can brtag pa rnam las śes par bya’o || ma stegs can thams
cad kyi gzal bya ni rtag ges rtags pa yin te || de dag gi’s brtags pa’i don rnam ni mnon
sum gyi yul ma yin pa’i phyir ro || rtag ge de yan de ltar brtag bzod pa ma yin no || de’i
phyir gzal bya dyag pa ma byas kyang byas pa ndi yin no || = PSV Derge 4204, 85a7–
Candrakīrti are thus all Tūrthikas who were refuted by Dignāga in his PSV, i.e., the adherents of the schools of the Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya and Mīmāṃsā. Thus we can say that Candrakīrti presents the position of Dignāga correctly, summarizing only the main points.

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

85b1: de dag gis (read: gi) so sor dgag pa daṅ gzal bya so sor dgag ba rgyas par ni bye brag pa’i rig pa daṅ l rkan mig pa’i rig pa brtag pa dag las šes par bya’o ־l mu stegs can thams cad kyi gzal bya go bar byed pa ni rtog ge tsam ste l des yongs su brtags pa’i dhus po rnam ns mnon sum gyi yal ma yin pa’i phyir ro l de yan de bzin du brtags na dpiva ni bzhod de l gal te ’di gnang mng gi s na don la gzal bar bya ba bkag ce na l. Jinen-drabuddhi’s comment ms B258b1–4 (Derge 312a3–6 = Peking 352b1–5): na kevalo nyāyāparikṣāśīdu prameyapratiśedhah kṛtaḥ, ihāpy arthaḥ, kṛta iti darśanāḥ. sarve-sañ ca ceyādi. kasmāt punah paratyakṣagamyaṁ na bhaveśīt dhū — tattvaparyāpāa-pārthānām ityādi. pradhiṇapunaḥsadikālasamavāyādīnam apratyakṣa jayaḥ śiṣṇendraviṣṇuvasthāpanāt tarkāgamāyatam. na vimardakṣamaṇa iti na viścāram artha iti arthaḥ, yathā ca vicāram na sāhatā, tathā pratipadi tam. ati iti. yasmād evam na parikṣāśīsam sar-kaḥ, tasmāt tadgambayasyo prameyasyāpy arthatā pratisedho ’ra kṛta eva veditavya iti. kṛtaḥ, ihaḥ arthataḥ, kṛta iti darśanāḥ eva. kṛta ity ihāpy arthatāh l kṛta iti darśanāḥ* ms (di yan don gyis byas pa’o žes ston pa gsuns pa T) mnoḥ sum yin pa’i nīd kyis T tadgambayasya eva: tattgambayāpyi ms (api n.e. T)


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

35 Buddhists are addressed by such statements as to be found at the end of the chapter (PV 283–286; cf. Tilman Vetter, Der Buddha und seine Lehre in Dharmakīrtis Pramāṇa-vārttika. Wien 1990: 172f.) According to the commentators Prajñākaragupta and
matters in order to establish the Buddha having become a pramāṇa, this is not in contradiction to Dignāga’s intention, but certainly an extension thereof. How Dharmakīrti himself conceives of the role of pramāṇa is clearly formulated at the beginning of his Pramāṇaviniścaya (PVin) and at the end of its first chapter. In the opening section he states that he will compose the PVin in order to explain what correct cognition is to those who do not know, as this cognition is necessary for attaining that which is beneficial and for abstaining from that which is detrimental. While it is clear already from this statement that Dharmakīrti writes for those who do not understand correct cognition, in his closing section he is very explicit that he follows the same line as Dignāga. As the Sanskrit text – a critical edition of the first chapters is under preparation by Ernst Steinkellner – allows for a new interpretation of this final passage and as it also shows Dharmakīrti’s cautious approach as to whether external objects exist, I will present more than is necessary to illustrate Dharmakīrti’s view of the role of pramāṇa. In the last kārikā he states that even if one assumes the existence of an object external to cognition, this cognition has two forms, i.e., that of the object and that of cognition. Moreover, he says that the existence of this external object could be established on account of the cognition’s absence when this object is absent. On this he comments as follows:

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

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


PVin 1.59 (the Sanskrit text is according to Steinkellner’s critical edition under preparation): bāhye ‘py arthe tato bheda bhāsamāṇārthatadvadvoḥ | dvairīpyaṁ tad dhiyo bāhyasiddhiḥ syād vyatirekataḥ ||
external object, unless someone [i.e. a Vijnana- or Vijnaptivadin]\(^{39}\) were to assert that the absence of the effect is caused by the absence of a particular material cause [i.e. a particular imprint (vasanā)]. [Question:] Inasmuch as he claims the object of every cognition to be lacking (vyatirecayam), how can he assert that a disturbed cognition (upapalava) and [its] opposite are a means of correct cognition and [its] opposite, since there is then no difference [between them]?\(^{40}\) [Answer:] When seeing an action that is untrustworthy, due to the deficiency of the imprints of a disturbed cognition not being connected [to the desired result], even to he who is not awakened, [he who is asked in this manner] could declare the one [cognition] to be apramāṇa. The other [cognition], which, as long as saṃsāra endures, has an uninterrupted connection [with the result] because its imprints are firm, [could be declared] here [in the world], dependant on its reliability in actions, to be pramāṇa. And it is this nature of the conventional means of valid cognition that has been explained. [Not only with regard to the ultimate means of valid cognition, but] also with regard to this [conventional cognition], others who are confused lead the world astray. Those, however, who cultivate the very wisdom born of reflection realize the ultimate pramāṇa, which due to its being devoid of error is immaculate [and] without return. Indeed, this too has been explained to some extent.

satsu samarthheyya anyesu hetuṣu jñānakāryānispattī kāramāṇaṃtaravaiśakyam sūciyati. sa bāhyo 'ṛthāḥ syāt, yādy atra kaścid upādānaviśeṣāhāvākṛtam kāryavatikram na brīyāt. so 'pi kathāṃ saṃvajjayānānāṃ viśayām vyatirecayam upapalavetarayoḥ pramāṇetaratāḥ brīyāt, viśeṣāhāvāt. upapalavāṇānviśaṃhādosād apravabhadhasyāpy anāśvākṣam vyavahāram upaśyayam ekam apramāṇam ācakṣaṇa, apramāṇaṃ saṃsāram avīśaṃsbhandhānam drīḍhavāsato vā vyavahāravaiśaṃhādāparpramāṇam. sāṃvyavahāriksaṃ caitat pramāṇasya rūpaṃ uktaṃ, atraśi pare muḍhā viśaṃvādaṃ yanti lokam iti. cintāmayi eva tu praṇānaṃ anuśīlayanto vibhramavivekanirmalam anapāyi pāramārthikapramāṇam abhimukhiśvanta. tad api leśataḥ sūciyati etevi.

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

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\(^{39}\) Cf. Jñānaśrībhādra’s explanation (PrYinṭ Derge 4228, 201b6–7; Peking 5728, 239b4–5): lādog pas phyi rol sgrub pa ’di gsal gi thse dmam par ūs par smra ba dag nāh gi ñe bar len pa ’i chos po ’i byes brag gis byas pas ’bras bu ston po ūs pa lādog pa yin par mi smra na phyi rol ’grub par ’gyur ro ||

\(^{40}\) pramāṇa and itara of the compound pramāṇetaratāṃ are to be construed with itara and upapalave of upapalavetarayoḥ respectively.
praịṇā.⁴¹ Thus, valid conventional cognition is a tool for correctly analyzing, distinguishing and determining what one has heard or learned before. This is the procedure that Dharmakīrtī has shown in the passage to which he probably refers, among others, with the words tad api leṣataḥ sūcitam eveti, i.e., PVin 1.28 with his explanation and the verses quoted from the Pramāṇavārttika (PVin 1.29–31).⁴²

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


⁴² bhāvanābalatāḥ spaṣṭam bhayaḍāv iha bhāṣate l
yaj jñānam avisaṃvādi tatt parayakaṃ akalpakaṃ l PVin 1.28

⁴³ yoginām api śrutaṃayena jñānenārthaḥ grhītā yukticintāmayena vyavasthāpya bhāva-
yaṭāṃ tannispattau yat spaṣṭāvabhāsī bhayaḍāv iha, tadd avikaṃ pakam avitaḥaviṣayaṃ pramaṇaṃ parayakaṃ, āryasaṃdarsanaṇaṃ yatha nirītām asmābhūt pramaṇāvārtti-
ike ..., translated in Vetter 1966: 73f. (cf. n. 36). The Sanskrit text is according to Stein-
kellner’s critical edition under preparation.

⁴⁴ PVinT Derge 4299, 167b2–3 = Peking 5727, 195b4–5: gal te thā sīṇād la rab tu sbyor
ba’i śes pa ’di la yan ḫig ḫen rmons rmonṣ byed pa de’i tshe de dag don dam pa’i tshul la ’jug pa’i skabs ga
la yod l donors dam pa’i tshul la ’jug par bya ba kho na’i phyir kun tu thā sīṇād pa’i śes pa
bṣad pa yin no l

⁴⁴ PVinT Derge 167b6–168a1 = Peking 196a2–5: pāramārthikam api pramaṇam na nir-
hetukam. na ca bhāvanāvyayatirikto hetuḥ, bhāvanā ca sāṃvyavahārikapramāṇaparic-
chinnāvāsīyāt, tatas ca tat sāṃvyavahārikam pramaṇam samyag nirītāṃ pāra-
mārthikajñānāhetuḥ sampadyate. tatas tadviṣayayo yaināḥ paramārthavisayā eva, mithyā-
jjñānena hi viṣayikāt bhāvā nityādibhir ākāraur bhāvyamānaḥ na pāramārthikajñānani-
Up to now we have seen that these philosophers of the Buddhist epistemological tradition had a clear idea about what they were doing and for whom they were writing. The question as to whether they saw their activity in the framework of the five *vidyāsthānas* as outlined above cannot be answered with certainty. I have been unable to gain clarity concerning this understanding from the texts of the Indian tradition that follow Dignāga. Support for such an interpretation can be gained, however, from no less than Śa skya Pāṇḍita, who puts the study of *pramāṇa* into the framework of the five branches of sciences. In the opening section of his “Entrance gate for the wise” (*mKhas pa rnams kyi ‘jug pa’i sgo*) – “the wise” being no one other than those who are omniscient – he tells us that the topics to be studied by the wise are the five *vidyāsthānas*, and to support this, quotes the very passage from the MSA that we have linked to Dignāga, i.e., *MSA 11.60.*

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

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

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25 *mKhas* ‘jug (Sa skya Pāṇḍita Kun dga’ rgyal mthun, mKhas pa rnams ‘jug pa’i sgo žes bya ba bstan bcos. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khan 1981) 5.10–11: *mKhas pa žes bya ba gan yin ze na | šes bya thams cad phyin ci ma log par šes pa yin la | ...* A similar idea is found in *MSA 11.2* where the wise man, here dhūmān, is said to obtain awareness of all modes of reality (dhūmān sarvākāraññatātāṃ eñi), the wise man being paraphrased as Bodhisattva in the commentary thereon (bodhīsattvāḥ sarvajñatātāṃ prāpnoti); cf. Griffiths 1990: 100 (cf. n. 24).

26 *mKhas* ‘jug 5.13–6.1: *mKhas pa des bslab bar bya ba’i yul ni rig pa’i gnas lha ste | ... de’an mdo sde rgyan las | rig pa’i gnas lha dag la mKhas par ma byas par || ’phags mehog gi khyen thams cad mkyen ŋid mi ’gyur te | gzhan dag tshar gcad rjes su gzun bar bya phyir dan || ran ŋid kun šes bya phyir de la de brtson byed || *MSA 11.60* ces gsuṅs pa ltar ro ||
as long as confused opponents lead the world astray. Wisdom born of reflection (cintāmayaḥ prajñā) operates with conventional valid cognitions, and hence they are indirectly a cause for the realization of the ultimate pramāṇa.

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