

Introduction

The text translated here is Dharmakīrti's *Hetubindu*. The translation has been undertaken on the basis of the only known surviving Sanskrit manuscript, which is found in the Potala. An edition of this 13th-century palm-leaf manuscript was published in 2016 (STTA 19) based on a photocopy of the manuscript held in the library of the China Tibetology Research Center (CTRC, box 112/1). The original manuscript kept at the Potala is still inaccessible to researchers.¹

Besides a one-folio fragment of another manuscript from the Gilgit finds (7th to 8th century CE; cf. the photo in STTA 19: xxvix), the existence of a second 13th-century manuscript is attested through its use by the scribe or corrector of the Potala manuscript. In addition to the Potala manuscript, complete except for the broken edge of the penultimate folio, two large fragments of two further and different manuscripts have recently become available. These are contained in a collective bundle of various manuscripts of works by Dharmakīrti at Drepung.² Like the Potala manuscript, their scripts are early Proto-Bengālī or Vihārī; they probably also date to the 13th century CE.

The Tibetan translation of the *Hetubindu* (~ 800 CE), the extant commentaries in Sanskrit and Tibetan, and the various testimonia allowed a critical edition under the conditions then at hand. They did not allow, however, the Potala manuscript to be positioned within a stemma. Moreover, it has not yet been possible to make use of the extensive Sanskrit commentary on the *Hetubinduṭīkā* of Nepalese origin,

¹ It can be assumed that this manuscript is also among the facsimiles of manuscripts held in the Potala in the multi-volume edition “published” 2011 with, to my knowledge, only five exemplars in the PRC. First corrections of my edition were published in Steinkellner 2016. For further corrections, cf. Steinkellner 2022a.

² On these manuscripts, cf. my description in Steinkellner 2022. These Drepung manuscripts I meanwhile put online at Academia.edu (“A Collection of Manuscript Fragments of Works by Dharmakīrti with a Postscript by Ernst Steinkellner”). The folios of the *Hetubindu* manuscripts can be easily found with the help of the overview appended in Steinkellner 2022a.

the *Hetubinduṭīkāṭātparyavyākhyā* by Nayabhadra, a photocopy of which is also held at the CTRC (box 179).³ Most surprisingly, moreover, Francesco Sferra was recently able to identify a number of folios among the Hodgson manuscripts in the Royal Asiatic Society which contain text for several lacunae in the edition of the *Hetubinduṭīkā* (Sferra 2022).

The 2016 edition of the *Hetubindu* supersedes all earlier retranslations and reconstructions⁴ even though it cannot claim any certainty regarding the text's relationship to a possible autograph or early product under the eyes of Dharmakīrti himself. A number of smaller and greater differences between the two long Drepung fragments as well as the materials assembled prior to the 2016 edition and the Potala manuscript can now be examined. Yet it is beyond doubt that the text established in this edition has the character and style that mark Dharmakīrti's other works: on the one hand, the full use of the possibilities within Sanskrit syntax for emphasis, ellipsis and implication, offering perfect clarity within the context, and, on the other, a predilection, occasionally even playful, for vividly discussing contesting ideas and arguments. In light of Dharmakīrti's other works in prose, this impresses me as indicative of his personal style and manner.

The structure and style of the *Hetubindu* are also remarkable in other respects. Its core consists in succinct statements of Dharmakīrti's logic to which four digressions are added: on ascertainments (*niścaya*) (§ a.); on the pervasion between the properties of existence (*sattva*) and of being a ceasing nature (*naśvarasvabhāvatva*) which includes related ideas regarding causality (§ b.); on the nature of non-perception (*anupalabdhi*) (§ c.); and a critique of Īśvarasena's theorem that a reason has six

³ A first transliteration of folios 1–45 of this manuscript was made by Anne MacDonald in April 2004; I undertook a second reading in February to March 2021. Using the Corona quarantine, I made a first transliteration of folios 46–122 from June 2020 to June 2021 and corrected it from July to November 2021. These transliterations of altogether 476 pages are kept in the library of the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Editing of this manuscript will eventually be undertaken at this institute.

⁴ By Sukhlalji Sanghavi and Muni Jinavijayaji (1949), by E. Steinkellner (1967, I), and by Pradeep P. Gokhale (1997). A Summary based on Gokhale's edition and translation was provided in Potter 2017.

characteristics (*ṣallakṣaṇo hetu*) (§ d.). Except for the first, already dealt with at the beginning of the *Pramāṇavārttika*(*sva*)*vṛtti*, the digressions are devoted to topics not yet systematically examined in Dharmakīrti's works, or in case of the last, not addressed at all. Typical is the presentation of non-perception as logical reason. In *Pramāṇavārttika* 1 with the *Vṛtti* and in *Pramāṇaviniścaya* 2 and 3, he offers broad and comprehensive analyses of non-cognition in general and in particular, as non-perception.⁵ Here, in the *Hetubindu*, he defines what kind of non-perception can serve as logical reason for proving absence and the corresponding epistemic, linguistic and physical behaviour in a single sentence (HB 26,1f) and, in conclusion, summarizes its three basic kinds (HB 33,12–34,4). But he devotes several pages (HB 26,3–33,11) exclusively to his view of the nature of non-perception as such.⁶ Also, quite unexpectedly, when refuting the last of Īśvarasena's characteristics, "being known" (*jñātatva*), Dharmakīrti uses this occasion to explain and defend his introduction of the term "ascertained" (*niścitagrahaṇa*) into Dignāga's definition of a logical reason (§ d.311).⁷

The presentations of Dharmakīrti's logic are elaborated on in explanations of various lengths. Some of these explanations are induced by the presence of opposing theorems. When their upholders are recognizable, I introduce the presentation of their points by "opponent," even when the opponent is defending a position that can definitely be attributed to a person, such as Īśvarasena in § d. More frequent are questions that serve for no other purpose than introducing an explanation as well as

⁵ Cf. Kellner 2001: 495–497; Kellner 2003: 121–124.

⁶ While this view has been touched upon earlier in various places, starting with *asatām cāsattvam anupalabdhiḥ* (PVSV 4, 11f), *tatrāpy ekopalabdhyā 'nupalabdhir evocyate* (PVSV 5, 15f), and particularly in PV 4.270–273 = PVin 3.45–47b (in PVin 3. 58,9–60,9) (cf. Kellner 2003: 142–145 and Watanabe 2002), in the *Hetubindu* Dharmakīrti focusses strictly on non-perception's nature. And it is here, in HB § c.1 – c.2, that Dharmakīrti elaborately explains in what way the short statement of PVSV 5,15f is to be understood.

⁷ As to the fourth characteristic *abādhitaviśayatva* for whose adoption by Īśvarasena I could not find in 1967 a motivation in Dignāga's works, I am most grateful to Muroya Yasutaka for referring me (letter of Feb. 14, 2021) to a possible Dignāgean background in PS 3.27 (cf. Katsura 2009: 159f) and PS 6.15.

further explanations embedded within such a section. These I introduce by “objection” or simply by “question.”⁸ Such objections or questions might be understood as reflecting real questions by students during oral instruction, and, thus, could have been grounded in recollections of actual teaching sessions. Since they introduce shorter or lengthier elaborations of the preceding statements, I prefer to take them as part of a specific style of “question and answers” used for further explaining or developing a topic, perhaps, but not necessarily, on the basis of live discussions. Yet as such, they may also be considered as nothing less than Dharmakīrti’s emulation of the Sūtras’ hallowed prototype, in which the Buddha leads his hearers to a final point through a sequence of ever new questions and answers.⁹

On the analysis

Only recently, when I began to try my hand at an English translation of the *Hetubindu*’s text in its 2016 edition, I found with much shame that the references to the text in the “Analytic Survey” of pp. 99–110 are all wrong. These references were composed based on a pre-publication version of the text and I simply forgot to change and adapt them to the version finally published. I can only express my profound apologies to the eventual users of this edition and ask them to substitute the references published by the ones already offered in Steinkellner 2016. The present analysis differs also in some places of minor importance.

On the manner of this translation

The main purpose of the present translation of Dharmakīrti’s Sanskrit text is to convey the meaning intended by the author as adequately as possible in a modern language. This conveyance of the meaning will then also serve to corroborate the editorial choices made for the edition of

⁸ All these indications are in parenthesis and notwithstanding a final question-mark.

⁹ Cf. for example Manné 1992.

2016 with the improvements published online later¹⁰ with the present translation.

Departing from my earlier approach to translation, I have refrained from adding words and phrases in brackets and only use parentheses for Sanskrit terms or cross-references when considered useful.¹¹

Referents are supplied that are not expressly stated in the Sanskrit, as for example, the antecedents of pronouns and substantival adjectives, unstated agents of actions, some names, and ellipses in the elaborations of a topic. Long Sanskrit sentences are separated, and extensive compounds that represent justifications are split up into individual English sentences. In general, contextually implied references are provided in order to ease the text's intelligibility. Occasional footnotes indicate the reason(s) for my choice when multiple or different interpretations are found in the commentarial tradition or in modern studies. Sanskrit *iti* is represented by quotation marks or, sometimes, before lists and the like by a colon.¹² Through all these devices, I hope, the translation will not only be useful to scholars of Indian logic, but also readable for interested contemporary philosophers and scholars of the history of logic and intellectual history in general, in particular those who do not read Sanskrit.¹³

As a consequence, it is not possible to gain from the present translation direct insights into the lexical shape of the translated Sanskrit, as was possible in my previous German and English translations, which functioned chiefly in support of the text-critical constitution or

¹⁰ Steinkellner 2022a.

¹¹ For well-considered observations on the possibilities of producing readable translations of philosophical Sanskrit texts into English or other modern languages, cf. McCrea and Patil 2010: 34–40; and the recent publication of Eltschinger *et al.* 2018: 5–6.

From June 3 to 5, 2018, one could follow a lively discussion on “Brackets in modern sanskrit translations” at “indology@list.indology.info.” My own reasons for using parentheses and brackets are indicated in the appendix of Steinkellner 2004: 235.

¹² With this facilitation of the translation, I put up with the reader's possible irritation that objections and the like are not always followed by sentences within quotation marks; this only signifies the absence of *iti* or *iti cet*.

¹³ The precision of Dharmakīrti's definitions and arguments will hopefully be also seen through the present translation of his words.

interpretation of the respective edition.

In case of doubt, it is still possible to refer to the notes on my earlier German translation, even if the newly available Sanskrit text differs slightly from the earlier reconstruction.¹⁴

The detailed structural outline of the contents below will, hopefully, provide quick access to the *Hetubindu*'s wealth of definitions, justifications, and defences. For a search of all Sanskrit words in the *Hetubindu*, the recently published *KWIC-index to Dharmakīrti's texts* is available.¹⁵ This index already includes the last corrections and additions to the 2016 edition in Steinkellner 2022a.

¹⁴ To John Taber, who kindly took a first look at this translation and rightly asked *cui bono?* I owe the feeling that this attempt to excuse myself might be considered slighting of readers who know no German. This is not intended. I simply cannot provide the contextual and systematic links again that explain the ongoing movements in this text from one point to the next. If the translation, then, may be seen insufficient for understanding, what good would it be for, indeed, and for whom?

But even without these explanations, the present translation may still be useful, primarily for any student who wants to read this Sanskrit text in order to introduce him- or herself into Dharmakīrti's logical thought.

Moreover, I also think it may be of help in re-introducing this treasure from a most creative Indian past to members of the modern open-minded Indian intelligentsia who do not know Sanskrit. The astonishingly minor success in India of selling the low-priced volumes of the series "Sanskrit Texts from the Tibetan Autonomous Region," produced in Beijing-Vienna, clearly indicates that Indian learned circles, as far as they are interested in Sanskrit at all beyond mere cultural gestures, still seem to shy away from such treasures that were successfully exiled from their motherland many centuries ago. I was not alone in hoping for better acceptance in India of these ancient Buddhist texts now available again. When starting to publish the above series, I opted for printing the texts in Devanāgarī instead of Latin script following the counsel of the late Muni Jambūvijaya, who as a leading Sanskrit scholar shared like thoughts. And now I think that an English translation might find more interested readers also in India than the Devanāgarī text, which was chosen mainly on behalf of pundits who are more or less uninterested in it. After all, the *Hetubindu* is the most ancient Indian text on pure logic that has come down to us in its entirety. But while modern India prides itself in the world for its early achievements in mathematics and linguistics, logic is rarely given comparable prominence because at the height of its development the leading masters were Buddhist.

¹⁵ Ono, Takashima, Oda 2020.

Earlier translations

After my own annotated German translation,¹⁶ Claus Oetke published German translations, with analyses and explanations, of the digression on causality (mainly from § b.122) and other selected passages.¹⁷ English translations based on materials available before the 2016 edition are a complete translation by Pradeep P. Gokhale¹⁸ on the basis of Arcaṭa's HBT, including a newly constituted text that displays numerous differences from my own of 1967, as well as on the *Hetubindu*'s text constituted by Sukhlalji Sanghavi and the Muni Jinavijayaji in Appendix 7 of their edition of the *Hetubinduṭīkā* (1949). Partial translations are offered by John D. Dunne, of HB § 3.2 and § a.1-a.2 (HB 2,11–4,3), in his 2004 volume on Dharmakīrti,¹⁹ and, in a broadly explanatory and paraphrasing manner, by Nagin J. Shah²⁰ of the sections HB § b.122 to § (b.) on the basis of the text by Sanghavi and Jinavijayaji.

In conclusion a few words may be expedient on the remarkable difference in the introduction to the first and only strophe in the *Hetubindu* from the introduction to the same strophe at the beginning of Dharmakīrti's first work which has come down to us as the *Pramāṇavārttika*'s chapter on inference for oneself (*svārthānumāna*), together with its elaborative *Vṛtti*, often referred to as the *Svavṛtti*.²¹

In both introductions Dharmakīrti says that inference will be explained, and right away starts with offering a definition of the logical reason (*hetu*). This is not a surprise because the reason is seen as the basis of inference.²² But inference itself is also a basis, yet of what it is a basis

¹⁶ Steinkellner 1967, II.

¹⁷ Oetke 1993.

¹⁸ Gokhale 1997.

¹⁹ Dunne 2004: 412–415.

²⁰ Shah 1967: 45–59.

²¹ Cf. Frauwallner 1954: 144f, 148 (= 1982: 679f, 683); Ono 1997; Kellner 2004; Steinkellner 2013 I: xv (n.5); Steinkellner 2020: 756f.

²² *anumānāśrayo liṅgam avinābhāvalakṣaṇam* (PV 2.285ab).

is stated differently. In PVSV 1,8f Dharmakīrti says: “The discernment of what is useful/beneficial (*artha*) and what is harmful/ unbeneficial (*anartha*) is based on inference. Therefore he says, because there are conflicting opinions about this inference, in order to determine it: ...”²³ In contrast, in HB 1,2f he says: “Because the apprehension of objects beyond the range of perception (*parokṣārtha*) is based on inference, the following is undertaken in brief exposition to explain it.”²⁴

Prominent in the first formulation are the words *artha* and *anartha*, whose content can only be discerned by inference. A more precise interpretation of these terms in this context is not easy,²⁵ but decisive is the fact that their determination is due to inference. Inference is the means for validly apprehending within the realm of concepts and, therefore, for discerning what is conceived as useful and harmful. Inference, thus, is tasked with serving individual and social life. Yet what is useful and harmful cannot derive its scope of meaning only within the practical realm of life. Therefore, the hopes and expectations that form a larger horizon, soterial or not, within which any rational life can receive orientation, also determine what is considered as useful and what as harmful. Even if the definition of the logical reason is specifically said to have the purpose of excluding erroneous conceptions of inference, this purpose remains embedded in the determinations of the useful and the harmful in their widest sense. If that sense is Buddhist, inference that conforms to Dharmakīrti’s criteria becomes a decisive weapon in the fight against all the brahmanical and pseudo-brahmanical ideologies that in Dharmakīrti’s

²³ *arthānarthavivecanasyānumānāśrayatvāt tadvipratipattes tadvyavasthāpanāya āha: ...* (PVSV 1,8f).

In the beginning of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, inference is included in right awareness (*samyagjñāna*) which of necessity presupposes all attaining and avoiding of what is beneficial (*hita*) and what is unbeneficial (*ahita*) (*hitāhitaprapṛṭiparihārayor niyamena samyagjñānapūrvakatvād ...*, PVin 1. 1,6), and, therefore, is in accord with the earlier formulation.

²⁴ *parokṣārthapratipatter anumānāśrayatvāt saṃkṣepatas tadvyutpādanārtham idam ārabhyate: ...* (HB 1,2f).

²⁵ Above all, there are the commentaries by Śākyabuddhi and Karṇakagomin who paraphrase the terms by *hita* and *ahita* and provide extensive explanations. Cf. Steinkellner 1981: 286; Katsura 1996; Kellner 2004: 153–157.

times were becoming ever more powerful and promoting diverging conceptions of *artha* and *anartha*.²⁶ Thus, this introduction clearly relates his theory of inference and the logical reason to the Buddhist soterial concern.²⁷

This concern may still be implied but is not equally expressed in the *Hetubindu*'s introduction. Here, inference is only said to be the basis of the apprehension of what is beyond the domain of perception (*parokṣa*). The limitation to what is *parokṣa*, imperceptible or only conceptually given, excludes objects that are radically inaccessible (*atyantaparokṣa*), that is, are neither perceptible nor provable by reasons, but only known through various scriptures (*āgama*).²⁸ Such objects are not at stake here.

Further, although there are many discussions of deviant opinions on details of inference and reason in the *Hetubindu*, correcting such conflicting opinions is not mentioned as the motive for its composition. Except for the inserted digressions and a supplement, the *Hetubindu* consists of nothing but an explanation of the reason's definition as presented in the strophe at the beginning.²⁹ Thus, the *Hetubindu* can be considered, as far as I see it, the first work in India's philosophical traditions conceived by its author as a treatise on pure, if not secularist, logic. Consequently, Dharmakīrti devoted his last work, the *Vādanyāya* ("A Code for Debates")

²⁶ Cf. Steinkellner 2013 II: 5–14 (n.4); Eltschinger 2014: 1–34 (Introduction: On Critical Examination and Apologetics) and 311–313. That Dharmakīrti's main opponents are the Mīmāṃsakas mainly represented by Kumāriḷa Bhaṭṭa seems meanwhile to be more confirmed (cf. Taber 2021: 206–221).

²⁷ Cf. Ratié 2017: §§ 4–11.

²⁸ Cf. Tillemans 1986: 33–35 (= 1999b: 29–30); Tillemans 1999a.

²⁹ Now, already Dignāga, the founder of the Buddhist logico-epistemological tradition, had composed works with the term *hetu* beginning their names: the *Hetucakraḷamaru*, the lost *Hetumukha* and, possibly, a *Hetvābhāsamukha*. But although Dignāga, in the *Hetucakraḷamaru*, surveys the formal varieties in the relationship between reason and consequent for the first time, it is still limited to this influential step in the history of Indian logic; the *Hetumukha* seems mainly to have clarified that inference is bound to the realm of conceptuality. Dignāga, then, applied his discovery to revising Buddhist dialectics in the *Nyāyamukha*, and in his last work, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, provided a summarizing survey of a first comprehensive epistemological system with inference dealt with in chapters two and three of six. Cf. Frauwallner 1959: 85–106 (= 1982: 761–782).

to promoting debate (*vāda*) solely as an examination of truth (*tattvacintā*) and rejected the traditional attitude of considering debate as an agonistic means for victory over opponents by whatever means.

Acknowledgments

My gratitude is due to John Taber for providing a draft translation of HB § a., as well as to Claus Oetke, who began reading an earlier version of the translation presented here and offered valuable remarks up to HB § b.113 before his untimely demise in December 2019 brought this most useful help to an end. Bertram Liyanage, the first reader of the whole translation, I thank for useful suggestions. I am grateful to Dania Huber for a first layout, to Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek for improving the English and, together with Alexandra Wedekind, for preparing the final layout, and to Patrick McAllister and Birgit Kellner for improving this introduction. My heartfelt thanks are due, moreover, to one of the two anonymous evaluators for his most helpful notes on the choice of English terms and phrases, as well as for idiomatically better presentations of some Sanskrit particles. Rarely in my life could I enjoy the pleasure of digesting remarks such as the precise ones of this reader of the present translation.