

# Introduction



## The Place of PVSV 164,24–176,16 in the Work of Dharmakīrti

**1.1.** Dharmakīrti is likely to have belonged to one of the first generations of those early medieval Buddhist intellectuals who attempted to answer an ever-increasing Brahmanical hostility towards Buddhism and other non- or anti-Vedic movements. The first among these thinkers was most certainly Dignāga (480–540, or slightly earlier), the author of several (now lost) tracts against the Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika, and the Sāṅkhya.<sup>1</sup> Together with the Mīmāṃsā and the author of the *Vādavidhi*, these schools were again the target of Dignāga’s last and major work, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (PS). During more than a century Dignāga’s version of the *hetuvidyā* remained the standard system studied at Nālandā. Dignāga, however, seems to have limited the scope of his answer to issues of “logic” and “epistemology.” Dharmakīrti was the one who provided Dignāga’s thought with an ontology, a psychology, and a religious doctrine, thus building a genuinely Buddhist system able both to respond to Brahmanical criticism and to defend Buddhism as a salvational path.<sup>2</sup> As a representative of the most uncompromising Brahmanical orthopraxy,<sup>3</sup> the Mīmāṃsā and its doctrine of the authorlessness (*apauruṣeyatva*) of the Veda had recently become Buddhism’s mortal enemy. It is thus hardly surprising that Dharmakīrti’s main opponent was Mīmāṃsā, quite probably in the person of its most brilliant classical exponent, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (Dharmakīrti’s senior contemporary).

---

<sup>1</sup> On Dignāga, see Frauwallner 1959 and Hattori 1968.

<sup>2</sup> General introductions to Dharmakīrti’s thought include Steinkellner 1971, Stcherbatsky 1984, Katsura 1984, Dreyfus 1997, Dunne 2004, Eltschinger 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Rather than “orthodoxy.” See McCrea 2009: 55.

**1.2.** We know next to nothing of Dharmakīrti's life, though he is likely to have been born to a Brahmin family and have spent at least part of his career in Nālandā. His dates are still a matter of controversy. According to Frauwallner's chronology, Dharmakīrti's dates must be around 600–660 CE. However, on the basis of very different arguments, these dates have been challenged by Lindtner, Kimura, and Krasser, who are inclined to locate Dharmakīrti in the sixth century CE.<sup>4</sup> Whatever the case may be, the first non-philosophical testimony regarding Dharmakīrti is Yijing's remark to the effect that Wuxing had studied his system in Telāḍhaka (near Nālandā) under the guidance of Jñānacandra. Dharmakīrti's works are traditionally held to amount to seven.<sup>5</sup> Among them, the *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV) is the first and by far the most important in that it shows us Dharmakīrti in his philosophical workshop. His later works mainly consisting of didactic digests or treatises dealing with specific topics, the PV is the fountainhead of Dharmakīrti's thought, the work to which any serious account of his system should primarily refer. As demonstrated by Frauwallner, the PV is a composite work composed of at least two layers.<sup>6</sup> Its first chapter (PV 1 = *Svārthānumānapariccheda*), dedicated to the three valid logical reasons and accompanied by a prose auto-commentary (PVSV), is likely to have originally formed an independent treatise (entitled *Hetuprakaraṇa* according to Frauwallner's – groundless – hypothesis). The last three chapters, entirely in verse, present themselves as a very loose and independent commentary on Dignāga's PS (PV 2 = *Pramāṇasiddhipariccheda* on the *maṅgalaśloka* of the PS, PV 3 = *Pratyakṣapariccheda* on PS 1, and PV 4 = *Parārthānumānapariccheda* on PS 3). The present study consists in an annotated translation of the concluding section of PV 1, viz., PV 1.312–340 and PVSV 164,24–176,16.

**1.3.** Although PV 1/PVSV deals with the three kinds of logical reasons (*hetu*, viz., essential property, effect, and non-perception),

---

<sup>4</sup> See Krasser 2012. For a summary of research before Krasser, see Eltschinger 2007a: 25–29. I accept Krasser's new chronology.

<sup>5</sup> On Dharmakīrti's works, see Frauwallner 1954 and Steinkellner/Much 1995: 23–44.

<sup>6</sup> See Frauwallner 1954: 142–151.

hence with private inferential judgment (*svārthānumāna*), this topic is overshadowed by two lengthy, seventy page-long digressions.<sup>7</sup> The first one (= PV 1.40–185/PVSV 24,16–93,5) focuses on the so-called *apoha* theory (Dharmakīrti’s innovative account of the two truths), which presents Dharmakīrti’s views on the genesis of concepts, language, error, and practice.<sup>8</sup> The second one deals with Dharmakīrti’s understanding of scriptural authority (*āgamaprāmānya*) and mainly consists in his polemics against the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of the authorlessness of the Veda (PV 1.213–338/PVSV 107,14–176,4).<sup>9</sup> One should be wary of considering Dharmakīrti’s polemics against authorlessness as a mere appendix to PV 1. To put it briefly, this doctrine claims that human judgment (conditioned by moral laxity) is the source of error and that human beings lack any cognitive access to the supersensible realm. As a consequence, only an authorless scripture – the Veda – can provide unbiased access to the invisible Dharma. And this claim is nothing but an attack on Buddhism, Jainism, Sāṅkhya, and other emerging religious movements (like Pāñcarātra and Pāśupata) deriving the authority of their scriptures from the trustworthiness (*āptatva*) of their human or divine authors.<sup>10</sup> But the Veda is far from being the only point at stake. For according to Mīmāṃsā, all that can be proven to be rooted in this authorless Veda (*vedamūla*) is authoritative, including those

---

<sup>7</sup> Gnoli’s edition of the PVSV has 176 pages. The two excursus amounting to about 140 pages, the systematic treatment of the three kinds of valid reasons does not exceed 35 pages.

<sup>8</sup> The most thorough account of Dharmakīrti’s *apoha* theory remains Frauwallner’s (see Frauwallner 1932 and 1933). See also Dunne 2004: 113–144.

<sup>9</sup> For a more precise analysis of this digression, see below, pp. 10–12. This digression on scriptural authority occurs towards the end of Dharmakīrti’s treatment of non-perception as a logical reason and returns to it at the very end of our passage, viz., PV 1.339/PVSV 176,6–12. The question raised by Dharmakīrti’s opponent can be summarized as follows: Since there is no object left out of consideration by scripture (*āgama*), if scripture keeps silent on a certain object, this object can be considered as non-existent. Non-perception can thus be defined as the silence (*nivṛtti*) of the three means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). As Dharmakīrti makes clear at PV 1.339, the aim of this lengthy excursus is to prove that the silence of scripture doesn’t allow one to ascertain the non-existence of a certain entity.

<sup>10</sup> See McCrea 2009.

*Smṛtis* and *Purāṇas* that are replete with an ostensible hostility towards Buddhism and other “heretical” (*pāṣaṇḍa*) denominations. In other words, authorlessness is nothing but an attempt to “naturalize” Vedic ritual and Brahmanocentric society, to legitimize the hostility of these “secondary” scriptures to movements challenging the Brahmanical order. This is something Dharmakīrti was most certainly aware of, something which, if accepted, represented a serious danger for Buddhism.

**1.4.** After a comparatively short theoretical elaboration on scriptural authority and its criteria (PVSV 107,14–112,6),<sup>11</sup> Dharmakīrti starts criticizing the doctrine of authorlessness by attacking the Mīmāṃsakas’ and the Grammarians’ account of the relation between word and meaning (*śabdārthasambandha*; PVSV 113,8–120,7), which these schools take to be permanent (*nitya*, but in the sense of *sāṃvyaṅyavahārikanitya*, whereas Dharmakīrti’s portrayal of their position interprets it as *kūṭasthanitya*). Dharmakīrti then turns to the Mīmāṃsaka arguments in favour of the eternity (*anāditā*, viz., beginninglessness; PVSV 120,8–126,15) of the Veda and Vedic memorization-cum-recitation (*adhyayana*). His discussion returns to linguistic issues as he sets about criticizing the two main classical accounts of authorlessness or, at least, permanent speech: first, the Grammarians’ *sphoṭa* (according to which meaningful linguistic units are “transphonetic” but revealed by ephemeral articulated sounds; PVSV 126,24–134,25), and second, the Mīmāṃsā’s (more precisely, Kumāriḷa’s) *varṇavāda* (according to which language consists of phonemes that are one and permanent [*kūṭasthanitya*], appear in permanent [*sāṃvyaṅyavahārikanitya*] series and are revealed

---

<sup>11</sup> Properly speaking, Dharmakīrti’s own doctrine is expounded in PVSV 107,14–109,22 (see Yaita 1987; Dunne 2004: 361–366; Eltschinger 2007a: 217–227; see also below, pp. 83–118). It is followed by a short critique of (mainly) Naiyāyika views on *āptavāda* (PVSV 109,23–110,15), by a rebuttal of the Mīmāṃsaka contention that a morally immaculate *āpta* is impossible (PVSV 110,15–111,11), and by Dharmakīrti’s own views on nescience as personalistic belief (PVSV 111,11–112,5). On this, see Yaita 1988, Dunne 2004: 366–373, Eltschinger 2007a: 227–239. Note that the present outline of PVSV 107,14–176,16 is but a very cursory one leaving several aspects out of consideration.

by ephemeral articulated sounds; PVSV 134,26–141,14).<sup>12</sup> In all this, Dharmakīrti takes his adversaries' claims about permanence for granted and uses them in unceasing *reductiones ad absurdum*. There follows, then, a passage commonly known as the *vināśītvānumāna* ("inference of perishability"<sup>13</sup>) where Dharmakīrti improves on Vasubandhu's arguments to the effect that all entities perish as soon as they are produced (PVSV 141,14–150,5). After a few elaborations of a more logical character, Dharmakīrti returns to a topic already<sup>14</sup> dealt with while criticizing the beginninglessness of the Veda, viz., that of mantras and their efficacy (PVSV 155,18–164,24).<sup>15</sup> His argument, here, is as follows: If, as the Mīmāṃsā claims, the Vedic mantras were authorless, then the Brahmins couldn't arbitrarily restrict their efficacy to the twice-born, excluding women and *sūdras*. In other words, authorless mantras ought to yield their results for every possible user independently of his or her social background.<sup>16</sup> Either the Vedic mantras are authorless (and then their efficacy is the same for everyone), or they are of human origin, hence arbitrarily controllable by their "author" (*kartr*) as to their fruitfulness and the conditions (social, ritual, behavioural, psychological, devotional) that have to be fulfilled for them to bring about their results (and then the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine falls to the ground). Then comes the concluding part of the chapter (PVSV 164,24–176,16), the one translated in the present book.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> On all this, see Eltschinger 2007a: 239–385.

<sup>13</sup> See Sakai 2011.

<sup>14</sup> See PVSV 123,14–124,28 and Eltschinger 2007a: 299–307. On Dharmakīrti's position on mantras, see Eltschinger 2001 and 2008. See also Wakahara 1988.

<sup>15</sup> Mantras proper do not exhaust PVSV 155,18–164,24. This passage also contains Dharmakīrti's own doctrine concerning phonetic series (PVSV 157,29–162,11). See Ōmae 1999 and Eltschinger 2007a: 204–212.

<sup>16</sup> This conclusion is only legitimate once it has been proven that "castes" are nothing but arbitrary conventions, which Dharmakīrti duly demonstrates in PVSV 157,10–18. See Eltschinger 2000: 103–115.

<sup>17</sup> Wakahara 1990, which provides a Japanese translation of the same passage, and Eltschinger 2001: 94–101, are the only secondary literature I am aware of. But since Dharmakīrti quotes PV 1.317–329 in his PVin 2 (70,6–72,8) and briefly deals there (PVin 2 72,10–11) with the *ekadeśāvisamvāda* argument (see PV 1.330–335 and PVSV 173,14–175,10, below, pp. 61–73; see also below, pp. 18–

21), Steinkellner 1979: 73–78 is to be considered as an important contribution to our passage. Note, however, that PVin 2.39, 43 and 44 do not belong to the PV (see below, p. 53 n. 89 and p. 55 n. 97). Dharmottara’s general introduction to PVin 2.35–50 provides us with a fascinating interpretation of the meaning of our passage (PVin<sub>T<sub>ms</sub></sub> 71a4–b3/PVin<sub>T<sub>Tib</sub></sub> Dze 227b4–228a2): *na vāstavaḥ kaścit sambandhaḥ kiṃ tu sāmāyikaḥ / icchāto ’rthābhidhānād iti / ayaṃ ca vāstavasambandhavādaḥ pramāṇavārttike vistareṇa niśiddha ity atra na vistāryate / iha ca vedāpauruṣeyatve na varṇānām padānām vā nityatvam upakāri / loke vede ca teṣām viśeṣābhāvād rathyāpuruṣavākyaśyāpi prāmāṇyaprasaṅgāt / kevalam vākyaṃ evāpauruṣeyaṃ pratipādayitavyaṃ vākyaṛthaś ca / ācāryasya tu padarūpaṃ pauruṣeyaṃ pratipādayato ’yam abhiprāyaḥ / padād vākyaṃ na vyatiricyate / tasya pauruṣeyatve vākyaśyāpi pauruṣeyatvam / vākyaṛūpe ca pauruṣeye ’rtho ’pi pauruṣeyaḥ sidhyati / ato vedaḥ pauruṣeyaḥ siddho bhavati / athāpi pauruṣeyānām padānām samāhārātmakaṃ vākyaṃ apauruṣeyaṃ padāny eva vā nityāni syuḥ / tathāpy arthasyāpauruṣeyatve vedaprāmāṇyaṃ na rūpasyeti / padānām nityatvaṃ tadracanātmakasya ca vākyaśyāpuruṣaracitatvaṃ vārttike nīrākr̥tam apy abhyupagāmya vārttikakārikābhir vāstavārthasambandhaniṣedhaṃ darśayati / vaidikānām śabdānām vākyaḥbūtānām padabhūtānām vā ’rtho na kenacid api śakyo niścetum puruṣopadeśaṃ vineti darśayitum āha.* “There is no real relation [between word and meaning], but a [purely] conventional [one], because the expression of a meaning is according to [a certain speaker’s] intention (*icchā*). But since the doctrine according to which the relation [between word and meaning] is real has [already] been refuted extensively in the *Pramāṇavārttika*, [Dharmakīrti] does not develop [it] here [in the *Pramāṇavinīśaya*]. But [neither] is the [alleged] permanence of the phonemes or of the words of any help to the authorlessness [and, hence, to the authority] of the Veda, because, since these [phonemes or words] do not differ in ordinary [language] and in the Veda, it would follow that even the statement of a man in the street would be authoritative. Rather, it is the sentence and the meaning of the sentence that must be shown to be authorless. But the following is the intention of Ācārya [Dharmakīrti] in showing that the nature of the word is of human origin (*pauruṣeya*): [Since] the sentence is not distinct from the word, if the [word] is of human origin, [then] the sentence is of human origin also. And if the nature of the sentence is of human origin, [then its] meaning too is established as of human origin, [and] therefore, the Veda is established as of human origin. But even if the sentence consisting of an aggregation of words of human origin were authorless, or [if] the words themselves were permanent, the Veda would [only] be authoritative if [its] meaning [, and] not [its verbal] form, were authorless. [Now,] although [Dharmakīrti] has refuted, in the [*Pramāṇa*]vārttika, that words are permanent and that a sentence consisting of an arrangement of these [words] is not created by humans, [he now provisionally] accepts [it] and presents, by [resorting to] the stanzas of the [*Pramāṇa*]vārttika, a refutation of a real relation with the meaning. [And] in order to show that no one is able to as-



**1.5** Up to this point, Dharmakīrti has demonstrated the possibility, even the necessity, of *atīndriyadarśana*. That mantras yield results is due to the fact that certain beings (including humans, gods, bodhisattvas, etc.) are able to discern, hence to *perceive*, which phonetic series is efficient and which is not; that these superior beings (*puṣātīśaya*, *puṣaviśeṣa*) prescribe, as a covenant (*samaya*; glossed *pratijñā*), ethical and behavioural conditions for the fruition of mantras; and, finally, to the fact that they empower (*adhi-√ṣṭhā*) these mantras so that they benefit ordinary persons (*prākṛtapuruṣa*). Such is the conclusion of his elaborations on mantras:

It is this [demonstration that the creators of mantras possess a superiority in cognition and power] that dismisses the [Mīmāṃsaka] proof that humans are incapable [of perceiving supersensible things]. Indeed, [we have] shown that the mantras are made by humans and yield results due to their [the humans'] empowerment. Therefore, since there is someone who possesses a [cognitive] superiority, the [Mīmāṃsaka] proofs that [supposedly] negate this [cognitively superior person] are also refuted. As for [that] which is regarded as a proof [by the Mīmāṃsaka, viz., reasons] like cognition, sense-faculties, language, and humanity, [all this is nothing but] an [inconclusive] pseudo-argument (*pramāṇābhā*),<sup>18</sup> for there is no correct cognition [of a state of affairs] from [a reason] possessing a remainder. As for the proof that [supposedly] negates [the existence of] a superior person, namely, 'Because, since he possesses cognition, sense-faculties, and language, [the alleged creator of a mantra] is a human being [, like every other human being],' this [proof] is strictly unconvincing, because there can be proofs neither of the negation nor of the sameness. [That is to say,] in the case of supersensible [things], indeed, a [person] who [can]not perceive [the said things] cannot [validly] negate

---

certain the meaning of the Vedic sounds – be they sentences or words – independently of a [purely] human instruction, [Dharmakīrti] says [the following]."

<sup>18</sup> Note PVSU 583,16–17: *kiṃ kāraṇam / vipakṣavṛtteḥ sandehena sarvasya śeṣavattvāt /*. "Why [are these reasons inconclusive]? – Because, since one can suspect [their] occurrence in the counter-instances [, viz., in human beings who are superior], all [of them] possess a remainder." On the *śeṣavadanumāna*, see PV 1.331/PVSU 173,22–26 below, pp. 62–65, pp. 62–63 nn. 126–127, and pp. 83–118.

[them, and this for three reasons: first,] because [this person of limited cognition can]not know them even though they exist; [second,] because, for the very reason [that they are supersensible, both kinds of] incompatibility [between them are] not established; and [third,] because it is not incompatible that [something co]exists with [something] that is not incompatible [with it]. This too [has already been] said [above]. [But] the sameness [of the alleged superior person] with another is not established either [, and this again for three reasons: first,] because one cannot know that there is no difference [between the two; second,] because non-perception has been dismissed as being a [valid logical] reason in cases such [as the qualities of another's mind]; and [third,] because one sees a certain difference [in wisdom or intelligence between two persons] in spite of the fact that [their] humanity, etc., is the same, and that if a difference exists, [then] sameness is not established. [But all this has already been] said [earlier]. Therefore, this inference possessing a remainder is incapable [of proving that a superior person does not exist], because even though one does not notice the presence [of the logical reason] in the dissimilar instances, one [can] suspect the contrary.<sup>19</sup>

In PV 1.312–329/PVSV 164,24–173,13, Dharmakīrti turns to the absurd consequences which a Mīmāṃsaka exposes himself to as long as he rejects *atīndriyadarśana*. As Dharmakīrti strongly insists upon in an earlier passage,<sup>20</sup> by denying the Veda any human agency and

<sup>19</sup> PVSV 164,9–24 (together with PV 1.310cd–311): *aśaktisādhanam puṃsām ane-naiva nirākṛtam // pratipādītā hi puruṣakṛtās tadadhiṣṭhānāc ca phaladā man-trāḥ / tad asti kaścid atīśayavān iti tatpratikṣepasādhanāny api prativyūḍhāni / buddhīndriyoktipuṃstvādi sādhanam yat tu varṇyate / pramāṇābhaṃ yathārthāsti na hi śeṣavato gatiḥ // yat tu buddhīndriyavacanayogāt puṃstvād iti puruṣātīśayapratikṣepasādhanam tat tv āgamakam eva / pratikṣepasāmānyasādhanayor asambhavāt / na hy atīndriyeṣv ataddarśinaḥ pratikṣepaḥ sambhavati / satām apy eṣām ajñānāt / ata eva virodhāsiddheḥ / avirodhiṇā ca saha sambhavāvirodhād ity apy uktam / nāpitarasāmānyasiddhir viśeṣasambhavasya jñātum aśak-yatvāt / idṛṣeṣu cānupalabdher hetutvapatikṣepāt / puṃstvādisāmnye 'pi kasya-cid viśeṣasya darśanāt / sambhavadviśeṣe ca sāmāyāsiddh[er]<sup>a</sup> ity uktam / tasmāc cheṣavad anumānam etad vyatirekasya sandehād asamartham adarśane 'pi vipa-kṣavṛtteḥ / .<sup>a</sup> PVSVṬ 584,17: *sāmāyāsiddher*; PVSV<sub>Tib</sub> D358a7/P525a7 = PVṬ Ñe D45a6/P51b3: *spyi ma grub pa'i phyir ro*, against PVSV 164,22–23: *sāmāyāsiddhir*. On this passage, see Eltschinger 2001: 101–114 and 2008: 281–286.*

<sup>20</sup> See especially PVSV 112,16–27 and Eltschinger 2007a: 240–243.

hence intentionality, the Mīmāṃsaka deprives it of any *meaning*, for meaningfulness depends on conventions (*saṅketa, samaya*) that are nothing but shared semantic intentions (*vivakṣā, vaktur icchā/abhiprāyah*).<sup>21</sup> An authorless scripture could only be unintelligible and devoid of truth value. But there is yet another reason why the meaning of the Veda, granted it exists, cannot be arrived at by the Mīmāṃsaka unless he contradicts his own claim that humans, *qua* humans, cannot perceive supersensible things. Since Vedic words have an invisible relation to invisible things, no one can pretend to ascertain what they really refer to. In other words, nobody can rule out the possibility that the paradigmatic Vedic injunction: *agnihotraṃ juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ*, may actually mean *khādec chvamāmsam svargakāmaḥ*.<sup>22</sup> As it turns out, every interpretation of the Veda reflects nothing but the interpreter's own arbitrary conceptions. The Veda is, then, a *mutus liber*, sealed by its original, unfabricated nature as well as by the cognitive limitations of humans. As a consequence, if the Mīmāṃsaka pretends, as he does, to provide an authoritative exegesis of the Veda,<sup>23</sup> he has either to attribute human agency and intentionality to the Veda (together with an unbroken explanatory tradition), or he has to admit that its most respected interpreters, Jaimini and Śābarasvāmin,<sup>24</sup> were endowed with extraordinary perceptual abilities.

**1.6.** More precisely, insofar as Vedic words refer to supersensible realities, their relation to these things is supersensible too. As Dharmakīrti insists, their being limited (*[prati]niyata*) to a specific thing

---

<sup>21</sup> See PV 1.327/PVSV 172,15–24 below, pp. 58–59; see also Eltschinger 2007a: 134–143.

<sup>22</sup> See PV 1.318/PVSV 167,11–14 below, pp. 40–41 and n. 35; see also below, pp. 126–127 and 135–140.

<sup>23</sup> For a detailed account of Mīmāṃsa's exegetical methods, see below, pp. 119–149.

<sup>24</sup> In PVT *Ñe* D49a4/P56b2 ≈ PVSVT 589,16, Mīmāṃsakas such as Jaimini are presented as *vedārtham ākhyātāraḥ*. In PVT *Ñe* D47a6/P54a1–2, these are termed *\*pramāṇabhūtapuruṣas* (*skyes bu tshad mar gyur pa*). Śābarasvāmin is mentioned at PVT *Ñe* D49b5/P57a6 = PVSVT 589,31–590,12.

is beyond the reach of ordinary experience.<sup>25</sup> In other words, the Mīmāṃsaka exegete may well *believe* that Vedic words refer to the things he *expects* them to point to, such as the daily morning and evening oblations he is acquainted with in the case of “*agnihotra*;” he may well believe that they have the desired meaning (*abhimatārtha*) or conform to his own wishes (*svecchānurūpa*).<sup>26</sup> Yet this remains just wishful thinking. As an ordinary (*prākṛta*),<sup>27</sup> hence cognitively limited (*arvāgdarśin*, *arvāgdarśana* as a *bahuvrīhi* compound) person,<sup>28</sup> the Mīmāṃsaka cannot discern (*vivecana*, *viveka*) what these words really refer to<sup>29</sup> and is simply ignorant of the true nature (*tattva*) of their meaning.<sup>30</sup> And as Dharmakīrti repeatedly points out, the Mīmāṃsaka can resort neither to ordinary linguistic usage (*prasiddhi*, *lokavāda*), nor reason(ing) (*yukti*, *nyāya*),<sup>31</sup> nor tradition (*sampradāya*).<sup>32</sup> The only thing he can do, and which Dharmakīrti actually accuses him of *doing*, is to ascribe extraordinary cognitive abilities to his authorities. And such is Dharmakīrti’s introduction to the passage translated below: “Moreover, in holding such a view, the Jaiminīyas compromise their own position with

---

<sup>25</sup> See PVT *Ñe* D46a7/P52b8 = PVSVT 585,27–28 and PVT *Ñe* D50a1–2/P57b3–4 ≈ PVSVT 590,16–17.

<sup>26</sup> See PVT *Ñe* D46a4/P52b3–4 ≈ PVSVT 585,21.

<sup>27</sup> See PVT *Ñe* D46b4/P53a5 = PVSVT 586,10, PVT *Ñe* D63b7/P76b2 = PVSVT 610,12, PVT *Ñe* D56a3/P66a2–3 = PVSVT 598,21 (D with no equivalent of *prākṛta*).

<sup>28</sup> See PVSVT 598,15, PVT *Ñe* D61a1/P72b2 = PVSVT 605,24–25, PVSVT 585,28–30 (to be compared with PVT *Ñe* D46b1/P52b8–53a1).

<sup>29</sup> See PVT *Ñe* D47a2–3/P53b4–5 ≈ PVSVT 586,21–22, PVT *Ñe* D52b2–3/P61a5–6 = PVSVT 593,27, PVT *Ñe* D46b7–47a1/P53b2–3 ≈ PVSVT 586,18–19.

<sup>30</sup> See PVT *Ñe* D45b5/P52a3–4 = PVSVT 585,8.

<sup>31</sup> PVT *Ñe* D51a6/P59a8–b1 = PVSVT 592,7, PVT *Ñe* D51a6–b1/P59b1–4 ≈ PVSVT 592,7–13. These passages contain suggestive claims, on the part of the Buddhists, that they alone are rational. See below, p. 42 n. 40.

<sup>32</sup> See, e.g., Dharmakīrti’s conclusion in PVS 168,3–4, below, p. 44. Note also PVS 169,4–13, below, pp. 47–48, where Dharmakīrti demonstrates that the Vedic schools or recensions (*śākhā*), in being notoriously liable to decay, charismatic revival, and innovation, are far from handing down unaltered scriptures.

their own assertion.”<sup>33</sup> The Mīmāṃsakas gain access to the invisible meaning of the Veda due to persons (like Jaimini) who must *ipso facto* be somehow superior to ordinary people. Therefore, they *de facto* recognize epistemically superior beings able to discern the meaning of Veda,<sup>34</sup> for this cannot be achieved without such persons.<sup>35</sup> But this conflicts with the Mīmāṃsakas’ ever-repeated doctrine (their very “complexion,” Dharmakīrti says) according to which there can be no person able to perceive supersensible things.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, if the Mīmāṃsaka acknowledges that his own authorities somehow access the supersensible realm, all his arguments against the existence of *atīndriyadarśīpuruṣas* such as those recognized by the Buddhists (*bauddhādyabhimata*) fall to the ground.<sup>37</sup> As a consequence, he will be forced to admit that either all or a few human beings, and certainly not only Mīmāṃsakas, are endowed with extraordinary abilities.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup> PVSV 164,24–25: *api caivaṃvādino jaiminiyāḥ svam eva vādam svavācā vidhurayanti /*.

<sup>34</sup> According to PVṬ Ñe D45b1–2/P51b6–7 = PVSVṬ 584,22–23: *svam eva vādam iti kathamcid atīśayavato jaiminyādeḥ sakāśād vedārthagatir bhavatīti puruṣātiśayābhyupagamavādam*.

<sup>35</sup> According to PVṬ Ñe D45b2–3/P51b8–52a1 = PVSVṬ 584,24–25: *vidhurayanti bādhante ’tiśayavatpuruṣapratikṣeṇa vedārthagater asambhavāt /*.

<sup>36</sup> According to PVṬ Ñe D45b1/P51b6 = PVSVṬ 584,21: *evaṃvādina iti nāsty atīndriyārthadarśī puruṣa ity evaṃvādino jaiminiyāḥ*, and PVṬ Ñe D45b2/P51b7–8 = PVSVṬ 584,23–24: *nāsty atīndriyārthajñāḥ puruṣaḥ kaścīd ity anayā svavācā*.

<sup>37</sup> Most regularly mentioned among these *puruṣātiśayapratikṣepasādhanas* or *atīndriyārthadarśīpuruṣapratikṣepasādhanas* is *puruṣatva* or *pumstva*. See PVṬ Ñe D46b6–7/P53b1–2 ≈ PVSVṬ 586,17–18, PVṬ Ñe D47a2/P53b4 ≈ PVSVṬ 586,22–23, PVṬ Ñe D47a1–2/P53b3 = PVSVṬ 586,19–20, PVṬ Ñe D45b6–7/P52a5–6 ≈ PVSVṬ 585,11–13. Note PVṬ Ñe D45b6–7/P52a5–6 ≈ PVSVṬ 585,11–13: *atha puruṣatvādisāmye ’py asādhāraṇaśaktiyukto vaidikānām śabdānām atīndriyair arthaiḥ saha sambandhasya vettā kaścij jaiminyādiḥ kalpyate / tadā tadvaj jaiminyādivat*. “But if one postulates that a certain [person] such as Jaimini, possessed with a special ability in spite of his being [allegedly] the same [as any other person] regarding humanity, knows the relation of the Vedic words with [their] supersensible meanings, then, just as Jaimini, etc.” See above, pp. 13–15.

<sup>38</sup> See PVṬ Ñe D46a1/P52a8 ≈ PVSVṬ 585,14–15, PVṬ Ñe D46b5/P53a6–7 = PVSVṬ 586,13–14, PVṬ Ñe D47a3/P53b5–6 ≈ PVSVṬ 586,23–24, PVṬ Ñe D45b6–7/P52a5–6 ≈ PVSVṬ 585,11–13.

1.7. Strictly speaking, Dharmakīrti's critique of authorlessness comes to a close with PV 1.329/PVSV 173,13. But before returning to the questions that concerned him prior to his excursus on scriptural authority, namely, the relation between (scriptural) words and their meanings (PV 1.336–338/PVSV 175,10–176,4) and non-perception (PV 1.339/PVSV 176,5–12), and then concluding with anti-Hindu sarcasms (PV 1.340), Dharmakīrti attacks yet another attempt to legitimize scriptural authority (PV 1.330–335/PVSV 173,14–175,10), viz., *ekadeśāvisaṃvādana*. According to his opponent, the Veda as a whole, including those of its *loci* that bear on supersensible (hence unverifiable/infalsifiable) matters, can be proved to be true provided one of its parts (*ekadeśā*) bearing on empirical (hence verifiable/falsifiable) matters can be proved to be veracious. This polemic raises two distinct problems. The first one concerns the identity of Dharmakīrti's opponent. For, as it is obvious, the doctrine he criticizes comes quite close to that of the Nyāya.<sup>39</sup> According to his commentators, however, Dharmakīrti's opponent is (an)other Mīmāṃsaka(s) (*dpyod pa pa gzan dag*, Śākyabuddhi), and more specifically an "old Mīmāṃsaka" (*vṛddhamīmāṃsaka*, Karṇakagomin, Manorathanandin).<sup>40</sup> Taking this seriously, who can this

<sup>39</sup> See NSū 2.1.68 and NBh 96,11–97,16. Note especially NBh 97,8–9: *dṛṣṭārthenā-  
ptopadeśēnāyurvedenādṛṣṭārtho vedabhāgo 'numātavyaḥ pramāṇam iti, āptaprā-  
mānyasya hetoḥ samānatvād iti* /. "One can infer that one Vedic passage whose  
object is invisible is a *pramāṇa* from the [fact that the] *Āyurveda*, the teaching of  
an *āpta* the object of which is visible [, is a *pramāṇa*; it is so] because [their]  
cause, the [personal] authority of the *āpta*, is the same." And further, NBh 97,15–  
16: *draṣṭṛpravaktṛsāmānyāc cānumānam / ya evāptā vedārthānām draṣṭāraḥ  
pravaktāraś ca ta evāyurvedprabhṛtīnām apīty āyurvedaprāmānyavad vedaprā-  
mānyam anumātavyam iti* /. "And [such an] inference is [made possible] by the  
[fact that these scriptures'] seers and expounders are the same. Since those very  
*āptas* who saw and expounded the objects of the Veda are exactly those of the  
*Āyurveda*, etc., one can infer that, as the *Āyurveda* is authoritative, the Veda is au-  
thoritative." Note, however, that Dharmakīrti's portrayal of his adversary does  
not allude to the underlying principle of *draṣṭṛsāmānyā*. See Oberhammer 1974  
and Steinkellner 1979: 78 n. 272.

<sup>40</sup> PVT *Ñe* D62b2/P74b4–5, PVT *Ñe* D62b2/P74b5 = PVSVT 608,17: *anyas tu  
mīmāṃsakaḥ*; PVV 409,13: *aparo mīmāṃsakaḥ*; PVT *Ñe* D62b7/P75a5, PVT *Ñe*  
D66b7–67a5/P80b2–81a1: *dpyod pa pa*. PVSVT 608,15–16: *aparo vṛddhami-  
māṃsakaḥ*, PVV 409,8: *vṛddhamīmāṃsakānām*, PVV 411,4: *jaranmīmāṃsakaḥ*.

rather unorthodox Mīmāṃsaka be? Should we think of Bhavadāsa, who is criticized by Kumārila and is likely to be one among the *vr̥ddhamīmāṃsakas*, i.e., the “pre-Śābarasvāmin” Mīmāṃsakas alluded to by Jayantabhaṭṭa?<sup>41</sup> Whoever he may be, what we would have to do with is a Mīmāṃsaka who does not (yet?) acknowledge the authorlessness of the Veda as a criterion of its reliability, or at least one who puts forward additional criteria for its authority.<sup>42</sup> However, since Dharmakīrti does not provide any hints as to the identity of his opponent,<sup>43</sup> one may feel justified in hypothesizing that Dharmakīrti *also* targets the Nyāya.<sup>44</sup> Though I am strongly inclined to favor the hypothesis of a Mīmāṃsaka opponent, I would like to postpone any conclusion until further research has been carried out

---

Vibhūticandra seems to regard this designation as sarcastic (Vibh 409 n. 8): *vr̥ddhaś cakṣurdoṣopahatatvāt*. Against this interpretation, see below, n. 41. See also PVin 2 72,10–11 (Steinkellner 1979: 77–78 and n. 252), TS<sub>K</sub> 2775/TS<sub>S</sub> 2774 and TSP<sub>K</sub> 736,3–18/TSP<sub>S</sub> 892,13–893,10.

<sup>41</sup> See Bronkhorst 1994: 383–385. NM I.664,6–7 is all the more interesting that it contrasts the *vr̥ddhamīmāṃsakas* (*jarajjaiminīyas* in NM I.664,16) and the followers of Śābara (*śābara*), thus allowing us to understand *vr̥ddhamīmāṃsaka* as “pre-Śābarasvāmin Mīmāṃsaka”: *vr̥ddhamīmāṃsakā yāgādikarmanirvartyam apūrvam nāma dharmam abhivadanti yāgādikarmaiva śābarā bruvate* /. “The old Mīmāṃsakas declare that dharma is what is called *apūrvā*, which is to be brought about by ritual activities such as sacrifices. The followers of Śābara say that the ritual activities such as sacrifices themselves are [dharma].” Translation Bronkhorst 1994: 384. On *vr̥ddha-* or *jaranmīmāṃsakas*, see also Kunjunni Raja 1963: 199 and Eltschinger 2007a: 161 n. 7.

<sup>42</sup> Though it is more likely to refer to (a) Buddhist(s) than to (a) heterodox Mīmāṃsaka(s), ŚV *codanā* 121 testifies to Kumārila’s familiarity with such a strategy: *yo ’pīndriyārthasambandhaviṣaye satyavādītām / dṛṣṭvā tadvacanatvena śrad-dheye ’rthe ’pi kalpayet* /. “The one who has observed [a certain person’s] truthfulness regarding a matter related to the sense objects might postulate [that it is] also [veracious] regarding something to be trusted, since it is a statement of this [same person].” For Sucaritamīśra’s and Pārthasārathimīśra’s explanations, see Eltschinger 2007a: 99 n. 98, and below, p. 115. For an alternative hypothesis regarding the *vr̥ddhamīmāṃsaka*, see Krasser 2012: 567–568 with n. 79.

<sup>43</sup> Unless one understands *parityajya* very literally (“giving up, abandoning, disregarding”) in the following statement (PVSV 173,16–17): *anyas tv apauruṣeyam āgamalakṣaṇam parityajyānyathā prāmānyaṃ vedasya sādhyatukāmah prāha*.

<sup>44</sup> As PVSVṬ 610,12 and PVṬ Ñe D64a2/P76b5–6 ≈ PVSVṬ 610,15–16 (*mīmāṃsakaḍiḥ*) might testify to. See also Steinkellner 1979: 78 n. 252.

on this passage. The second problem is of a philosophical nature. Dharmakīrti criticizes his opponent's apologetic strategy (i.e., *ekadeśāviśaṃvādāna*) by pointing out that to infer the authority of the Veda in this way amounts to a *śeṣavat*-inference, an inference "with a remainder."<sup>45</sup> What does this pseudo-inference consist of? To put it briefly, this kind of inconclusive argument characteristically doesn't rule out the possibility of a counterexample. In other words, that *one* empirically verifiable Vedic *locus* is true in fact does not exclude (an)other Vedic statement(s) being false. But Dharmakīrti is well aware of the fact that his own apologetic strategy (ultimately, the one he ascribes to Dignāga), which amounts to nothing but a sophisticated version of *ekadeśāviśaṃvādāna*, is open to the same charge. But is it really so? According to Dharmakīrti, one is entitled to infer a certain scripture's reliability (*aviśaṃvāda*) in regard to non-empirical (*adṛṣṭa*, *atīndriya*, *atyakṣa*, etc.) things if *all* that this scripture claims to be perceptible is indeed perceptible (contrary to most of the Vaiśeṣika categories and to the Sāṅkhya constituents), *all* that it holds to be "objectively" inferable is indeed (successfully) inferable (contrary to *īśvara* and the *ātman*), and if one cannot detect any inconsistency or internal contradiction (*pūrvāparavirodha*) in it (contrary to the prescription of physical ablutions in order to annihilate moral defilements).<sup>46</sup> Now, as Dharmakīrti insists, the difference between his own and his opponent's strategies lies in the scope of the verification process. Whereas his opponent restricts it to one (trivial, *atyantaprasiddha*) point, Dharmakīrti requires that it should bear on *all* the empirically verifiable/falsifiable matters alluded to in the treatise under scrutiny.<sup>47</sup> What Dharmakīrti doesn't say in this context, however, is that the verification strategy according to which he proves the Buddhist scriptures to be reliable is an alternative one. As he announces in PV 1.217/PVSV 109,11–19 and makes clear in PV 2.145–279, the reliability of the Buddhist scriptures can be inferred from the fact that their principal tenet (*pradhānārtha*), the four Noble('s) Truths,

---

<sup>45</sup> See above, pp. 13–15 and n. 18, and below, pp. 62–63 nn. 126–127.

<sup>46</sup> See below, pp. 86–87 and 107–111; see also below, p. 64 n. 130, pp. 69–70 n. 142, p. 77 n. 172 and p. 78 n. 174.

<sup>47</sup> See PVSV 173,26–174,6 below, pp. 63–65.



withstands critical analysis. In other words, the first strategy (PV 1.215-216/PVSV 108,16-109,11) is of a “heresiological” character, whereas the second (PV 1.217/PVSV 109,11-19) is apologetic in nature. And it is of the first strategy as applied to the Veda that PV 1.332-334 and PVSV 174,14-175,4 provide a fascinating example.

