

VINCENT ELTSCHINGER

BUDDHIST EPISTEMOLOGY AS APOLOGETICS

STUDIES ON THE HISTORY, SELF-UNDERSTANDING
AND DOGMATIC FOUNDATIONS OF
LATE INDIAN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN
PHILOSOPHISCH-HISTORISCHE KLASSE
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Vincent Eltschinger

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Foreword

The present volume is a collection of four studies which, though originally published as independent essays, have been conceived as *chapters* of an organic book dedicated to the socio-historical context and the dogmatic foundations of early Indian Buddhist epistemology. The volume was intended as—and remains—a general introduction to this religio-philosophical current’s apologetic dimensions, properly speaking—proofs of the possibility of rebirth, insight, compassion, liberation and omniscience, i.e., a demonstration of the rationality of the Buddhist salvational path. Parts of the materials presented in Chapter 1 (“Apocalypticism, Heresy and Philosophy”) were first presented on the occasion of the international conference “World View and Theory in Indian Philosophy” (Barcelona, Casa Asia, 26–30 April 2009), and then twice in Japan (Tokyo University, 30 September 2009; Ryukoku University, 27 November 2009); the original study was published under the same title in a volume edited by Piotr Balcerowicz (*World View and Theory in Indian Philosophy*. Delhi 2012: Manohar [Warsaw Indological Studies Series 5], pp. 27–84). Chapters 2 and 3 go back to two papers delivered at the XIVth World Sanskrit Conference (Kyoto University, 1–5 September 2009): Whereas “Buddhist Esoterism and Epistemology” was initially published in the proceedings of the Kyoto panel edited by Eli Franco (*Periodization and Historiography of Indian Philosophy*. Vienna 2013: De Nobili [Publications of the De Nobili Research Library 37], pp. 171–273), “Turning Hermeneutics into Apologetics” first appeared in the volume of proceedings edited by myself and Helmut Krasser (*Scriptural Authority, Reason, and Action*. Vienna 2013: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press [Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 79], pp. 71–145). The research that resulted in Chapter 4 (“Nescience, Epistemology and Soteriology”) was originally presented in the framework of the XVth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (Atlanta, Emory University, 23–28 June 2008) and published in two parts in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* (vol. 32/1–2, 2009 [2010], pp. 39–83, and vol. 33/1–2, 2010 [2011], pp. 27–73). Except for “Nescience, Epistemology and Soteriology,” which retrieves its original unity and was added section 4.4.6 on the *cintāmayī prajñā*, the studies un-

derwent no substantial modification. Besides unifying styles, spellings and bibliographical information as well as adding all relevant cross-references, I have updated what was necessary. Thus, Chapter 1 incorporates materials drawn from and references to Giovanni Verardi's recently published (2011) *Hardships and Downfall of Buddhism in India*. Chapter 2 has benefitted from Christian Wedemeyer's *Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism* (2013) and Eltschinger 2012. As for Chapter 3, it now takes into consideration Richard Nance's recent (2011) *Speaking for Buddhas: Scriptural Commentary in Indian Buddhism*.

The studies that served as a basis for Chapters 1, 2 and 4 were funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF, project P21050-G15: "Tradition und Wandel in der indischen buddhistischen Logik"). Part of the research work that led to Chapter 1 was also made possible by the Numata Foundation, to whose generous support I owe an extremely fruitful stay in Kyoto (Ryukoku University, September-December 2009). I am very grateful to these institutions as well as to Ernst Steinkellner, Helmut Krasser and Shoryu Katsura.

I wish to express my most sincere thanks to Diwakar Acharya, Piotr Balcerowicz, Johannes Bronkhorst, Danielle Feller, Peter Flügel, Erika Forte, Eli Franco, Gérard Fussman, Dominic Goodall, Harunaga Isaacson, Kyo Kano, Shoryu Katsura, Birgit Kellner, Deborah Klimburg-Salter, Helmut Krasser, Hiroshi Marui, Jan Nattier, Marion Rastelli, Isabelle Ratié, Alexander von Rospatt, Masamichi Sakai, Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, Peter Skilling, Ernst Steinkellner, François Voegeli, Toshihiko Watanabe, Yuko Yokochi, Chizuko Yoshimizu, and Kiyotaka Yoshimizu for their very precious help. I am also very grateful to Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek and Katharine Apostle, who improved the English of the original papers and the introduction. My deepest gratitude goes to two exceptional scholars, Alexis Sanderson and Lambert Schmithausen, for their extremely careful reading and improvement of the studies that were to become Chapters 1 and 4. Last but not least, I would like to address my most heartfelt thanks to Karin Preisendanz and Ernst Steinkellner for encouraging me not to postpone any further this publication, a habilitation thesis submitted to the University of Vienna.

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Introduction

On Critical Examination and Apologetics

1.1. How seriously should we take Dharmakīrti's *Buddhist* affiliation? Did the great sixth-century logician and epistemologist¹ simply pay lip service to Buddhism as a doctrinal and salvational system, or was Buddhism an integral part of his intellectual *ouillage*, one that shaped his ideological convictions and religio-philosophical agenda? There can be little doubt that during its first seven or eight decades (say between 1900 and 1980), the reception of Dharmakīrti's philosophy betrays a clear assent to the first hypothesis.² According to the Russian neo-Kantian scholar Th. Stcherbatsky (1866–1942), “Buddhist logic” was to be interpreted as an Indic *Aufklärung* the most prominent representatives of which—Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, Dharmottara—had emancipated themselves from any scriptural, dogmatic and metaphysical commitment. While Vasubandhu was ancient India's Plato, Dignāga was its Aristotle, and Dharmakīrti its Kant. Briefly put, the Buddhist epistemologists were transcendentalist “free thinkers”³ engaged in the critical assessment of the nature and legitimate scope of human understanding. According to Stcherbatsky, “the system had apparently no connection with Buddhism as a religion, i.e., as the teaching of a path towards salvation. It claims to be the natural and general logic of the human understanding.”⁴ Stcherbatsky's forces were declining as E. Frauwallner (1898–1974), who did not share his Russian colleague's philosophical presuppositions and advocated a historical-philological approach to Indian philoso-

¹ On the chronology of Dharmakīrti, see below, p. 116, n. 80.

² For a short sketch of the scholarly reception of Dharmakīrti's and his successors' philosophy, see Steinkellner 1982. T. Vetter's remarkable *Erkenntnisprobleme bei Dharmakīrti* (1964), published with the benediction of Frauwallner, is a partial exception to this.

³ Stcherbatsky 1932: 13–14, as quoted in Steinkellner 1982: 5.

⁴ Stcherbatsky 1932: 2, as quoted in Steinkellner 1982: 4–5.

phy, published some of the richest and most innovating studies ever dedicated to Dharmakīrti.⁵ But in spite of his entirely different background, Frauwallner equally understood Buddhist logic and epistemology as an axiologically neutral philosophical system in which religious, dogmatic and soteriological issues played virtually no role. With Dharmakīrti, something like a hellenic and even “Āryan” (sic) period of Indian philosophy found its culmination—and its conclusion.⁶ Since the early seventies analytic philosophy has become the paragon of philosophical reflection. In spite of its overall aversion for the history of philosophy, the analytical approach has remained—be it in a purely ideal way—the dominant paradigm in the historiography of Buddhist epistemology besides the more philologically oriented “Viennese school” founded by Frauwallner.⁷ Unsurprisingly, analytically oriented scholarship—what M. Kapstein has termed the “problems and arguments approach,”⁸ the program of which partly overlaps with the *Problemgeschichte* inherited from Frauwallner—has generally disregarded the texts as organic wholes, the socio-historical contexts and the dogmatic frameworks in favor of an unhistorical, comparative and at times formal approach to logical quantification, linguistics and ontological theory. No less than deeply ingrained convictions, however, these different types of scholarship also reflect most of their promoters’ aspiration to see these Indian and Indo-Tibetan scholastic productions finally recognized, against

⁵ I am thinking essentially of Frauwallner’s pathbreaking “Beiträge zur Apohalehre” (1932, 1933a, 1935).

⁶ On Frauwallner’s contribution to indological studies as well as his historical and ideological background, see Franco/Preisendanz 2010, Stuchlik 2009, and also below, Chapter 2, §2.3.1.2.

⁷ In my opinion, Taber 2013 provides the best presentation and defense of this interpretive trend to date. According to Taber (2013: 126), a *philosophical*—but not necessarily analytic—engagement with Dharmakīrti’s writings amounts to “reflecting on the broader philosophical meaning of his ideas in light of similar or contrasting views of the things they treat—and not just in light of theories that were current in India in his days but even ones familiar to us only from Western philosophy (such as ‘nominalism’ and ‘idealism’); analyzing his arguments and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses as philosophical arguments and assessing the overall plausibility of his system (Is it internally consistent? Does it present us with a compelling picture of reality?); and arriving at some judgment about how well his theories hold up under the sorts of criticisms that were levelled against them by his contemporaries and subsequent generations of thinkers [...]”

⁸ Kapstein 2003: 5.

resistant Anglo-Saxon and continental European prejudices, as properly and genuinely *philosophical*.⁹ As a side effect of this lack of interest in religious issues, many of those interested in Buddhism as a soteriological system (or in Madhyamaka) have come to consider Buddhist logic and epistemology a serious betrayal of Buddhism, as the following judgment by E. Conze testifies: “The importance, validity and usefulness of Buddhist logic is circumscribed by its social purpose, and the works of the logicians can therefore exhibit the holy doctrine only in a distinctly truncated form.”¹⁰

1.2. Dharmakīrtian scholarship’s interest in the dogmatic and soteriological dimensions of Buddhist epistemology became stronger in the early eighties thanks to the pioneering work of E. Steinkellner, R. Hayes, T. Vetter, E. Franco and T. Tillemans. These scholars called attention to various topics such as Dharmakīrti’s Buddhology, its indebtedness to Dignāga, rebirth, apologetics, doctrinalism, and scriptural authority.¹¹ Reading these innovative contributions, however, one gets—or should I say “I get”?—the impression that their authors regarded the religious issues at stake as exhibiting the logicians’ treatment of, and solution to, purely occasional and neatly circumscribed problems with little or no connection to the heart of the system. In other words, these pioneers remained very cautious not to interpret these and other issues as representing more than specific aspects—less open-minded scholars would say “peripheral aspects”—of an otherwise

⁹ Note Kapstein 2003: 5: “The dominant, dismissive prejudgment of the analytic tradition [...] was received by late twentieth-century anglophone students of Buddhist thought with sufficient seriousness that, during the past few decades, many of us who work in this and related areas have in effect devoted our energies to proving Flew^a wrong—to showing, that is, that classical Indian and Buddhist thinkers *were* concerned with well-formed arguments, and that the problems about which they argued were often closely similar to those that are taken to exemplify philosophy in our textbooks.” ^aKapstein alludes here to the following statement by Antony Flew (Flew 1971: 36, as quoted in Kapstein 2003: 5): “Philosophy [...] is concerned first, last and all the time with argument [...] [B]ecause most of what is labelled Eastern Philosophy is not so concerned [...] this textbook draws no materials from any sources east of Suez.”

¹⁰ Conze 1962: 267, as quoted in Steinkellner 1982: 4. Note also Conze 1962: 265 (as quoted in Steinkellner 1982: 4): “At variance with the spirit of Buddhism, it can indeed be tolerated only as a manifestation of ‘skill in means’. Logic was studied ‘in order to vanquish one’s adversaries in controversy’, and thereby to increase the monetary resources of the order.”

¹¹ See, e.g., Steinkellner 1978, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, and 1986, 1988, Hayes 1984, Tillemans 1986, Franco 1989, Vetter 1990.

strictly philosophical enterprise aimed at uncovering the true nature and possibilities of human knowledge. And indeed, there can be no doubt that at the surface level at least these Buddhist intellectuals' overarching concern was epistemology in the sense of a rational and polemical inquiry into the nature, the number and the operation of the means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). But there is also very little doubt that these intellectuals were Buddhist monks active in Buddhist educational and ritual centers as specialists of the "science of [justificative] reasons(/evidences)" (*hetuvidyā*); that the early descriptions of the *hetuvidyā* reflect its essential connection to, and function as, positive and negative apologetics on behalf of Buddhism, a connection that could only gain in strength in a context of exacerbated religious rivalry; that at least since the sixth century CE Buddhism was the object of orthodox Brahmanical hostility and had to struggle, mainly against Śaivism, for economic patronage and political support; that the Buddhist logicians understood their own intellectual enterprise as instrumental in putting Buddhists as well as non-Buddhists in an epistemic position to enter the Buddhist path; that their works provide systematically argued "rationalizations" and defenses of key Buddhist dogmas such as the two "truths" (on perception, concept formation, language, and error—the *apoha* theory), momentariness, selflessness and nescience; that several theoretical statements regarding the two *pramāṇas* (perception's direct encounter with the ultimately true features of reality; inference's corrective and "sapiential" functions) reflect a clear attempt to have them fit the needs of Buddhist soteriology; and finally that, of course, significant parts of these works are dedicated to defend, against the critiques of allodox schools such as materialism and Mīmāṃsā, the four nobles' truths, the doctrine of *skandhas*, or the Buddhist position on rebirth, insight, compassion, the path, salvation, buddhahood, omniscience and the like. To sum up, I believe that the socio-historical matrix (religious pluralism, Brahmanical hostility, competition for patronage), the identity of the opponents (rival salvational systems with strong apologetical concerns expressing themselves through linguistic and epistemological theory), the doctrinal foundations and the issues at stake call for a description of Buddhist epistemology as an apologetical enterprise—whence the title of the present book, "Buddhist Epistemology as Apologetics."

1.3. By heuristically resorting to the concept of "apologetic(s)," my aim is to provide a more accurate and flexible description of the ways in which the religious dimensions of Dharmakīrti's philosophy can be meaningfully taken into historical and doctrinal account. My idea is not, and has never

been, to deny Dignāga, Dharmakīrti and their successors the quality of philosophers—after all the greatest among the Christian apologists such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Augustine, Anselm of Canterbury, Abelard or Thomas Aquinas were no insignificant philosophers.¹² As I understand them, those who wrote so extensively on *pramāṇas* were Buddhist monastics (rarely lay people) who engaged in a twofold defense of Buddhism as a religion, attacking its rivals’ systems—this is positive apologetics—and neutralizing their real or potential objections—this is negative apologetics.¹³ But this is also to say that even regarding allegedly non-confessional issues such as (ontology,) language, gnoseology and epistemology, the directions taken by these scholiasts’ philosophical answers were shaped by their Buddhist education and persuasion—by their Buddhist intellectual reflexes, their “habitus” so to say—, and that they deliberately organized these answers so as to avoid any possible contradiction with received doctrine and scripture (*āgamavirodha*, which included contradiction with Vasubandhu’s AKBh). In other words, I believe that our authors knew what and where the truth was before engaging in philosophical analysis, and that to them this scripturally and dogmatically given truth needed to be defended: “Under the direction of faith, the apologist constructs arguments that are valid before natural reason.”¹⁴ What Dharmakīrti and his followers did was to construct and to defend, on the basis of a logical organon inherited—and updated—from Dignāga and the *hetuvidyā/vāda* tradition, a system of the world, the mind, cognition and salvation that conformed in every single point to the doctrinal exigencies of (a minimal and broadly consensual version) of Buddhism. I fail to see how and why such a picture could threaten

¹² Dulles 2005 provides an excellent and easily accessible overview of the history of Christian apologetics.

¹³ On these notions, see below, §3.1–2. Needless to say, the Buddhist epistemologists also defended Buddhist doctrinal “orthodoxy” (by which I mean nothing other than Vasubandhu’s Buddhism; see below, Chapter 2, §2.3.3.2) against coreligionists such as the *Vaiśiṣṭikas* and the (*Vātsīputrīya*)/*Sāṃmitīyas*, and polemicized against other *Buddhist* epistemologists holding allegedly erroneous views on diverse logico-epistemological issues (see below, Chapter 2, §2.3.3.4). On the hypothesis that rather than attacking and defending Buddhism *directly* against its critics, these intellectuals taught their *hetuvidyā/vāda* students how to refute them, see below, §3.3.

¹⁴ Dulles 2005: 284, describing the position of the French Dominican theologian Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877–1964). On natural reason and natural theology, see below, p. 21, n. 63.

the claim that these intellectuals were genuine philosophers. For in my opinion, the apologists of late Antiquity or the twelfth- to fourteenth-century scholastic intellectuals, all of whom structured their account of Christianity so as to defend it in contexts of real or virtual religious pluralism and competition against pagans, Gnostics, Jews, Muslims or Christian heretics, are the most likely counterparts of the Buddhist epistemologists. This is not only to say that these intellectual traditions resemble each other—a fairly trivial observation that can only result in naive and superficial comparatism—, but also that the institutional and socio-historical contexts which at least partly account for them are roughly similar.

2.1. As the pious hagiographies have it, the Buddha did not obtain awakening immediately after taking up homeless life. Abandoning the Vedic anachorites he had first joined, Gautama became the disciple of the then famous teacher Arāḍa (or: Ārāḍa, Pali Āḷāra) Kālāma, whose salvational method relied on the attainment of an “incorporeal realm” (*ārūpya*) called the “stage of nothingness” (*ākiñcanyāyatana*). The future Buddha was soon to master Arāḍa’s meditation techniques and, though offered co-responsibility over the latter’s religious congregation, left him for the concurrent teacher Udraka (or: Uḍraka, Pali Uddaka) Rāmaputra, another representative of “mainstream meditation”¹⁵ who regarded the attainment of the stage of neither-ideation-nor-non-ideation (*naivasañjñānāsañjñāyatana*) as bringing about salvation.¹⁶ Śākyamuni was equally disappointed and reached the bank of the Nairāñjanā River in order to give himself up to the

¹⁵ This stream consisted of mainly Jaina and “Hindu” ascetic tradition(s) that, contrary to (earliest, i.e., “pre-*samāpatti*”) Buddhism, understood meditation as a painful and “forceful effort to restrain the mind and bring it to a standstill” (Bronkhorst 1993: 22) and as a medium “by which the practitioner gradually puts an end to all ideations” (Bronkhorst 1993: 81). Indeed, as Putkasa/Pukkusa tells the Buddha in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, “Ārāḍa Kālāma at one occasion did not hear the sound of five hundred—in one version fifty—carts passing by, even though awake and conscious” (Bronkhorst 1993: 79; the different versions of the episode are discussed in Bareau 1970: 282–295). As Bronkhorst has pointed out, the episode of the future Buddha’s turning his back on the two sages and their unsatisfactory teachings is likely to be interpreted as an explicit criticism of representatives of and/or meditative practices belonging to the mainstream tradition (Bronkhorst 1993: 87).

¹⁶ On these episodes, see Bareau 1963: 13–27 (add MV II.118,1–3, LV 243,15–18, and MV II.119,8–10). Bareau’s reasons for not giving any credence to this story are summarized in Bronkhorst 1993: 85–86, summarized and criticized in Zafiropulo 1993: 23–29.

most severe forms of asceticism—which in turn proved to be no less unsatisfactory methods of salvation.

Most canonical versions of the events end with a recension-specific, generally stereotyped formula pointing to the unsatisfactory character of the practices experienced by the Buddha. Here is the Theravāda formula concerning Āḷāra Kālāma: “But it occurred to me: ‘This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna, but only to reappearance in the stage of nothingness.’ Not being satisfied with that Dhamma, disappointed with it, I left.”¹⁷ Its Sarvāstivāda counterpart runs as follows in the LV: “The *bodhisattva* replied [as follows to Udraka Rāmaputra]: ‘This path, Sire, does not lead to bliss, to detachment, to cessation, to appeasement, to super-knowledge, to awakening, to [being] a [true] *śramaṇa* and a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, to cessation.’ And thus, O monks, the *bodhisattva* [...] [said to himself] ‘Enough,’ and departed[, saying] ‘Enough of [all] this for me.’”¹⁸ The Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya’s formula is much shorter: “Then the [following] occurred to the *bodhisattva*: ‘This path is not conducive to knowledge, is not conducive to vision, is not conducive to the supreme [and] perfect awakening.’”¹⁹ Equally short is the Mahāsāṅghika/Lokottaravāda version: “But, O monks, the following occurred to me: ‘Ārāḍa’s doctrine does not lead him who practices it to the real exhaustion of suffering.’”²⁰ As we can see, neither do the canonical versions of the events shed

¹⁷ MN I.165: *tassa mayhaṃ bhikkhave etad ahoṣi / nāyaṃ dhammo nibbidāya na virāgāya na nirodhāya na upasamāya na abhiññāya na sambodhāya na nibbānāya saṃvattati yāvad eva ākiñcaññāyatanūpapattiyā ti / so kho ahaṃ bhikkhave taṃ dhammaṃ analaṅkaritvā tasmā dhammā nibbijjāpakkamim̐ /*. Translation (slightly modified) Nāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 258. See also MN I.166 (Uddaka Rāmaputta; see Nāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 259).

¹⁸ LV 285,11–15: *bodhisattva āha – naiṣa māṛṣa mārgo nirvṛtaye na virāgāya na nirodhāya nopasamāya nābhijñāyāi na sambodhaye na śrāmaṇāya na brāhmaṇāya na nirvāṇāya saṃvartate / iti hi bhikṣavo bodhisattvo [...] yāvad alam iti kṛtvā prakrāmad alam mamāneneti /*.

¹⁹ SBhV I.97,30–98,2: *atha bodhisattvasya itad abhavat – ayaṃ mārgo nālaṃ jñānāya nālaṃ darśanāya nālam anuttarāyāi samyaksambodhaye /*. See also SBhV I.98,29–32 (Udraka) and SBhV I.107,1–3 (*duṣkaracaryā*[*vasthā*]).

²⁰ MV II.119,4–5: *tasya me bhikṣavaḥ etad abhūṣi / nāyam ārāḍasya dharmo niryāti tatkarasya samyagduḥkhakṣayāye /*. See also MV II.120,15–16 (Udraka, with *tasya rāmasya* instead of *ārāḍasya*).

any theoretical light on the practices involved nor do the various dissatisfaction formulas provide any argument against the teachings ipso facto abandoned by Gautama. In the mind of the Buddha and/or the compilers of the various canonical recensions, the failure of these practices to bring about detachment (*virāga*, etc.), cessation (*upaśama*, *nirodha*, *nirvāṇa*, *duḥkhakṣaya*, etc.), knowledge (*jñāna*, *abhijñā*, etc.), intuition (*darśana*) and awakening (*sambodha*, *sambodhi*) is strong enough an argument to disqualify them as proper soterial paths (*mārga*).

Consider now Aśvaghōṣa's brief outline of the same biographical sequence in the SNa: "Then quitting the majestic and secure city of Kapilavāstu, whose population was devoted to him and which was thronged with masses of horses, elephants and chariots, he started resolutely for the forest to practise austerities. But finding that the sages were practising austerities according to varying scriptures and under varying rules and were still made wretched by desire for sensory objects, he concluded that there was no certainty in asceticism and turned away. Then, with his mind fixed on the ultimate truth, he sat at the feet of Arāḍa who preached emancipation and of Uḍraka who held the doctrine of quietude, but left them, deciding in his discrimination of paths that theirs were not the right paths. After considering which of the various sacred traditions in the world was the highest, and failing to obtain exact knowledge from others, he entered after all on austerities of extreme difficulty. Then seeing this to be a false path, he gave up that extended course of austerity too and, realizing that the sphere of trance was the highest, he ate choice food to prepare his mind for the understanding of immortality."²¹ Aśvaghōṣa's narrative displays innovating features. The future Buddha is depicted as a path expert (*mārgakoviḍa*) in search of certainty (*niścaya*) and looking for decisive conclusions as to the (un)reliability of the respective salvational methods. No less importantly, Śākyamuni critically examines (*viCAR*) "which of the various sacred

²¹ SNa 3.1–5: *tapase tataḥ kapilavāstu hayagajarathaughasaṅkulam / śrīmad abhayam anuraktajānaṃ sa vihāya niścitananā vanaṃ yayau // vividhāgamāṃs tapasi tāṃś ca vividhaniyamāśrayān munīn / prekṣya sa viṣayatṛṣākṛpaṇān anavasthitam tapa iti nyavartata // atha mokṣavādinam arāḍam upaśamamatim tathodrakam / tattvakṛtamatir upāsyā jahāv ayam apy amārga iti mārgakoviḍaḥ // sa vicārayan jagati kiṃ tu paramam iti tam tam āgamam / niścayam anadhigataḥ parataḥ paramam cacāra tapa eva duṣkaram // atha naiṣa mārga iti viḥṣya tad api vipulaṃ jahau tapaḥ / dhyānaviṣayam avagamyā paraṃ bubhuje varānam amṛtatvabuddhaye //* Translation Johnston 1928: (II.)15.

traditions in the world [is] the highest.” In other words, entertaining soteriological expectations in a context of religio-philosophical pluralism makes a critical appraisal of the competing salvational methods necessary: There can be neither choice nor success in soteriological matters without a thorough prior evaluation of the different systems (*dharma*) at hand. Aśvaghōṣa lays even more emphasis on critical examination (*parīkṣā*, *vicāra*) in his BC. Consider, e.g., the monk poet’s treatment of Gautama’s encounter with Vedic asceticism in BC 7. Here, the future Buddha’s dissatisfaction (*na santutoṣa* BC 7.19) with the religious aims and methods of his fellow forest dwellers is based on a detailed critical examination (*parīkṣamāṇa* BC 7.34) and results in a thoroughly argued (*bahuyuktiyukta* BC 7.32) critique of *tapas*.²² The BC’s treatment of Gautama’s rejection of Arāḍa’s *dharma* (which Aśvaghōṣa fancies, most certainly due to the great success of Sāṅkhya in his time, to be a kind of proto-Sāṅkhya doctrinally close to that of the CS²³) provides a paradigmatic instance of *parīkṣā*—in spite of the fact that the expression itself does not occur in this context. After spelling out Arāḍa’s theoretical commitments and salvational method (a substantialist and abridged version of the Buddhist *dhyānas* and *samāpattis*) in great detail,²⁴ Aśvaghōṣa presents the future Buddha’s very systematic arguments against his early teacher’s system.²⁵ The passage ends with the following statement: “Thus he was not satisfied on learning the doctrine of Arāḍa, and, discerning that it was incomplete, he turned away from there.”²⁶ As we can see, Aśvaghōṣa 1. makes a Sāṅkhya philosopher out of the philosophically uncommitted canonical Arāḍa, 2. has the *bodhisattva* himself refute

²² On Gautama’s arguments against asceticism, see BC 7.20–31 and Johnston 1984: (II.)96–97.

²³ On the Sāṅkhya known to Aśvaghōṣa, see Sastri 1952, Rao 1962, Rao 1964, Johnston 1974: passim, Hulin 1978: 136, Larson 1979: 104–108, Kent 1982, Johnston 1984: (II.)lvi–lxii, and Maas forthcoming.

²⁴ In BC 12.14–42, Arāḍa teaches his theoretical tenets (*siddhānta*, BC 12.16b), the conclusions (*nīścaya*) of his own *śāstra* (on the arising and the end of *samsāra*, BC 12.15d) to the *bodhisattva*. Aśvaghōṣa also presents Arāḍa’s doctrine as a *darśana* (BC 12.13c) and a *śāstra* (BC 12.10b, 15d). In BC 12.45–67, the sage expounds the practical aspects of his doctrine of salvation, its soteric means (*abhyupāya*, BC 12.43c; *upāya* BC 12.66a) consisting in *brahmacarya* (BC 12.42c, 44a).

²⁵ See BC 12.69–82.

²⁶ BC 12.83: *iti dharmam arāḍasya viditvā na tutoṣa saḥ | akṛtsnam iti vijñāya tataḥ prati-jagāma ha ||*. Translation Johnston 1984: (II.)181.

the latter's doctrine 3. on the basis of philosophical arguments instead of practical experimentation. It is because first- to second-century Sāṅkhya philosophy—an *āgama* or *sāstra* ("treatise") among several others in competition—fails to stand critical examination that it does not qualify as a soteriologically relevant system, that it is a non-path (*amārga* SNa 3.3) and is accordingly to be rejected as unsatisfactory.²⁷ Though much shorter, Aśvaghōṣa's depiction of Gautama's dissatisfaction with Udraka's teachings displays very similar features and explicitly alludes to *vicāra*: "But, having grasped [Arāḍa]'s speech and [thoroughly] examined it, the [*bodhisattva*] replied [as follows]."²⁸ As for Śākyamuni's abandonment of severe asceticism, it conforms to a similar pattern: the sage is shown reflecting upon (*anuCINT* BC 12.102) the value of austerities, providing a row of reasoned arguments against them,²⁹ and finally concluding (*niścaya* BC 12.107) that the salvational means can only be based on one's intake of food (*āhāramūlo 'yam upāya iti* BC 12.107). This provides the rational justification for the *bodhisattva* uttering the now well-known formula: "This is not the way of life for passionlessness, for awakening, for liberation."³⁰

Aśvaghōṣa's representation of the (future) Buddha as subordinating rational choice to a critical examination of the competing salvational systems can be seen at work on several other occasions in the BC³¹—and

²⁷ The reason why the *bodhisattva* condemns Arāḍa's and Rudraka's doctrines is that they involve a substantialist account of, and a belief in the self. Note BC 12.84cd: *ātmagrāhāc ca tasyāpi jagrhe na sa darśanam ||*. "And [it is] because [it entailed] the belief in a self that the [*bodhisattva*] did not accept [Udraka]'s [philosophical] perspective either."

²⁸ BC 12.68ab and d: *iti tasya sa tad vākyam gṛhītvā tu vicārya ca | [...] pratyuttaram uvāca ca ||*.

²⁹ See BC 12.103–106.

³⁰ BC 12.101ab: *nāyaṃ dharmo virāgāya na bodhāya na muktaye |*. Translation (slightly modified) Johnston 1984: (II.)184.

³¹ See, e.g., the critiques of fire sacrifice (*agni*) in BC 16.55–61 (see Johnston 1984: [III.]20 and Eltschinger forthcoming a, §3.3); of the self in BC 16.80–89 (Johnston 1984: [III.]22–23 and Eltschinger 2013: 176–185); of *īśvara* in BC 18.18–29 (Johnston 1984: [III.]32–33); of nature in BC 18.30–41 (Johnston 1984: [III.]33–35); of time in BC 18.42 (Johnston 1984: [III.]35); of substance (*dravya*) in BC 18.13–46 (Johnston 1984: [III.]35–36); of *puruṣa* in BC 18.47–51 (Johnston 1984: [III.]36); of fortuitousness (*ahetukatva*) in BC 18.52–56 (Johnston 1984: [III.]36–37). See also the discourses on kings and politics in BC 20.15–52 (Johnston 1984: [III.]50–55) and on women in BC 22.21–35 (Johnston 1984: [III.]65–66).

points to Aśvaghōṣa as one of the most significant early Buddhist philosophers, as was already suggested by Yijing.³² This picture, however, is also part of the poet's wider concern with the (future) Buddha as challenging wrong systems and converting their representatives. This can be seen, e.g., in the Buddha's dialogue with the Sāṅkhya-oriented "philosopher"³³ (*parīkṣaka* BC 26.7) Subhadra who, freshly converted by the Buddha, claims that "previously he had held birth to be by nature, [and] now he saw that there was no salvation in that [doctrine],"³⁴ or that "previously he had held with respect to that which is manifested (*vyakta*) that the self is other than the body and is not subject to change[, and that] now that he had listened to the sage's words he knew the world to be without self and not to be the effect of self."³⁵ Aśvaghōṣa's representation of the *bodhisattva*'s entire career is encapsulated in BC 25.9, according to which the Buddha, "after refuting the allodox erroneous paths, proceeded on such a path that

³² Together with Nāgārjuna and (Ārya)deva, Aśvaghōṣa is listed among the Buddhist doctors "of an early age" by Yijing. See Takakusu 1966: 181 and Krasser 2012a: 583–585.

³³ BC 26.7ab (P107a8–b1): *l kho bo lta bu'i yoṅs su rtog pa po rnams las ll thar pa'i lam gžan lhag par thob ces gtag l.* "It is said that you have gained a path of salvation other than that of philosophers (*parīkṣaka*) like myself." Translation (slightly modified) Johnston 1984: (III.)92.

³⁴ BC 26.15ab (P107b8–108a1): *l sñon du des ni rañ bžin las ni skyes sñam ste ll des kyan der ni thar pa mthoñ ba ma yin žiñ l.* Translation (slightly modified) Johnston 1984: (III.)93.

³⁵ BC 26.17 (P108a3–4): *l gsal ba 'di yin rnam par 'gyur ba med pa'i bdag ll lus las gžan ni de yis sñon du rtogs pa ste ll thub pa'i gsuñ ni yoṅs su thos^a nas 'jig rten ni ll bdag med pa dañ bdag tu bya ba med par šes l.* ^athos em.: *thob* P. Translation (slightly modified) Johnston 1984: (III.)93. This can also be seen, although in an indirect way, in Aśvajit's conversion of Upaṭiṣya (described in BC 17.4 [P75b7] as *ser skya'i rigs kyi dge sloñ slob ma du ma can*, i.e., "a mendicant of Kapila's sect, who had many pupils" [translation Johnston 1984: (III.)24]) in, e.g., BC 17.10 (P76a5–6): *l rgyu med pa dañ bya ba med dañ dbaṅ phyug ste ll žiñ šes pa ni ñes par de yis sñon rig ciñ ll rgyu las 'di rnams rab tu 'jug par thos nas ni ll bdag med gyur pa mthoñ nas dam pa'i bden pa gziḡs l.* "Previously he had held the theory that the field-knower (*kṣetrājña*) is uncaused, inactive, and the originator (*tīśvara*); on hearing that all these things take place in dependence on causes, he perceived that there is no self and saw the supreme truth." Translation Johnston 1984: (III.)25.

he [could] teach the right path (**sanmārga?*).”³⁶ In short, “in Kāśī he turned the wheel of the Law and by being [so] judicious brought content to the world; he caused those who were to be converted to practise the way of the Law, and brought bliss to us for our good. Others he caused to see the real truth that they had not yet seen, and he united the followers of the Law with the virtues. By refuting the other systems and by argument he caused men to understand the meaning which is hard to grasp. By teaching everything to be impermanent and without self and by denying the presence of the slightest happiness in the spheres of existence, he raised aloft the banner of his fame and overturned the lofty pillars of pride.”³⁷ Proclaiming the final truth of impermanence, selflessness and painfulness does not go without critically examining and overcoming (**niGRAH?*) competing religio-philosophical claims.

2.2. The *Savitarkasavicārādibhūmi* of the YBh (itself a section of the YBhŚ) provides us, in its *Paravāda* (“alldoxy”) section,³⁸ with a fascinat-

³⁶ BC 25.9ac (P103a6–7): *l lam log mu stegs rnams pham nas ll 'di 'dra'i lam la gśegs nas su ll gañ gis dam pa'i lam bstan te l*. Translation Johnston 1984: (III.)83. (The *senāpati* Śiṃha is speaking.)

³⁷ BC 27.30–32 (P115b7–116a2): *l kā śi nas su chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba ste ll blo dañ ldan pa ñid kyis 'jig rten tshim mdzad ciñ ll 'dul bya rnams ni chos kyi cho gar spyad mdzad la ll bdag cag rnams la phan pa'i ched du dge ba mdzad ll gžan rnams ma mthoñ yi de ñid mthoñ mdzad ciñ ll yon tan rnams kyis chos byed rnams la sbyar ba ste ll gžan gyi lugs rnams tshar bcad nas ni bskul gyur la ll rtogs par dga' ba'i don ni rnam par śes par mdzad ll thams cad mi rtag pa dañ bdag med par gsuñs śiñ ll srid pa rnams su bde ba cuñ zad ma gsuñs la ll śñan pa'i ba dan gyen du rnam par bsgreñ ba ste ll ña rgyal ka ba mthon po rnam par bskyel bar mdzad l*. Translation (slightly modified) Johnston 1984: (III.)108.

³⁸ YBh 118,1–160,9, YBh_{MS} 33b5–44a5, YBh_T D60b2–81a1/P71a3–93b4. YBh 118,5, 118,6, 160,8. To the best of my knowledge, the YBh provides neither an analysis nor an explanation of the compound *paravāda*. I take *para* to be used here in the same sense as its Pali equivalent in the BJSū (DN I.3 and passim; see Eltschinger forthcoming c, §1.3 and n. 36), i.e., to refer to a representative (*śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*) of any non-Buddhist group and/or doctrine. In this sense, *para* is very close in meaning to (*anya*)*tīrthya/tīrthika*, the “alldox” (rather than heterodox/“heretic”) teacher, but insists on its function as an at least virtual opponent. The author(s) and/or compiler(s) of the YBh was/were probably aware of the problem raised by the presence, among the sixteen alldoxies, of the obviously *Buddhist* (*ihadhārmika*, Tib. *chos 'di pa*) *sarvāstivāda*. See Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.3 and also §2.2.13 of a Buddhist (Mahāyānist) version of “nihilism.” On issues of orthodoxy, heterodoxy/heresy and alldoxy within Buddhism, see below, Chapter 1, p. 36, n. 3, and Eltschinger/Ratié 2013: 65, n. 57.

ing outline of early Buddhist philosophy *in concreto* and another early testimony of the use of *parīkṣā* in a scholastic context. This section is remarkable in several respects. First, contrary to the BJSū and the ŚPhSū, to which it is confessedly indebted,³⁹ it does not limit itself to listing and condemning sixteen false views qua false views in a doxographical manner, but provides sophisticated arguments against each of them. Second, contrary to the overwhelming majority of prior and contemporary Buddhist polemical works, which focus on coreligionists' views (the *puḍgala*, the existence of the three times, etc.) in an Abhidharma-like manner (notably by resorting to the *yukti-āgama* methodology),⁴⁰ this section targets, by means of reason(ing) (*yukti*) alone, the most prominent representatives of third- to fourth-century Indian philosophy: early Sāṅkhya (*satkāryavāda*), (Vaiśeṣika?) atomism, Brahmanism (self, creator God, ritual violence, etc.), the Buddhist Sarvāstivāda, Jainism as well as several allodox views already mentioned in the BJSū (eternalism, annihilationism, etc.) and the ŚPhSū (Jainism, Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist "nihilism," etc.). Third, the *Paravāda* section addresses non-Buddhist *practices and institutions* (ritual, purity, caste classes, etc.) in addition to purely theoretical tenets, and thus it echoes Aśvaghoṣa's way of submitting both philosophical doctrines (early Sāṅkhya, self, creator God, etc.) and religious practices (asceticism, Vedic ritual) to sustained critical examination.

Here are the sixteen allodoxies: "These allodoxies [amount to] sixteen, i.e.: (1) the doctrine [according to which] the effect [pre]exists in [its]

³⁹ The *Paravāda* section confessedly draws upon the BJSū of the *Dīrghāgama* in its doxographic account of at least five allodoxies: eternalism, "extensionism," "eel-wriggling," fatalism and annihilationism. The expression *yathāsūtram* occurs whenever the YBh description is indebted to this Sūtra (see YBh 138,4, 148,3, 150,1, 150,7, 151,3). The YBh's indebtedness to the ŚPhSū can be observed in (parts of) its account of eternalism (see Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.5), Jainism (Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.6), annihilationism (Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.12) and "nihilism" (Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.13). Important Sanskrit sources are the PrV and the SBhV of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (see Eltschinger forthcoming c, nn. 76, 85, 86, 89, 120, 134, 145).

⁴⁰ See below, Chapter 3, §3.2.2. The present author subscribes entirely to the following remark by Albrecht Wezler (Wezler 1985: 14): "For this literature [i.e., early Buddhist literature, VE] is characterized by the fact that most, if not all, debates carried on in the texts start from and centre around internal Buddhist or even Hīnayānistic differences of views and Abhidharma points of controversy. In Buddhist literature it is only gradually that heterodox doctrines are taken notice of [...]."

cause, (2) the doctrine of manifestation, (3) the doctrine [according to which] the past and the future exist as [real] substances, (4) the doctrine of the self, (5) the doctrine of eternal[ity], (6) the doctrine [according to which present suffering] has past deeds as its [sole] cause, (7) the doctrine [according to which entities] such as God are agents, (8) the doctrine [according to which ritual] violence is a [religious] duty(/is righteous), (9) the doctrine of finite[ness]-and-infinite[ness], (10) the doctrine of “eel-wriggling,” (11) the doctrine [according to which things are] without a cause, (12) the doctrine of annihilation, (13) the doctrine of the [universal] deniers, (14) the doctrine [according to which the Brahmins are] the best [caste class], (15) the doctrine of purification, and (16) the doctrine of festivals and auspicious things.”⁴¹ The aim of the *Paravāda* section of the YBh is to criticize these sixteen allodoxies as instances of incorrect reflection (*ayoni-śomanaskāra*) or as false views originating from nescience.⁴² These allo-

⁴¹ YBh 118,8–12 (YBh_{MS} 33b6–34a1, YBh_T D60b3–5/P71a5–8): *ṣoḍaśa ime paravādāḥ / tadyathā / hetuphalasadvādaḥ / abhiviyaktivādaḥ / aītānāgatadravya^asadvādaḥ / ātmavādaḥ / śāśvatavādaḥ / pūrvakṛtahetuvādaḥ^b / īśvarādīkarṭṛvādaḥ^c / hīmsā^ddharmavādaḥ / antānantīkavādaḥ / amarāvīkṣepikavādaḥ^e / ahetuvādaḥ / ucchedavādaḥ / nāstīkavādaḥ^f / agravādaḥ / śuddhivādaḥ / kautukamaṅgalavādaś ca ।. ^a°gatadravya° em. YBh: °gataḥ dravya° YBh_{MS}. ^b°hetuvādaḥ YBh_{MS}: °hetusadvādaḥ YBh. °°karṭṛvādaḥ em. YBh: °karṭṛkavādaḥ YBh_{MS} (this reading is equally good; but YBh_{MS} 40a4 reads *karṭṛvādaḥ*). ^dhīmsā° YBh_{MS}: *vihīmsā°* YBh. °°vikṣepikavādaḥ YBh_{MS}: °°vikṣepavādaḥ YBh. ^f*nāstīkavādaḥ* YBh_{MS}, YBh_T (*med par smra ba daḥ*): *nāstīkavādaḥ* om. YBh (does YBh_{MS} 34a1, in spite of the *akṣara*’s dissimilarity with other °*kyā*°, read *nāstīkyā*°? Whatever the case may be, YBh_{MS} 42a4 clearly reads *nāstīka*°). The *Paravāda* section of the YBh has not yet received the scholarly attention it undoubtedly deserves. Of the sixteen allodoxies successively dealt with in this passage, only two (*hetuphalasadvāda* and *abhiviyaktivāda*) have been (studied, edited and) translated in their entirety so far: see Furusaka 2001 (in Japanese) and Mikogami 1969; on these two sections, see also Wezler 1985. As for the *ātmavāda*, the *īśvarādīkarṭṛvāda*, the *śāśvatavāda* and the *nāstīkavāda* sections, they have been treated, but only in part: see Shukla 1967, Haya-shima 1991 (in Japanese) and Eltschinger/Ratié 2013:79–82, n. 111 (*ātmavāda*), Chem-parathy 1968–1969: 86–89 and 94–96 (*īśvarādīkarṭṛvāda*), Mikogami 1967 (in Japanese) (*śāśvatavāda*), Schmithausen 2000: 254–259 (*nāstīkavāda*).*

⁴² The concluding stanza of Dharmakīrti’s PV 1/PVSV, viz. PV 1.340, reveals very similar ideas: *vedaprāmāṇyaṃ kasyacit karṭṛvādaḥ snāne dharmecchā jātivādāvalepaḥ / santāpārambhaḥ pāpahānāya ceti dhvastaprajñāne pañca līṅgāni jāḍye ॥* “[Believing in the] authority of the Veda, claiming something [permanent, God or the self,] to be an agent, seeking merit in ablutions, taking pride in one’s caste, and undertaking penance to remove sin, these are the five signs of complete stupidity devoid of any discrimination.” Translation (slightly modified) Eltschinger/Krasser/Taber 2012: 77–78. The echo is all

doxies are initiated and/or defended by (groups of) ascetics and Brahmins (and twice at least by coreligionists) who are presented as reasoners (*tār-kika*) and investigators (*mīmāṃsaka*).⁴³ They are attempting, according to the BoBh, to make their points on the basis of scripture and reason(ing),

the more striking that, with the exception of *vedaprāmāṇya*, all of Dharmakīrti's "signs" already occur in the *Paravāda* section of the YBh: *kasyacit kartṛvādaḥ* (note the similarity in wording) \approx *īśvarādīkartṛvādaḥ* and *ātmavādaḥ* (see Eltschinger forthcoming c, §§2.2.4 and 2.2.7; on the two traditional interpretations of Dharmakīrti's *kasyacit kartṛvādaḥ*, see Eltschinger/Krasser/Taber 2012: 77, n. 171), *snāne dharmecchā* \approx *śuddhivādaḥ* (see Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.15), *jātivādāvalepa* \approx *agravādaḥ* (see Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.14), *santāpārambhaḥ pāpahanāya* \approx *pūrvakṛtahetuvādaḥ* (see Eltschinger forthcoming c, §2.2.6).

⁴³ YBh 119,7–9 (YBh_{MS} 34a2–3 [nearly illegible], YBh_T D60b7–61a1/P71b3–4): *yuktiḥ katamā / yathāpi tat sa^a eva śramaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā tārkiko bhavati mīmāṃsakas tarkaparyāpannāyāṃ bhūmau sthitaḥ svayamprātibhānikyāṃ pārthagjanikyāṃ mīmāṃsānucaritāyāṃ / tasyaivaṃ bhavati / .^ayathāpi tat sa YBh_{MS} (cf. also Wezler 1985: 5) *yathā sa eva* YBh (YBh_T simply reads: '*dī ltar* [**yathā*]). "What does reason(ing) consist of? For instance [here in the world, (a certain/)]this ascetic or (a certain/)]this Brahmin is a reasoner, an investigator who remains on a level that belongs to ratiocination, which is based on one's own wit, [which is] ordinary and pervaded with [philosophical] investigation. The following occurs to him." The origin of this formula can be sought in the BJSū (DN I.16, 21, 23, 29: *idha bhikkhave ekacco samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā takkī hoti vīmaṇsī. so takkariyāhataṃ vīmaṇsānucaritaṃ sayamṇapaṭibhānaṃ evam āha* [...]. "In this case, brethren, some recluse or Brahman is addicted to logic and reasoning. He gives utterance to the following conclusion of his own, beaten out by his argumentations and based on his own sophistry [...]." Translation Rhys Davids 1899: 28–29). The BoBh provides the duly expanded formula, which characterizes the intellectual inclinations and practices of those, most certainly Buddhists but also non-Buddhists, who construe a purely rationally based level of reality. BoBh_D 25,15–19/BoBh_W 37,22–38,1: *yuktīprasiddhaṃ tattvaṃ katamā / satāṃ yuktārthapañḍitānāṃ vicakṣaṇānāṃ tārkikānāṃ mīmāṃsakānāṃ tarkaparyāpannāyāṃ bhūmau sthitānāṃ svayamprātibhānikyāṃ pārthagjanikyāṃ mīmāṃsānucaritāyāṃ pratyakṣam anumānam āptāgamam pramānam nīśritya suvicitaniścitajñānagocaro jñeyam vastūpapattisādhana-yuktyā prasādhitaṃ vyavasthāpitam idam ucyate yuktīprasiddhaṃ tattvaṃ / .* "What does reality established by means of reason(ing) consist in? [It is the level of reality that belongs] to [those] wise [persons] who are experts in reasoned matters, sagacious, reasoners [and] investigators [who] remain on a level that belongs to ratiocination, which is based on one's own wit, ordinary and pervaded with [philosophical] investigation; [this kind of reality consists in] something cognizable that is the object of a well-examined and ascertained cognition, [something] that is demonstrated and determined by [that type of] reason(ing) which proves by means of arguments on the basis of a means of valid cognition, [viz.] perception/(the perceptible), inference [and] trustworthy scripture. This is what [we] call 'reality established by means of reason(ing).'*"

that is, by depending on the (three) means of valid cognition or *pramāṇas* (a term that, to the best of my knowledge, never occurs in this technical sense in the entire *Paravāda* section). This section's critical stance and methodology are best reflected in its concluding statement: "Thus [it appears that] these sixteen allodoxies are entirely unreasonable once they are evaluated by means of a(/the) twofold (*dvayābhinirhāra*) [type of] reason(ing) consisting in a [critical] examination."⁴⁴ The author(s) and/or compiler(s) of the *Paravāda* section thus regarded it and its/their polemical endeavor as a *parīkṣā*.⁴⁵

2.3. The Sanskrit term *parīkṣā* provides an important element in the YBhŚ's (somewhat cryptic) definition of the *hetuvidyā*, the "science of [justificative] reasons(/evidences)."⁴⁶ The fact is of primary importance granting the impact of the so-called *Hetuvidyā* section of the YBhŚ (HV) on later Buddhist philosophers, especially those who are labeled "epistemologists."⁴⁷ The HV testifies to an early connection between critical

⁴⁴ YBh 160,8–9 (YBh_{MS} 44a5, YBh_T D80b7–81a1/P93b3–4): *iṭṭhe soḍaṣa paravādā dvayābhinirhārayā^a parīkṣāyuktyo^b paparīkṣya sarvathā na yujyante l. ^advayābhinirhārayā YBh_{MS}, YBh_T (mñon par bsgrub pa rnam pa gñis): abhinirhārayā YBh. ^bparīkṣāyuktyo^o em. YBh_T (brtag pa 'i rigs pa): parīkṣyā yuktyo^o YBh, YBh_{MS}.*

⁴⁵ A difficult point remains: What does *dvayābhinirhāra* (obviously a *bahuvrīhi* compound, loosely translated above as "twofold"; on *abhinirhāra*, see BHSD 52^b–53^a s.v., Schmithausen 1969: 168 [nn. 187 and 191] and Deleanu 2006: II.477 [n. 31]) mean in the present context? Or: what does "two(fold)" refer to in the (very literal) expression "the accomplishment/realization of which is two(fold)"? I am inclined to understand "two(fold)" as pointing to *āgama* and *yukti*, and to interpret the whole expression as: "the accomplishment/realization of which is twofold [i.e., bears on the scriptures and reason(ing)s relied upon by each opponent]," and less literally as: "that is to be carried out in a twofold way [by submitting each opponent's scripture and reason(ing) to the test]." One might, of course, think of this expression as pointing to an examination carried out *by means of* both scripture and reason(ing)—in line with the argumentative method that is most typical of Buddhist scholasticism. However, (1) the Buddhists were perfectly well aware of the fact that quoting Buddhist scriptures was useless against outsiders; (2) to the best of my knowledge, the *Paravāda* section does not criticize any allodoxy on the basis of *āgama*.

⁴⁶ On the *hetuvidyā*, see below, p. 166, n. 229, and p. 167, n. 232.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., Yaïta 1999. On this section, see also below, Chapter 2, §2.3.1.3. On its nature and aims, see Eltschinger 2012: 452–473, and note Kang's insightful remark (Kang 2003: 30): "In der HV ist die Betrachtungsweise letztendlich diejenige eines Bodhisattva, der durch angemessene Benutzung der sprachlichen Mittel die buddhistische Lehre zu verkünden, aber auch zu rechtfertigen anstrebt. Dennoch sind in der Erklärung der

examination as a philosophical and (negative) apologetical concern and the *hetuvidyā* as a normative discourse about dialectics and logico-epistemological theory. Here is the HV definition of the *hetuvidyā*: “What does the science of [justificative] reasons(/evidences) consist of? It is something that exists for the sake of a [critical] examination. But what does this [something], i.e., dialectics, consist of?”⁴⁸ Whereas the text remains entirely silent on the definition and the scope of the *parīkṣā*, it explains “something” (*vastu*) as “dialectics” (*vāda*) and thus suggests the latter to be aimed at, and instrumental in, critical examination. In other words, whatever critical examination may consist of and be concerned with, it has *hetuvidyā* \approx *vāda* for its means. Now according to the HV (1,2–4), the *hetuvidyā* \approx *vāda* consists of all the eristic-dialectical items subsumed under the following seven headings: speech (*vāda*, HV 1,5–4,1), target group of a debate (*vādādhikaraṇa*, HV 4,2–5),⁴⁹ basis of a debate (*vādādhiṣṭhāna*, HV 4,6–17,1), ornament of a debate (*vādālaṅkāra*, HV 17,2–20,16), defeat in a debate (*vādanigraha*, HV 20,17–25,8), getting out of a debate (*vādaniḥsaraṇa*, HV 25,9–27,7), and the properties held to be variously useful in a debate (*vāde bahukarā dharmāḥ*, HV 27,8–16).⁵⁰ This is tantamount to claiming that the logical and epistemological items instantiating the category “basis of a debate,” and especially its subdivision “proof” (*sādhana*),⁵¹ i.e., “the thesis, the reason, the example, similarity, dissimilarity,

einzelnen Unterarten von *vāda* die eigentlich dialektischen Aspekte nicht vorrangig: die Darstellung orientiert sich zunächst an möglichen Gesprächssituationen für den Bodhisattva [...].”

⁴⁸ For the Sanskrit text of HV 1,1–2, see below, p. 161, n. 214.

⁴⁹ On the meaning of *adhikaraṇa* as “target group,” see Kang’s useful discussion in Kang 2003: 154–175 [= Appendix iii].

⁵⁰ According to HV 27,8–16, these properties are three in number: knowledge of one’s own as well as others’ systems (*svaparāsamayajñātā*), which allows one to debate (*ka-thām KR*) on every topic (*vastu*), self-confidence (*vaiśāradya*, see Kang 2003: 148–153), which allows one to debate before every audience (*parṣad*), and eloquence (*prati-bhāna*), which enables one to answer (*uttara*) any kind of utterance.

⁵¹ According to the HV (4,6–7), the basis of a debate is tenfold, i.e., a twofold probandum (*sādhya*) and an eightfold probans (*sādhana*). The thing (*artha*) to be proven may consist of either a nature (*svabhāva*) or a property (*viśeṣa*) such as permanent (*nitya*) or impermanent (*anitya*), pure (*anāśrava*) or impure (*sāśrava*), conditioned (*saṃskṛta*) or unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*).

perception(/the perceptible), inference, and authoritative scripture,”⁵² are regarded as the bases or instruments of critical examination. As we can see, those items that were to become key-components of logical theory (*pratijñā*, *hetu*, *udāharaṇa*) and those that would come to be known as the (four, three or two) “means of valid cognition”⁵³ (*pramāṇa*) now play a significant role in the *parīkṣā*. The *pramāṇas*, in particular, are responsible for providing material evidence in favour of a thesis concerning the point to be proven, as the HV makes very clear:⁵⁴ “What does the reason(/evidence) consist of? It is the justification that, based on an example and drawn from similarity and dissimilarity, or perception, or inference, or scripture, is aimed at establishing the point [at stake] in the thesis.”⁵⁵ Although the HV’s understanding of the nature, the purpose and the target(s) of the *parīkṣā* remains unclear (I would be very reluctant to interpret them in the light of the *Paravāda* section in spite of their belonging to the same corpus), one thing is certain: The HV provides us with the earliest known Buddhist instance of a connection between *parīkṣā*, *hetuvidyā* and the *pramāṇas*.

2.4. At this point, let us pause for a while and attempt a provisional definition of *parīkṣā* in the early Indian Buddhist context. A critical examination consists in the evaluation, by means of reason(ing) (identified or not to the *pramāṇas*) and/or scripture (provided the opponent belongs to the same

⁵² HV 4,15–16: *pratijñā hetur udāharaṇam sārūpyam vairūpyam pratyakṣam anumānam āptāgamaś ca* /. See also below, p. 159, n. 205.

⁵³ See below, p. 159–159, nn. 205–206.

⁵⁴ HV 4,17–5,2: *pratijñā katamā / dvividhaṃ sādhyam artham ārabhya yo ’nyonyam svapakṣaparigrahaḥ śāstraparigrahaṭo vā svapratibhānato vā parāvajñāto vā parānuśravato vā tattvābhisandhānato vā svapakṣāvasthānato vā parapakṣadūṣaṇato vā parābhībhavato vā parānukampanato vā* /. “What does the thesis consist of? It consists in each [debater]’s adoption of his own proposition regarding the point to be proven, which is twofold [i.e., a nature or a property. The adoption of one’s own proposition may proceed] either by adopting a[n already available] treatise, or through one’s own wit, or due to contempt for an opponent, or due to hearsay about an opponent[?], or by interest in the truth, or by sticking to[?] one’s own proposition, or due to [one’s wish to] refute an opponent’s proposition, or due to [one’s wish to] overcome an opponent, or by sympathy for an opponent.”

⁵⁵ For the Sanskrit text of HV 5,3–5, see below, p. 159, n. 205. See also CS 3.8.33, where the reason (*hetu*) is defined as the cause of apprehension (*upalabdihkāraṇa*), which comprises perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), (scriptural) tradition (*aitihya*) und analogy (*aupamya*). See Preisendanz 1994: 531.

confessional denomination⁵⁶), of an opponents' theoretical and/or practical tenets in order to assess their rationality and, further, the soteriological relevance of the system as a whole (note that a *parīkṣā* does not necessarily entail, and in actual fact rarely entails, a systematic exposition of the examiner's own tenets [*svamata*]). As the so-called dialectical tradition developed and underwent its "epistemological turn" in the hands of Dignāga,⁵⁷ critical examination remained true to its nature, purpose and targets, but its association with the theory and practice of *pramāṇas* grew ever more intimate—so much so that both became nearly indistinguishable. As we shall see in Chapter 2, the epistemological turn of the *hetuvidyā* coincided with a shift in the polemical targets and audience of the Buddhist dialecticians, a shift that is mirrored in the titles of several works authored by Dignāga, viz. the *Nyāyaparīkṣā* ("[Critical] examination of the Nyāya [system]"), *Vaiśeṣikaparīkṣā* ("[Critical] examination of the Vaiśeṣika [system]"), and the *Sāṅkhyaparīkṣā* ("[Critical] examination of the Sāṅkhya [system]"),⁵⁸ which may well have consisted in monographs targeting, on the likely model of works such as Vasubandhu's *Paramārthasaptatikā*,⁵⁹ the (epistemo)logical theories (and religio-philosophical doctrines?) of these non-Buddhist schools.

2.5. There is at least one hint to the fact that Dignāga's philosophy amounted to a *parīkṣā* in the mind of Dharmakīrti. In this oft-quoted passage, Dharmakīrti outlines, allegedly in the footsteps of Dignāga, his posi-

⁵⁶ Christian apologists such as Alan of Lille (d. 1202), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) or Philippe de Mornay (1549–1623) also showed a clear consciousness of the fact that resorting to Christian scriptural authorities was of no argumentative value against the Muslims and the pagans (unlike Jews and heretical Christians); see Dulles 2005: 110, 115 and 157 respectively. In particular, Philippe de Mornay "[...] calls attention to the necessity of arguing from principles that are accepted by the adversary as well. In the case of pagans one may appeal to self-evident principles and to demonstrable philosophical truths; in the case of Jews, to the Old Testament" (Dulles 2005: 157). This aspect of apologetical methods has also been emphasized by Griffiths (1991: 15): "Apologetics also usually uses only methods of argumentation and criteria of knowledge acceptable to the adversary. This is to rule out, among other things, appeals to sources of authority not recognized by one side in the debate." Griffiths (1991: 82) refers to these scriptural sources as "community-specific self-guaranteeing authority sources."

⁵⁷ See below, Chapter 2, §2.3.1.

⁵⁸ See below, p. 157, nn. 195 and 196.

⁵⁹ See below, p. 157, n. 196, and p. 175, n. 251.

tion concerning the appraisal of scriptural authority (*āgamaprāmāṇya*): “The person [who wishes to engage in religious practice] cannot live without resorting to scriptural authority[, and this for two reasons: first,] because [it is only in scripture that this person] learns the great benefits and evils [that are to be expected from] engaging in and refraining from certain [actions/intentions] whose results [remain entirely] imperceptible [to him/her; and second,] because [this person] does not see [anything] contradictory to the existence of these [desirable or undesirable results]. Thus if [this person] is [necessarily] to act [on a scriptural basis], it is better that (s)he act in this way [i.e., after evaluating scripture, and] this is the reason why [Dignāga recommends that scriptural] authority [be decided] through [critical] examination [...] The [treatise]’s reliability consists in the fact that neither perception nor the two kinds of inferences invalidates the empirical or transempirical things [that are] their [respective] objects. [A treatise]’s not being invalidated by perception consists [first] in the fact that the things it holds to be perceptible are indeed such [i.e., perceptible], as [the five *skandhas*, i.e., colours] such as blue, [affective sensations such as] pleasure and pain, [ideation consisting in one’s] grasping the characteristics [of things, conditioning factors] such as desire, and cognitions[, which are all perceived by sensory perception and self-awareness. Second, a treatise’s not being invalidated by perception consists] in the fact that the [things] it does not hold to be such [i.e., perceptible,] are [indeed] imperceptible, as [pseudo-constituents] such as pleasure, which [the Sāṅkhya erroneously takes to] combine in the form of sounds, etc., and [categories] such as substances, motions, universals and connections[, which the Vaiśeṣika erroneously takes to be perceptible]. Similarly, [a treatise’s not being invalidated by inference] consists [first] in the fact that the [things] it holds to be the objects of an inference that does not depend on scripture are really such [i.e., inferable], as the four nobles’ truths, [and second] in the fact that the [things it holds to be] non-inferable are really such [i.e., noninferable], like the self, [God,] etc. [And this type of invalidation is] also [relevant] concerning an inference that depends on scripture[, which consists in identifying internal contradictions within a treatise]: For example, once it is admitted that demerit has the nature of [defilements] such as desire and the [corporeal and verbal acts] that originate from them, one does not prescribe [things] such as ablutions and fire oblation in order to remove it [i.e., de-