

## Interpretation of the abstract noun in the Buddhist epistemological tradition

Hisataka ISHIDA, Vienna

As is well known, Dignāga (ca. 480-540 C.E.), the founder of the Buddhist epistemological tradition, insisted that the treatment (*vyavahāra*) of the means of inference (*anumāna*) or the object of inference (*anumeya*) is based on the distinction between the property and the property-bearer that appears in a cognition (Cf. Fragment of the *Hetumukha*, quoted e.g. in the *Pramāṇavārttikasvavṛtti*: PVSV 2,22-3,1). Here one can admit that the notion of the property or its bearer concerns exclusively the conceptual cognition and is not directly related to the external objects, i.e. particulars.

Dharmakīrti (ca. 600-660 C.E.) follows this understanding and, concerning the theory of language, says that on the basis of the appearance in a conceptual cognition one can better explain the *sāmānādhikarānya* of words, i.e. the application of words to the same locus on the basis of different causes (cf. the definition in the *Pramāṇavārttikasvavṛttiṭīkā* by Kaṇakagomin: PVSVṬ 149, 12), or the relation between the qualifier and the qualified (*viśeṣyaviśeṣaṇabhāva*). It is important that, according to Dharmakīrti, the property and its possessor, both of which appear in a conceptual cognition, cannot be expressed (*avācya*) as either identical or different (PVSV 35,7-13).

Against the above assertion, it could be asked why one does actually employ some words in apposition, e.g. “*śabdo 'nityaḥ*,” as well as the abstract noun which is commonly formed with the suffixes *tā* or *tva* and construed with a separate subjective genitive (*śaṣṭhī*), e.g. “*śabdasyānityatvam*,” although the state or object expressed by both the expressions is not different. In the *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV) 1.60ff. and PVSV thereon Dharmakīrti answers this question, and he explains that the difference of the above-mentioned usages results from the intention of the speaker, i.e. whether the speaker intends to imply the other exclusions, i.e. the other qualities, of the subject, or not (*bhedāntarapratikṣepāpratikṣepa*).

Further, the above explanation by Dharmakīrti is referred to also in his later work, i.e. *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (PVin 2.90,7ff.). It means that one may consider the explanation in the PV and PVSV as a general theory about the usage of the abstract noun, and therefore it would be useful to examine it in order to understand Dharmakīrti's usage of the abstract noun in general. In the course of this investigation, I will also consult the commentary on the PVin by the Kashmirian scholar Dharmottara (ca. 740-800 C.E.), i.e. *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā*.