Jayanta’s Objection to Dharmakīrti’s Criticism of the pratijñāhāni of the Nyāya School

SASAKI Ryō

1. Introduction

The “condition of defeat” (nigrahasthāna) is the rule which determines the victory or defeat of debaters. Dharmakīrti, who criticized the definition of the condition of defeat appearing in the Nyāyasūtra (NS), Nyāyabhāṣya (NBh), and Nyāyavārttika (NV), provided a new definition of the condition of defeat in the Vādanyāya (VN); Little attention has been given to the Naiyāyikas’ way of accepting or criticizing the theory of the condition of defeat in the VN. However, this research theme is important in thinking about the history of debatology in India. In particular, the importance of researching the acceptance or criticism of Dharmakīrti shown in Bhaṭṭa Jayanta’s Nyāyamañjarī (NM) cannot be overemphasized.

I compared the first half of the VN with the second half and demonstrated the correspondences between Dharmakīrti’s and the Nyāya school’s conditions of defeat in Sasaki [2014a]; furthermore, I clarified how Dharmakīrti’s acceptance of the Nyāya school’s conditions of defeat was accepted by Jayanta in Sasaki [2014b].

In this article, I investigate the part of the NM in which explicit criticism of Dharmakīrti is unfolded. Although Dharmakīrti identified seventeen of the Nyāya school’s twenty-two types of conditions of defeat as incorrect in the latter half of the VN, due to space limitations, this paper focuses on the “abandonment of thesis” (pratijñāhāni), which is the first condition listed by the Nyāya school, and discusses the difference between Dharmakīrti’s and Jayanta’s views.

To sum up the explanation of the abandonment of thesis by the Nyāya school, we can say the following: First, the proponent makes an inferential statement, such as,
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"Sound is non-eternal (Q) because it is perceived by the sense, like a pot." Second, in order to oppose this proponent's statement, the opponent says, "Similarity is perceived by the sense and is eternal (P); therefore, sound perceived by the sense is also eternal (P)." Third, the proponent answers, "It is true. If similarity is perceived by the sense and is eternal (P), a pot perceived by the sense is also eternal (P)." When he admits that the property (P) of a counterexample (i.e., eternality) exists in his own example (i.e., a pot), he abandons his original thesis (i.e., "sound is non-eternal") because in this case, he admits that sound is also eternal, as the opponent states.

In this way, when a proponent is opposed through the property (P), which is contrary to the property (Q) as probandum, the proponent who admits that a property (P) of a counterexample exists in a proponent's own example abandons his thesis, and therefore is defeated due to the "abandonment of thesis."

2. The Controversy between Dharmakīrti and Jayanta

In the latter half of the VN, Dharmakīrti does not admit the abandonment of thesis to be a correct condition of defeat; he produces three important points of criticism. In contrast, Jayanta confirms the meaning of the points and then refutes Dharmakīrti's three points one by one. Therefore, in relation to the three points, we should consider (1) Dharmakīrti's criticism against the Nyāya school, (2) Jayanta's confirmation of Dharmakīrti's criticism, and (3) Jayanta's criticism of Dharmakīrti's view.

2.1. The First Point of the Controversy

Dharmakīrti criticized the Nyāya school's "abandonment of thesis" as follows:

VN 25.18–22: (Dharmakīrti's criticism) [The rule that the proponent who leaves his thesis is defeated due to the abandonment of thesis does not need to exist] because he can leave his own position and accept another [opponent's] position in different ways [from that where the proponent's admission that a property of a counterexample exists in a proponent's own example abandons his thesis]. [For example, the opponent may] indicate the [proponent's] logical reason's fault and so forth, and [the opponent may] state [his] counter-position's proof. Furthermore, this is exactly the principal cause of the abandonment of thesis. [The proponent] to whom [the opponent] explains this (i.e., the fault in the proponent's logical reason and the proof of the opponent's counter-position) has to abandon [his] thesis, and when [the proponent] abandons [the thesis], he is defeated.

Dharmakīrti did not admit the definitive example taken up by the Nyāya school to be
an appropriate instance of the abandonment of thesis because he thought that the principal cause of the abandonment of thesis is the fault in the proponent’s logical reason and the opponent’s statement of proof of his counter-position.

Jayanta confirmed and interpreted the above criticism by Dharmakīrti in the following manner:

NM 2.682,7–8: (Dharmakīrti’s view as understood by Jayanta:) In this matter, Dharmakīrti says the following: First, [stating] a thesis is just “stating what is not the element of the means of proof” (asādhanāṅgavacana). Therefore, stating it (i.e., the thesis) deserves the condition of defeat [but] abandoning it (i.e., the thesis) does not [deserve the condition of defeat].

Jayanta’s understanding of Dharmakīrti’s criticism is different from Dharmakīrti’s original view. Indeed, Dharmakīrti thought that stating a thesis is a condition of defeat as asādhanāṅgavacana in the first half of the VN (cf. VN 17,9–15). However, he does not refer to this point when criticizing the “abandonment of thesis” in the second half.

Jayanta understands Dharmakīrti’s criticism to mean that abandoning a thesis is not a condition of defeat; rather, stating a thesis is a condition of defeat because the thesis is not a probans (sādhanā).

NM 2.682,14–17: (Jayanta’s answer:) In this matter, I will answer as follows: First, it has been [already] settled in the definition of the component part (avayava) of the inferential statement] that [stating] a thesis is not “stating what is not the element of the means of proof” (asādhanāṅgavacana). Indeed, all proponents are [required] effort to prove the thesis from. Furthermore, stating it (i.e., the thesis) is not “stating what is not the element of the means of proof” because a [thesis] which is not shown can never be proven. Among ordinary people, in relation to a point of controversy such as recovery of a debt, the abandonment of thesis is said to be exactly the principal cause of defeat.

Jayanta contends that Dharmakīrti’s view that the thesis is not probans is wrong because the thesis is established as probans when defining the component part (avayava) of the inferential statement.

2.2. The Second Point of Their Controversy

Dharmakīrti criticizes the Nyāya school’s “abandonment of thesis” as shown below.

VN 26,2–9: (Dharmakīrti’s criticism:) When it is only said that eternal similarity is perceived by the sense, does [the proponent], who has healthy mind and says, “Sound is non-eternal because it is perceived by the sense, like a pot,” for himself admit that sound is eternal? [No, he cannot admit it . . . Without the statement that eternal similarity is perceived by the sense, a fool] must
say thus only, that is, that sound is eternal, because there is no consideration in the fool's thinking.

Dharmakīrti indicates that the proponent who abandons his thesis in the manner that the Naiyāyikas show, that is, by accepting the eternality of a pot, is a stupid man whose mind is not healthy. According to him, the proponent's action shown by the Naiyāyikas is absurd, and a proponent whose mind is healthy cannot do such a thing. That is to say, he shows that the Naiyāyikas' definitive instance is inappropriate for the content of the abandonment of thesis.

NM 2.682,8–10: (Dharmakīrti's view as understood by Jayanta:) And further, [in the first place, the thesis] is not even abandoned. Even if eternality as the property of the counterexample [such as similarity] is admitted to be [the property of] a pot which is regarded as an example, is the thesis that sound is non-eternal abandoned due to only this [admission]? [No, it is not abandoned.]

Here, Jayanta's summary of Dharmakīrti's criticism is different from Dharmakīrti's original view. Jayanta's understanding is that the proponent does not normally abandon the thesis that sound is non-eternal only due to the acceptance of the property of eternality in a pot.

NM 2.683,3–6: (Jayanta's answer:) [The proponent] who admits that a property of a counterexample [which an opponent shows exists] in the [proponent's] own example abandons [his] thesis. That is to say, [if] he agrees that a pot also has [the property of] eternality, like [the eternality of] similarity, [and then,] because of [a property such as eternality in] an example [such as a pot], he wishes to prove that sound also [has the same property as the property of the pot]. Therefore, just then [eternality, that is,] the property of the pot [as the example] must establish the same [property of] eternality in sound [as the subject]. Hence, why is not the thesis that it (i.e., sound) is non-eternal abandoned? [No, the thesis must be abandoned.]

Jayanta's point of objection is that as long as the proponent uses a property of an example in order to establish the same property in a subject, he has to admit that sound has the property of eternality when he admits that a pot has the property of eternality. Therefore, he falls into the abandonment of the thesis that sound is non-eternal.

2.3. The Third Point of Their Controversy

Dharmakīrti criticizes the Nyāya school's "abandonment of thesis" as follows:
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VN 26.14–16: (Dharmakirti's criticism:) Therefore, "being perceived by the sense" [as the logical reason] exists in both the position of non-eternity and the position of eternity, and therefore deviates [from non-eternity, which is the property as probandum]. Hence, [the proponent] deserves defeat due to "mentioning what is not the factor of proof" (asādhanaṇāgasyapādāna) but does not [deserve defeat] due to abandoning the thesis by admitting a property of a counterexample [which an opponent shows exists in the proponent's own example].

In the Naiyāyikas' definitive example, "being perceived by the sense" is the logical reason (probans) for establishing the proven property (probandum) of non-eternity. According to Dharmakirti, "being perceived by the sense" in this case deviates from the property of non-eternity and is concomitant with the property of eternity; therefore, it is the logical reason's deviation (vyabhicāra), that is, inconclusiveness (anaikāntika), representing "fallacious logical reasons" (hetvābhāsa). Therefore, the proponent is defeated due to stating the "fallacious logical reasons" but is not defeated due to the "abandonment of thesis" by admitting the property of the counterexample.

NM 2.682,11–13: (Dharmakirti's view as understood by Jayanta:) Moreover, the "fallacious logical reasons" are also indeed counted among the group of "conditions of defeat." And further, the [proponent] is defeated only due to using inconclusiveness as "fallacious logical reason" [but] is not [defeated] due to the "abandonment of thesis." Therefore, it should be stated that it (i.e., the abandonment of thesis) is not different [from the fallacious logical reasons].

In the above text, Jayanta exhibits a solid understanding of Dharmakirti's original point. Moreover, he criticizes Dharmakirti as shown below.

NM 2.683,7–13: (Jayanta's answer:) In contrast, [we consider the case where] the proponent, who is refuted through [the opponent's] indication of [the logical reason's] deviation based on what has been established by the opponent, gives up [the discussion] only due to this (i.e., the opponent's indication of the logical reason's deviation) in the second statement (i.e., the opponent's objection to the proponent's thesis). If [this occurs, then] it must be correct that what is called the "cause of defeat" (nigrahanimittta) is nothing but usage of the "fallacious logical reason," not the "abandonment of thesis." However, the [proponent] who is engaged in the third statement (i.e., the proponent's answer to the opponent's objection) based on [his] intelligence, which removes it (i.e., the logical reason's deviation) explains such kind [of faults]. [If he cannot explain this,] he will abandon [his] thesis. Therefore, defeat is suitable for the [proponent] only due to the "abandonment of thesis." [At that time, the proponent] aims to [state] and is dependent on words which are stated because of the desire to abandon [the logical
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reason’s] deviation [but cannot let the proponent abandon the deviation] and admits that a property of a counterexample [exists in a proponent’s own example]. [In this case,] the “fallacious logical reason” is not used [as the “cause of defeat”]. This is indeed the principal matter of the “abandonment of thesis.”

Jayanta’s point of objection is that in the sequence of the proponent’s proof (the first statement), the opponent’s objection (the second statement), and the proponent’s answer (the third statement), if the proponent gives up the discussion when the opponent points out the logical reason’s deviation in the second statement, he is defeated due to the fallacious logical reason as the condition of defeat. In that case, if he does not give up the discussion, intends to leave the logical reason’s deviation, and fails to leave it, then he is defeated due to the abandonment of thesis as the condition of defeat. In this manner, the Nyāya school’s position can be justified.

3. Concluding Remarks

In terms of the “abandonment of thesis” (pratijñāhāni), Jayanta addresses Dharmakirti’s points of criticism one by one in the NM, although he misunderstands the purport of Dharmakirti’s view in matters of detail.

The difference in opinion about the abandonment of thesis between Dharmakirti and Jayanta derives from a difference in the theory of logic, such as the definition of the thesis and the fallacious logical reason, as well as a difference in debatology, including the order of the debate. This is evidence that understandings of the condition of defeat as one of the most important concepts in the field of debate theory are inseparable not only from their debatology but from their theory of logic.

Notes

1) Jayanta resolves asādhanaṅgavacana and adosodbhāvana into apratipatti and vipratipatti, that is, the traditional concepts in the doctrine of the Nyāya school. Furthermore, he welcomed and reintroduced Dharmakirti’s assertion in which some of the twenty-two conditions of defeat are admitted to be correct. See Sasaki [2014b] for details.

2) When criticizing the seventeen types of conditions of defeat, Dharmakirti adopts two methods—criticism of the content of each condition of defeat and criticism of classification of conditions of defeat. As for these two methods of criticism, see Sasaki [2014a: 323–324] for details.

3) Cf. NBh 1163,3–1165,2 ad NS 5.2.2 (Ci’e VN 25.4–5). Uddyotakara explained the abandonment of thesis in a different way from Vātsyāyana. Cf. NV 1166,2–4.
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4) Cf. NS 1.1.32–33.

**Abbreviations**

Cf e *citatum in alio usus secundarii modo edendi* / citation in another text used secondarily, that is, not marked by an author as being a citation, with redactional changes.

NBh *Nyāyabhāṣya* (Vātsyāyana). See NV.


NS *Nyāyasūtra* (Gautama). See NV.


**Bibliography**


**Key words** Dharmakīrti, Jayanta, Vādanyāya, Nyāyamaṇḍhari, *nigrahasthāna, pratijñāhāṇi*

(Lecturer, Waseda University, PhD)