Udayana’s theory of inference in his Kiranāvalī

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1. Praśastapāda, the author of the PDhS, mentions twice the theory of the three conditions that inferential mark should satisfy (tairūpya), in which the word “well-known (prasiddha)” is used for the second condition. Udayana gives a particular meaning to the word “prasiddha” in his Kir, a commentary of the PDhS, which is that inferential mark is well-known as such that it has firm invariable concomitance, or as such that it is associated with firmly cognized invariable concomitance.

The comment given by Udayana, however, seems to have an apparent contradiction if we hold that inferential mark has vyāpti, invariable concomitance when it satisfies the second and the third conditions, that is to say, “sapakṣe sattvam” and “vipaśāt vyāvṛttiḥ”. Since vyāpti is not considered to be established until inferential mark satisfies these two conditions, the word “vyāpti” should not have been used in the very tairūpya theory if Udayana had held that the two conditions could be sufficient for establishment of vyāpti. It may be more legitimate to assume that Udayana had a specific intention, than to assume that he made a logical error, as he gives the same comment in other places. The Vyomavatī and the Nyāyakandali, the other two main commentaries of the PDhS, do not give this kind of comment. This paper aims to clarify Udayana’s intention in using the word “prasiddha”.

2. Later Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika texts define the instrument of inferential knowledge as the consideration of inferential mark (lingaparāmarśa), which is regarded as the knowledge that the property qualified by invariable concomitance is present in a particular location (vyāptivivishaṭapaśadharmañjñāna). According to their theory, the agent of inference should first grasp vyāpti in a particular location (sapakṣa, similar instance). After that, he sees, in another particular location different from a sapakṣa (pakṣa, inferential subject), the inferential mark, from which the remembrance about vyāpti arises. Finally, when he cognizes the inferential mark again in the pakṣa as
such that it has vyāpti with sādhya, the thing to be inferred, inferential knowledge occurs.

It seems clear here that Udayana has attempted to site this lingaparāmarśa theory along with the word “drḍavyāptikataya” when commenting on the Praśastapāda’s statements. His first comment on them, “inferential mark is nothing but what is well-known again (lingam punar prasiddham eva)”, must be intended to refer to ling-gaparāmarśa ⁴.

3. However, as mentioned above, if vyāpti is established by the second condition and the third condition, his comment has conflict with the trairūpya theory. To this matter, Udayana’s comment on the theory of the grasp of vyāpti and that of fallacious reasons (hetvābhāsa) must be a key.

When Udayana comments on the passage of the PDhS, in which Praśastapāda mentions the process of the occurrence of inferential knowledge, he clarifies how vyāpti can be grasped. Denying causality (tadutpatti) and identity (tādātmya) as the ontological ground for the establishment of vyāpti, he asserts svabhāvikasambandha, natural relationship. For Naiyāyikas after around the 9th century, vyāpti is regarded to be nothing but svabhāvikasambandha, the relationship which lies between two things without any other conditions. According to their theory, what the agent of inference should do to grasp vyāpti is to cognize that there is nothing except the inferential mark and the thing to be inferred in a particular location. For, according to the Naiyāyikas, vyāpti is equal to a natural relationship which also corresponds with an unconditional relationship (nirūpādhvikasambandha). Buddhist logicians, in contrast, regard the ascertainment of sapakṣe sattvam and vipakṣāt vyāvṛtthiḥ by perception (pratyakṣa) and non-perception (anupalabdhi), as the epistemological ground for establishment of vyāpti. We may assume that Udayana had a specific intention when he asserted the theory of the grasp of vyāpti based on non-perception of condition (upādhi) in refuting the Buddhist logicians’ view.

We will next see Praśastapāda’s statement on hetvābhāsas, along with the quotation from the VS 3-1-10 ⁵. Udayana identifies asat and sandigdha in the VS with asiddha and anaikānika respectively. Asiddha is regarded as a kind of hetvābhāsas that is opposite to the first condition of the trairūpya theory, that is, “pakṣadharmaṭā”, and anaikāntika is regarded as such that it lacks the third condition. As for apras-
iddha, Udayana puts it on a particular position. According to his interpretation, it includes not only viruddha, which is opposed to the second condition, but also prakaraṇasama and kālātyayāpadiṣṭa. It is well known that prakaraṇasama and kālātyayāpadiṣṭa respectively corresponds to satpratipakṣa and bādhita in most of the Nyāya-Vaśeṣika texts, and also that being free from the each fallacy which lies in satpratipakṣa and bādhita (asatpratipaksatva, abādhitatva) is considered to be the fourth and the fifth conditions. Udayana says that the word “prasiddha” should be regarded to exclude prakaraṇasama and kālātyayāpadiṣṭa because the word “aprasiddha” includes both fallacious reasons⁶). Thus, the word “prasiddha” in Praśastapāda’s theory of trairūpya includes the fourth and the fifth conditions as well as the second condition. For Udayana, that which is required for the occurrence of inferential knowledge is not only the three conditions but also the other two. Inferential mark can be a “prasiddha”, such that it is associated with vyāpti, only when all the five conditions are satisfied.

4. The following points have been made clear. Adding the word “drḍavyāptikatayā” to “prasiddha”, Udayana refers to the theory of liṅgaparāmarśa and that of the grasp of vyāpti based on non-perception of upādhi, and joins the fourth and the fifth conditions to the three conditions of inferential mark. These points clearly show that Udayana regarded that the theory of trairūpya is not enough to define the valid inferential mark. He dared to place a special significance on the word “prasiddha” to assert the above theories of the Nyāya-Vaśeṣikas logic, which differs from the Buddhist logic based on the trairūpya theory.

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1) Padārthadharmanāṃgadṛṣṭa (PDhŚ), included in the Kiranāvālī (K) of Udayana, edited by Jitendra S. Jetly, Gaekwad’s Oriental Series 154, Vadodara: Oriental Institute, 1971, p. 193, 18-21; p.195, 9-12
3) K, p.196, 4-7; K, p.264, 3-4
4) K, p.193, 22
6) K, p.196, 9-12; K, p.234, 23-27

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