How to refer to a thing by a word: Another difference in the theories of denotation between Dignāga and Kumārila

Kiyotaka YOSHIMIZU

In this paper I wish to propose a new approach to the question of how Dignāga and Kumārila deal with the meaning of a word. It is a linguistic approach that does not bring into question whether the denotation of a generic term is concerned with reality or concept. Uddyotakara and Kumārila criticize the *apoha* theory by arguing that it results in circularity because the word "cow" can exclude the class of non-cow only when the class of cow that is negated by the class of non-cow has already been known. In answering to an objection, however, Dignāga has already said: The denotation of a word is comparable to the negative concomitance of the logical reason in a valid inference because, for example, the word "cow" excludes all horses by virtue of the fact that horns are never seen on them (PSV 5. 43b).

As is illustrated by Patañjali at the beginning of his *Mahābhāṣya,* ordinary people characterize a cow as an animal that has a dewlap, a tail, a hump, hooves and horns, and recall such an animal hearing the word "cow." In the abovementioned explanation Dignāga indicates that the class of animals divides into horned ones and hornless ones. Through the repetition of lapping a bifurcation by a characteristic over another bifurcation by another characteristic, the word "cow" encloses its referent within a closed sphere without assuming a single universal inherent in individual cows in this sphere. Although the species to be excluded by the word "cow" are innumerable, the word "cow" can exclude all of them by means of only some particular characteristics that form the worldly definition of the cow.

The way of exclusion in Dignāga's *apoha* theory is linked with an alternative theory of Nyāya semantics according to which the word "cow" denotes cow's configuration (*saṃsthāna*) that consists of the fixed set of parts, such as a dewlap, etc. Criticizing the Nyāya view that the entirety of a dewlap, etc., reveals the universal of a cow, i.e., the cowness, Kumārila points out that this view leads to infinite regression because, if it were necessary for the cognition of the cowness to cognize a dewlap, etc., it would also be necessary for the cognition of a dewlap to cognize its own parts. Even if a dewlap, etc., are not cognized simultaneously, the cognition of the cowness can take place. Moreover, one can find the cowness even in an individual cow deprived of some of its characteristics (ŚV, Vanavāda, vv. 5-6, 73cd-74).

It is established in the Mīmāṃsā semantics that a word solely denotes a universal and can be related to an individual only indirectly through the inherence of the universal to it. Moreover, comparing the universal to a collar of animal (*bhūtakaṇṭhaguṇa, ibid*., v. 35), Kumārila emphasizes that the universal is entirely possessed by an individual. This aspect of universal, which was termed by Dignāga as "entire inherence in each entity" (PSV 5.36d), is elucidated in the Ākṛty-adhikaraṇa (MmS 1.3.30-35) and applied to exegetics in the Āgneyy-adhikaraṇa (MmS 3.2.21-28) of Kumārila's *Tantravārttika.*

Despite the fact that Bhartṛhari's holistic theory influenced Dignāga's thought of sentence meaning, Dignāga puts a word isolated from sentences in the semantic competition with other words of the same level, and elucidates the *apoha* by componential analysis. As a Mīmāṃsaka, however, Kumārila adapts his theory of semantics for the understanding of a sentence that states something referring to an individual given in a particular context. For this purpose, he refutes the Nyāya theory of *saṃsthāna* in accordance with the pragmatics where it is questioned how one cognizes a universal to use a word in a given concrete situation.