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HOW NOT TO AVOID SPEAKING
– A Free Exposition of Dignāga's *Apoha* Doctrine

PROLOGUE

Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophers' attitude toward language is notoriously negative. The transcendental reality is often said to be ineffable. One's obsession to apprehend the truth through words is an intellectual disease to be cured. Attachment to verbal and conceptual proliferation enslaves oneself in the afflictive circle of life and death. Nevertheless, no Buddhist can afford to overlook the significance of language in preaching Buddhist *dharmas* as well as in day-to-day transactions. The point is not that of keeping silence. Rather, one should understand and use language in such a way that one alludes to the unsayable reality and somehow escapes the bewitchment of language. Perhaps with this realization in mind, Mahāyāna Buddhist metaphysicians had fostered the *penchant* for using, at the sentential level, denials, negations and paradoxes to couch their views. In a similar vein but mainly at the word level, Dignāga (ca. 480–540 A.D.) the Yogācāra epistemologist¹ offered us a theory of language known as *apoha* doctrine in his landmark work *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (henceforth *PS*).² It is the purpose of this article to construe the doctrine.

In his epistemology Dignāga accepted only non-conceptual perception (*pratyakṣa*) as the genuine means of knowing that reveals actuality. For him, inference (*anumāna*) and verbal cognition (*śābda*) are both fictional plays by dint of concepts. It is understood that, by introducing the notion of *anyāpoha* (exclusion of others) into his theory of *śābda*, Dignāga intended to show that *śābda* is not intrinsically different from *anumāna*. Both means of knowing hang on conception, which acts in the *apoha* manner. As such, neither is capable of delivering the true form of what there is.

Now if the verbal net cannot catch the transcendental real, would one then be shut within one's private world where meaningful communication with others is ruled out a priori? This consequence looms especially

when the percept is taken as private, discrete sense data *absolutely* distinct from each other. That, however, is not Dignāga's position. On the contrary, his *apoha* doctrine tells us how words can negatively indicate the real, and how – insofar as their use does not impose on the real what is not there – words can be faithful to reality.

In what follows I shall first sketch Dignāga's theories of perception and of inference, focusing on issues pertinent to the rest of the article. My reading of the theories differs significantly from some received interpretations. I will then discuss the *apoha* doctrine in some details, relating it to inference and clarifying certain key notions. I will highlight its relative merits against some other approaches in its interpretation of the way a word signifies its object. Then, a section is devoted to what I call demonstrative *apoha*. Towards the end of the article, I shall briefly mention certain problems concerning language and suggest that Dignāga's *apoha* theory shows a way as to how, despite the deficiency of language, not to do away with speech. As the discussions proceed, incidentally, my exposition would finally go beyond the boundary of the text. I thereby make no claim for hermeneutic accuracy.

1. PERCEPTION

In discussing Dignāga's views on perception, two interrelated notions demand our attention: the notion of what there is in reality and that of what is directly and entirely perceivable. The former refers to the real things in the world, while the latter that which forms the very object of senses. Dignāga, speaking of sense-perception (*indriya-jñāna*) and its object, indicates the two notions in the following verse:

- S1: A thing (*dharmin*) of many forms (*rūpa*; aspect) cannot
 be known entirely [viz. in all its aspects] by the sense.
 That form (*rūpa*) which is experienced as it is and which
 is ineffable is the field-of-operation (*gocara*) of the sense.³

The term “*dharmin*” is usually used – together with “*dharma*” – by Dignāga in his theory of inference, and belongs to the category of *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* (common-appearance). But I think here it stands for the notion of what there is in reality.⁴ When Dignāga argues in the *apoha* chapter of PS that a class-word (*jāti-śabda*), say “lotus”, does not express its particulars (*bheda*; *vyakti*), such as lotuses, he is denying the sayability of real, concrete things. Now, while Dignāga said little about reality it can be just these concrete things as lotuses, cows and

so on that constitute for him the totality of the real (external) world, although they are presented to one only through perception, but not thought or talk. Perhaps, ultimately one simply cannot say how the structure of the world is. But if one can say anything at all, given that, as I shall show, in Dignāga there is no rift between the transcendental (the perceptual) and the conventional (the conceptual),⁵ the concrete things should be *said* to be what there are in reality.⁶

For Dignāga, a genuine perceptual episode is devoid of conception (*kalpanā*). This means that it is free from any conceptual thought which is expressible by the five kinds of words: arbitrary words (*yadṛcchāśabda*), class-words, quality-words, action-words and substance-words. An opponent may say that a blue thing, as a *dharmin*, qualified by the quality-character (*guṇa*) blue, as a *dharma*, can be expressed by the word “blue”, and so on. But Dignāga seems to hold that transcendentially (*paramārthataḥ*) there is no difference between a quality-character, or a class-character, and its bearer. A *dharmin-dharma* differentiation is, indeed, a construction. After all, one does not see any difference between a cow and its character of being a cow!⁷

As a matter of fact, we cannot perceive a real thing in all its aspects. One may see just the front side of an elephant, for instance. In elucidating the nature of perceptual experience, our primary concern should be that which is directly and entirely perceptible or our second notion. Dignāga, I believe, used the troublesome term “*svalakṣaṇa*” for the notion. The term may be translated as self-appearance or appearance-in-itself and understood as the non-conceptually perceivable form of a real thing. A self-appearance is ineffable, yet, when it is perceived, it is known entirely.

Significantly, one should understand the notion of *svalakṣaṇa* in terms of the objective field – or rather its focus – of perceptual experience, rather than of atoms or gross things. When one sees a forest at a distance, the *svalakṣaṇa* concerned would be its visible form as a whole (*sāmānya*), though the forest is actually composed of many trees.⁸ Analogically, one may expect that when a swaying green guava is perceived, the *svalakṣaṇa* be an integral whole containing guava-class, green-quality, swaying-action, etc. and their bearers, all in a conceptually undifferentiated state.

At one place in the *apoha* chapter, Dignāga holds that when one conceptually cognizes an object, e.g., a jug, as a character-bearer, with its characters of, say, being white, earthen, real and odorous, etc., one does not cognize the characters individually, rather one is aware of them as an undifferentiated whole.⁹ I suspect that Dignāga is here

unknowingly shifting from the case of conceptual cognition toward that of perception. For if any inner distinction is not possible, one cannot use words to designate the bearer by expressing its characters. It would be like *svalakṣaṇas* which are said to be ineffable. The unanalyzable nature of the percept leads one to assert its ineffability. Later in the chapter, Dignāga denies the existence of a unified complex entity (**samudāya*).¹⁰ But such an entity turns out to be one whose relation to its character can be articulated as that of identity or difference. Problems arise as soon as we *conceive* a self-characterized object as an effable conglomerate of effable components and ask whether it is different from or the same as its components. It is in this light, I think, we should understand Dignāga's notion of conventional existent (*samvṛti-sat*).

My interpretation of the two notions may suggest the presence of a 'gap' between a real particular and its *svalakṣaṇas*. However, the problem does not occur here only. When one turns her whole body rightwards one sees the scene before turn leftwards. This is for all epistemologists to explain. A *svalakṣaṇa* is nothing other than a thing's (or things') own (*sva*) appearance as the thing bodily presents itself to a perceptual experience. The 'gap' may cease to exist if due attention is paid to the actual experiential context, and I believe Dignāga did do so.¹¹ *Svalakṣaṇas*, then, are no privileged entities standing in-between the inner mind and the outer corporeal world. Neither are *svalakṣaṇas* point-instants or piece-meal sense-data, nor do they form a private world of colored shapes or shaped colors.

To give a phenomenalist account of the theory is to overlook some fundamental differences between the Buddhist's conceptual background and that of a Western phenomenalist and his allies. There is in Mahāyāna Buddhism neither the Cartesian dualism nor any 'para-mechanical' theory.¹² "Don't think, but look!", Dignāga – I suppose – would have approved wholeheartedly this Wittgensteinian dictum.¹³ After all, one cannot *perceive* a membrane-like appearance with something else lurking behind or a bundle or discrete *quale*-pieces, without the dint of *kalpanā* in relation to a highly hypothetical scientific causal theory.

A few more notes to end the section:

- (i) For Dignāga, a sense has an apprehending (*grāhaka*) ability (*śakti*) capable of perceiving.¹⁴ It is no passive receptor of incoming sense-stimuli.
- (ii) Dignāga seems to hold that self-awareness (*svasamvitti*), which occurs simultaneously with its object, a first-order perceptual experience, may know the object as desirable or otherwise. This means,

pace phenomenologists, affective or volitive elements are there from the outset of a perceptual episode.¹⁵

- (iii) S1 indicates that a sense-perception is necessarily perspective. A real thing presents itself to different senses, in different orientations and so on, while each such presentation as a *svalakṣaṇa*, being brought into relief by its background, can be seen as three-dimensional. Merleau-Ponty so speaks from his phenomenological standpoint: “Thus there is a paradox of immanence and transcendence in perception. Immanence, because the perceived object cannot be foreign to him who perceives; transcendence, because it always contains something more than what is actually given.”¹⁶ The *transcendence* suggested in S1 predicates the existence of things and aspects external to consciousness.

2. INFERENCE

In Dignāga’s logic, one seeks for a genuine logical reason (*hetu*) to establish an inference. The three characters a reason must have to be genuine are as follows:

- (i) The reason must belong to *pakṣa*, the subject about which an inference is made.
- (ii) It must belong to at least one *sapakṣa*, i.e., that which is similar to *pakṣa* by possessing *sādhya*, the property whose belonging to *pakṣa* is to be inferred.
- (iii) It must not belong to any *vipakṣa*, i.e., that which is dissimilar from *pakṣa* by not possessing *sādhya*.

Once the reason at hand is confirmed to have the characters, it is presumably established that the subject of inference possesses *sādhya*. Dignāga’s stock example is the inference wherein one, knowing that sound is produced, infers that sound has the property of impermanence.

Dignāga’s emphasis, indeed, is on the third character. A genuine reason establishes what is to be inferred by excluding all *vipakṣas* such that the *pakṣa* to which the reason belongs is not that in which the *sādhya* concerned does not reside. The latter point is what is meant when we say that the subject possesses *sādhya*. In the above example, the presence of the property-of-producedness (= *hetu*) in sound leads to the knowledge that sound is not where the property-of-impermanence (= *sādhya*) is absent.

Why did Dignāga not take the second character to be that the reason is present *only in sapakṣa*? For Dignāga, as the extension of things

having the property of *hetu* can be unlimited, it is not necessary to confirm such a character. Besides, Dignāga might think that a universal affirmative proposition in the form “All A’s are B’s” may seduce one to imagine an essential relation between *hetu* and *sādhya*. Dignāga’s negative approach certainly dilutes the temptation of giving an eidetic and/or a causal explanation of the relation. What seems neglected by scholars is that his logic differs significantly from inductive logic. An inductive method by itself does not tell one when to start or what to observe, yet Dignāga’s logic may begin with the question: does the *pakṣa* possess the *sādhya*, and why so, or the like? Further, such a method does not tell one when to end, but for Dignāga one can rest the confirmation of a *hetu*’s having the third character simply on the non-observation of its being present in any *vipakṣa*.¹⁷ The process of confirming a *hetu* in respect of the three characters, known as ‘inference for oneself’, is a reason-seeking process with a negative and conjectural tone. A reason residing in a *pakṣa* is disqualified mainly when one reminds oneself of or observes a counter-example.¹⁸ In such a logic there is virtually no need of observing and inducing many instances.

An empiricist prefers an inductive method. For him the world is a depository of discrete empirical data without any intrinsic relation therebetween. One just needs to glean data here and there and generalize them to form an empirical law. That Dignāga did not opt for the method together with its skeptical leaning, may suggest that he did not view reality as a great bundle of scattering raw-materials. Actually, Dignāga did not categorically deny the existence of class-character (*jāti*). He did deny the existence of a common-appearance take as an indivisible real entity residing in and *ontologically distinct from* a plurality of particulars. Yet there may be ineffable concrete class-characters so knit with their bearers that they cannot be distinctly known as substantial entities, and that they appear particularized.¹⁹ They are rather perceived as non-different from their bearers. And then a *svalakṣaṇa* is not something bare.²⁰ In any case, it seems certain that although Dignāga rejected the possibility of perceiving commonness, he did not thereby sail on the same boat with the inductivist.

3. EXPRESSION AND APOHA

Just as a logical reason establishes what is to be inferred by excluding things that do not possess the inferable property (*sādhya*), a word expresses its own object (*artha*) by differentiating it from objects that

are expressed by its contrary words.²¹ To cite some verses from the *apoha* chapter:

- S2: That which is expressed (*abhidheya*), bearing many features, cannot be known entirely by a word. In accordance with an intrinsic relation, the knowing (*gati*) [through the word] brings on an effect of differentiation (*vyavaccheda*).²²
- S3: Verbal cognition ... tells its own object (*svārtha*) by excluding others.²³
- S4: A word expresses just things (*bhāvān*) that are qualified by the preclusion of others.²⁴

When criticizing the *tadvat* approach (see below), Dignāga stresses that the meaning (*artha*) of a word should be general (*sāmānyam*).²⁵ Later, it appears that what he has in mind there – besides a word-type (*śabda-sāmānya*) – is preclusion of others.²⁶ Then, for Dignāga the *artha* of a word is an *apoha*. However, Dignāga seems to understand the term “*svārtha*” differently. For Dignāga the own object (*svārtha*) of a sense or a perception is a *svalakṣaṇa* (refer to note 8). But what is the own object of a word or a verbal knowing? A general word can only express an object in that aspect with which it is intrinsically related through an exclusion which determines what the aspect would be. Since a word, incapable of expressing particulars (*bheda*),²⁷ cannot have intrinsic relation with particulars, its *own* object should be a referentially meant individual as such and in that aspect as determined by an exclusion. Such an object – call it the meant thing as such – is something generic (It differs from the *abhidheya* of S2 in that the latter is of *many* determinable aspects). However, if a word is used to express a perceived particular, the latter would become a thing qualified by exclusion; in a derivative sense this – call it the meant thing – can also be a *svārtha* as a thing (*vastu; bhāva*) qualified by preclusion.²⁸ To have a clear survey, let me make the following distinctions:

1. The thing to be meant (or expressed) = the thing to be qualified by exclusion of others = the ineffable particular.
2. The meant thing = the perceived thing as verbally qualified by an exclusion.
3. The meant thing as such = the thing referentially meant as such and qualified by an exclusion.
4. The (negative) ‘meaning’ (*artha*) = the exclusion as a qualifier.

For example, the word “rose” is meant to express particular roses but actually expresses just the meant rose as such and as qualified by

the exclusion of things other than roses. But when it is used to denote a perceived rose, the latter becomes a meant rose, but not as such. Note that the notion of a meant thing as such is resorted to here just because there is no proper designation of particulars in the doctrine. The *expressive* relation between a word and a particular can only be *thought*, not perceived. Consequently, the relata concerned must become something generic.

Being meaning-like, an *apoha* mediates a word's signifying relation to its referent. Being negative in character, it is hardly representable. On the whole, to know the signification of the word "tree" is to know that the word does not refer to non-trees, while to know that of the name "Delhi" is to know that the name does not refer to places other than Delhi.

I now tentatively suggest the three characters the word "tree" should bear to be a genuine sign with respect to a particular tree:

- (i) The word "tree" is used to express the particular tree.
- (ii) It expresses at least a thing qualified by a conceptual tree-appearance (*pratibhāsa*), one that is evoked in one's mind when one hears the word.
- (iii) It never expresses things qualified by appearances – other than the tree-appearance – that are associated with its contrary words. This is a way of saying that it is never applied to what is dissimilar.

Here, (iii) may be rephrased as: It expresses a thing by precluding things qualified by other appearances, or it expresses a thing qualified by the preclusion of non-trees. By emphasizing the third character, then, we can transfer our talk about how a word refers to its object through the medium of a positive meaning (here *pratibhāsa*) to that about how a word refers to the object through exclusion. Through *apoha* negation, the word "tree" generates – in respect of a particular thing – the knowledge that the thing expressed by the word is different from things other than trees.²⁹

In a smoke-fire inference, we infer from seeing smoke present on a hill to fire's presence on the hill. In the usage of the word "tree", the word denotes its referent through its meaning which determines the referent. We are not sure whether wherever smoke is there *must* be fire, so we can only base the inference on the non-observation of smoke's being present where fire is absent.³⁰ Similarly, we are not sure whether everything denoted by the word "tree" *must* be determined by the appearance it evokes. We can only base the signification of the word on the non-observation of its application to non-trees. We should thus understand the third character. As in the case of inference, however,

the second character should not be wiped off. For without the notion of tree-appearance such an exclusion of non-trees may make no sense.³¹

Meanwhile, if the second character is re-defined to signify a universal affirmation, then the word “cow” may generate – *positively* – the knowledge that the thing denoted by it is a thing determined by a cow-appearance. On the other hand, one may attend to the resemblance one supposedly finds among things of the same class, then the – *positive* – knowledge would be that the denotatum is a thing bearing a cow-resemblance. Further, a Naiyāyika, who posits *jāti* (universal) and takes it as the ground for application of a word (*pravṛtti-nimitta*) as well as an *artha*, might affirm both P1 and P2.³²

- P1: (x) (x has the difference [*anyonyābhāva*] from the possessors of the absence [*atyantābhāva*] of U-resemblance or μ \equiv x has μ)
- P2: (x) (x has the absence of the difference from U \equiv x has μ) – where ‘ μ ’ stands for a universal, and ‘U’ for the class of things in which μ may be said to inhere.

And so the thing denoted by “cow” is just a particular cow possessing cowhood. All the three positive versions entice us to believe that a particular is primarily expressible. Dignāga would certainly deny P1 and P2. After all, a double negation does not amount to an affirmation.

In the *apoha* chapter of PS, Dignāga puts forth a series of arguments to show that a class-word such as “lotus” expresses neither particulars (*bheda*) or a class-character (viz., a genus) nor the character’s relation to a particular or a particular possessing the character, and concludes that a class-word, as well as a quality-word, etc., signifies its own object by means of preclusion of others.

Dignāga argues that it is his doctrine that satisfactorily explains some common fact about usage of words. For example, if we use the words “blue” and “lotus” to express a blue lotus the two words should be co-referential (*sāmāna-adhikarānya*). Yet, none of the alternative approaches, according to Dignāga, can explain the fact. The *tadvat* (character-bearer) approach is, indeed, the most promising and Dignāga made much effort to repudiate it. If – as followers of the approach have it – the words “blue” and “lotus” co-refer to blue lotuses through directly expressing the quality blue and the lotus-hood respectively then, the latter being their very own – use the term “expressee” for that which is expressed – expressees (*sva-abhidheya*), one fails to see how they can co-referentially encompass the class of blue lotuses. The basic problem, if I am not mistaken, is that once a character and its bearer

are considered as distinctive and substantial entities, it is difficult to see how a word can refer to the bearer through directly expressing the character as its very *artha*.

The vantage of the *apoha* approach seems to rest on the non-substantial nature of preclusion. Here, the words “blue” and “lotus”, while differing in what they exclude, become converged (*samudita*) at one place, i.e., a blue lotus, and so are co-referential.³³ Unlike a class-character, an exclusion does not stand on a word’s way to its referent, it rather facilitates the word’s ‘going’ toward the referent by setting the latter in relief. Words refer to their common object just like crows alighting upon a pillar. A pillar is erected in an *empty space* and crows find no difficulty alighting on it. Similarly, a referent is made in relief through *exclusion* so that words can refer *toward* it. The *tadvat* approach would be like crows to alight on a small circle on the ground above which may lay a net (signifying a character) – by no means an easy thing.

That even under this negative approach a word cannot really reach a particular is indeed an apohist assertion. On the other hand, the approach prevails by bringing the real into relief and by not imposing on it what is actually not there, viz., universal. The paradox here is that though the *apoha* doctrine highlights the ineffable nature of reality, it turns out to show the best way for an expression to approximate reality.

4. THREE WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING OF LANGUAGE

Here are three approaches accounting for the way a word signifies its object:

- (1) The essentialist approach: a word expresses its object through the medium of an abstract sense, separated from a ‘private’ mental image, or through a universal inhering in all its referents.
- (2) The descriptive approach: a word expresses its referent through the medium of a conceptual appearance – such as *pratibhāsa* – or through certain resemblance one finds among its referents.
- (3) The de-substantial approach: a word expresses its referent through the medium of a preclusion of objects to which it is never applied.

I understand that both Frege and the Naiyāyika follow the essentialist approach. The former appealed to the notion of sense (*Sinn*) while the latter that of universal (*jāti*), both signifying highly substantial or abstract entities. A Fregean sense is an abstract ideal entity which determines for a given word a referent. A word is related to its referent via a sense, yet

how the relation is determined by the sense is not properly explained by Frege himself. Someone may know of Jawaharlal Nehru only as a deceased former prime minister of India but use the name “Nehru” to refer to him successfully. Yet the sense of the name, expressible by the phrase “a deceased former prime minister of India,” does not pick out Nehru uniquely. Again, while for Frege a referent is not an ingredient of meaning, it may be argued that to know the sense of a word one needs to know its referent. This is most obvious in the case of token-reflexive words like “today”, “I” and demonstratives.³⁴ The problem with Frege seems to be that he made too sharp a distinction between a word and its sense as well as between the sense and the referent.

It may be said that the meaning of the word “cow” corresponds to the mode of presentation of the universal cow-hood. But there are problems related to the notion of universal. Wittgenstein, for instance, has convincingly pointed out that among things referred to by a general word we see only resemblances overlapping and criss-crossing but not any commonness.³⁵ A Naiyāyika would find it difficult to counter the view.

The second approach, which seeks to offer a faithful description of the way a word is used – in the actual context of experience – to express its object,³⁶ may have support from common sense. Here, the notion of *pratibhāsa* claims our attention as that which *appears to* one’s mind when one uses a word. A *pratibhāsa* is altogether conceptual, imaginal and representative. It re-presents generically the non-conceptual forms (*ākāra*) of a number of one’s previous perceptual episodes of the same kind of object. As such it has an imaginal aspect with a perceptual bearing. One, indeed, cannot brush away an imaginal appearance and look for a purely objective, ideal and self-identical entity called “sense”. But then is a *pratibhāsa* something private?

A private entity would here be an entity that *real-ly* exists in consciousness and is incapable of recurrence. Besides the perceptual bearing concerned, the fact that we cannot have a simultaneous access to two – appearing at different moments – *pratibhāsas per se* evoked by the same word surely makes impossible our confirmation of the recurrence of a self-same *pratibhāsa*. Yet, what is first of all not possible is the confirmation, not the recurrence. But is not a *pratibhāsa* a real phase of consciousness, which is admittedly in a perpetual flux? For Dignāga whatever is real is primarily non-conceptually known, yet this ‘image’ has a conceptual aspect as well.³⁷ Since a conceptual construct as *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* is unreal, a *pratibhāsa* would not exist

in the mind as something real. Again, Dignāga attributed to *apoha*, as a conceptual item, the feature of being permanent (*nitya*).³⁸ This also makes room for understanding a conceptual *pratibhāsa* as recurrent. It now turns out that a *pratibhāsa* is neither purely objective nor purely subjective. Without further complicating the issue, we may phenomenologically reckon it as a – on the whole – recurrent appearance existing intentionally, but not real-ly, in consciousness.

With the notion of *pratibhāsa* one may think that the use of a word consists in applying to what is similar, and this application is determined by a word-evoked *pratibhāsa*. Were it the case, Dignāga contends, “then from [hearing] the word “tree” there would be no doubt about the appearance (*pratibhāsa*) of a *śimsapā* or of other [kinds of trees] in respect of a certain thing; yet, there would be doubt about just the appearance of earthness or that of substance-hood, etc.”³⁹ A conceptual tree-appearance does not by itself tell whether the tree concerned is earthen or not; yet, by attending to things “tree” does not apply to, one knows that the tree is made – not of fire but – of earthen elements, and so no doubt would arise regarding the appearance of earthness, and so on.

But why if one adopts the proposed approach there would be no doubt about the conceptual appearance of a certain kind of trees? Hearing the word “tree” might evoke a conceptual appearance of a particular kind of trees showing their specific nature, yet it is a fact that uncertainty always arises as regards the specific nature of the denotatum of a generic expression. Another problem is that we are not sure whether the tree in question must be determined by a certain given appearance, for not even a generic appearance can cover no more and no less than what we conventionally call trees. If we come across a new species of trees, the proposed approach may prevent us from calling them trees, although we observe in them features to which the contrary words of “tree” are *all the more* inapplicable. As the appearance then requires an interpretation for its determining function, it cannot by itself determine a given object as denotable by “tree”.

Now if actuality is a world of differences, an expression cannot represent to us the subtle – internal – differences of the class of things it conventionally refers to. Yet from an attention to the things’ – external – differences from others our knowledge about their general nature arises. This point, together with the predicament of the first two approaches, suggests the relevancy of our third approach. This approach alone brings to light the facts that words as well as their own *arthas* are interdependent, that a word derives its own *artha* from the

latter's differentiation from the *arthas* of many other words. Note that the approach does not dispense with the notion of *pratibhāsa*, as it too conveys an idea of the meant as such. Yet the *apoha* preclusion prevails. Given a word-type, a *pratibhāsa*, a *svārtha*, there is correlatively an *apoha* that precedes to determine it.

To think is to posit, to objectify, to abstract, to separate and to construct, etc., or, in one word, to substantiate. One asks: "What is the meaning of a word?" or "What is the *artha* of a word?" Questions like these produce in us a mental cramp – we felt that there must be something substantial over there in an ideal space or in the objective world that functions as the meaning or *artha*. The essentialist approach is very much such a substantiation of meaning, whereas the descriptive approach is just half way to it. This may explain why Dignāga denied even the existence of resemblance.⁴⁰ The substantiation leads to various sorts of intellectual attachments, which may become obstacles to religious realization. Besides, one then fails to see the contextual, temporal and correlative nature of language and so even fails to understand the functioning of language. The *apoha* approach, instead, seeks to de-substantiate meaning by stressing the negativity embedded in the way a word signifies its object. An expression consists not in saying what a thing is but in saying what it is not.

5. DEMONSTRATIVE APOHA

So far I have focused on class-words and quality-words, which, for Dignāga, are too generic to pick up a particular object. But can a demonstrative like "this" or "that" properly express a perceptual particular?

I think token-reflexive words – like "now", "you" and including demonstratives – should be classified, together with proper names, under the title of arbitrary words (*yadr̥cchā-śabda*; words devoid of a meaning), for they are all used *seemingly* to denote their objects without the medium of a concept under which a class of things are subsumed. A proper name itself may be said to take the role of a character and is attached to its object. So, in our previous example, the proper name "Nehru" can be used successfully to refer to just an individual, for it is different from names like "Indira Gandhi", "Rajiv Gandhi", etc. However, for Dignāga the reference of a proper name is factually effected through an *apoha* procedure.

Unlike a proper name, a demonstrative can be used freely to refer to any perceived object without any previous name-giving act or knowledge of such an act and is not supposed to continue to be associated with its

referent for some time. While it is true that a demonstrative reference does not explicitly involve meaning that mediates the reference in the way that of a general term does, we still can say that a demonstrative has two meanings, one generic, the other specific. The generic meaning of, for instance, “this” is, or corresponds to, the sense that embodies the general character of being a directly intended object in one’s visible front (in the case of a visual perception).⁴¹ Its specific meaning on a given occasion of utterance is the sense that conceptually determines a perceived object in one’s front as an intended particular within a particular location. We may call the latter sense a demonstrative sense.

What is this demonstrative sense? It may simply determine a percept as a barely intended object at a certain place. It does not tell us anything specific about its characters and its relations to adjoining things. Its corresponding meaning, then, seems too impoverished to *say* what the percept is. A demonstrative seems to function as a replacement of one’s primitive unlearned behavior of pointing to something with a finger. Then, a demonstrative directs our attention to a certain visible thing by telling us the direction of seeing the thing rather than by directly denoting it. And we know from experience that in many cases the hearer may even fail to know what the speaker means to indicate. All this suggests that the expressive function of a demonstrative is rather limited.

One usually uses a demonstrative when its referent is perceptually present. Such a conceptually perceived object can certainly bridge the alleged gap between a self-appearance and a full-fledged common-appearance. The question is whether general words alone need *apoha* operation and a demonstrative “is immune to *apoha* negation because the demonstrative does not denote its object through a shared property, but does so directly.”⁴²

There are reasons for saying that a demonstrative is not immune to *apoha* negation: first, a demonstrative sense is still a conceptual entity and for Dignāga *apoha* operates in tandem with conception; secondly, even proper names may also be said to denote their objects without a shared feature or a meaning, yet they are undisputedly prone to *apoha*.⁴³ It seems to me that a demonstrative, say “this”, expresses a particular by differentiating it from those conceptually-perceptually co-present objects which are not presently indicated by the demonstrative. This *indicatum*, no longer a thing to be meant, is then a thing qualified by the exclusion of things other than *this*.

To impose *apoha* on the perceptually co-present objects is not to withdraw or eliminate them. Instead of positively determining the

indicated object, the preclusion induces us *not to determine* it by directing our attention to its differences from the surrounding objects (*the others*). We rather become more aware of the relation between the two kinds of object and are less inclined to substantiate the indicated object. We may call such a preclusion *demonstrative apoha*. The *apoha* so understood, further, takes care of the fact that even with the aid of a pointing finger a demonstrative generates uncertainty as to what its indicatum is. One may say that a demonstrative has the three characters: (i) it is used to indicate a particular in one's front, (ii) it connotes a demonstrative – both generic and specific – meaning, and (iii) it effects a demonstrative *apoha*.

The above discussion applies to token-reflexives in general. Here I am tempted to quote a set of theses of Donn Welton's as the phenomenologist outlines the dialectic relation between language and perception:

- 1.1 A This is a This only in terms of a That which is not a This.
- 1.2 If a This is a Here it is such only in contrast to a There which is not Here.
- 1.3 If a This is a Now it is such only in contrast to a Then which is not a Now.
- 1.4 A This which is Here and Now and which is not a That which is There and/or Then is such according to a What.⁴⁴

A Today is a Today only in contrast to a Yesterday, a Tomorrow, etc., while an I is an I only in contrast to a You, a He etc. So, one simply cannot use the word "I" this way: "Yes, I am perceiving my self and going to use the word "I" to denote it. Since my self is *in toto* different from yours – well, I doubt whether you have it – only I know how "I" means my self and so the meaning of the word "I" is private, no way accessible to you!" One should be told that the word "I" makes sense *only* when it differentiates its own object from other objects expressed by "you", "he", etc. The meanings of "you", "he", etc., delimit that of "I" such that one's ego-sense – if any – as the presentation of one's self (or consciousness) would be ineffable if it is something unique, but if it is effable it would be intersubjectively knowable.⁴⁵ If my understanding is correct – that is, not incorrect – there is in Yogācāra Buddhism no room for pure subjectivism or private language.

Finally, taking a demonstrative sense and a demonstrative *apoha* together, a demonstrative may be said to negatively indicate its referent. Similarly, a general word negatively indicates its particulars in that it,

through *apoha* and *pratibhāsa*, tells the direction – its *svārtha* = what the particulars have in common – of perceiving them. As is suggested, the negativity involved therein rather facilitates the reference of a word to its particulars. By dint of a conceptual perception with an explicit or implicit use of a demonstrative, the word “picture”, preceding to set its object in relief, goes forward to express a meant particular picture qualified by the exclusion of other *arthas* as well as by a demonstrative *apoha*. The phrase “(This is) picture” would mean “(This – not that – is) not non-pictures.” One observes here a certain ‘homomorphism’ that connects together a word-*apoha*, an *artha-apoha* . . . and an *apoha*-particular (see fn. 19).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

For Dignāga words are mutually dependent and never atomic. Meaning (*artha*) of a word results not from an abstract determination of intention, but from the meaning’s and the word’s correlation with and differentiation from other meanings and words in a web of language and in the latter’s attempt to net reality. This, so to speak, negative holism is further moulded by his views that a sentence is the primary linguistic unit, that word meaning is derivative. Further, the complexity and strength of the *apoha* doctrine seem to consist in its multiple functions: (i) it shows the negative indicability as well as positive ineffability of the real; (ii) it sheds light on the interdependency of words and meanings, while accounting for certain linguistic facts underlying the expressive capacity of language; (iii) it de-substantiates the notion of *artha*, dispensing with universals, and so provides a way of escaping the spell language casts on our mind.

In a conceptual awareness we may determine the thing X as X. Now with the *apoha* alternative, we may determine it as not Y, Z, etc. Such a negative determination, it seems, somewhat dilutes the conceptual content of the awareness and thereby approximates a non-conceptual perception. For, we never perceive an object in isolation and it is through our seeing the background that an object is brought into relief (as a three-dimensional whole). It may then be suggested that with the *apoha* theory Dignāga had already bridged the alleged gap between pure perception and conception.⁴⁶

A related point is that the difference between the realm of *svalakṣaṇas* and that of conventional existents, i.e., spatio-temporal things properly designated by a class-word is just that between what is negatively indicatable and what is taken as positively describable. Were *svalakṣaṇas*

sensory *quale*, given that the *apoha* theory shows a way of saying the unsayable, Dignāga should have taught us how to transfer our talk about physical objects to that about sense-data.⁴⁷ Were actuality a world of *absolutely* discrete and unique particulars, the general nature of the real things would not even be verbally knowable through precluding others. One would either remain in silence or engage oneself in purely meaningless talks. Significantly, Dignāga re-understood the expressive function of language with his *apoha* doctrine, while keeping in view the integrity and utility of ordinary language.

Dignāga's *apoha* doctrine has been labeled as a form of nominalism. I have three minor objections to this practice: (i) As already said, Dignāga might accept the existence of inexpressible particularized class-characters; (ii) Wittgenstein, defending that what he was doing is not nominalism, says that "[n]ominalists make the mistake of interpreting all words as *names*, and so of not really describing their use . . ." ⁴⁸ I am sure Dignāga did not make the mistake, for his doctrine did tell us the use of words and he did not equate words with names as 'mere tags'; (iii) Dignāga is a nominalist in that he rejected the objective existence of universals as distinct from concrete particulars, but then many – probably all anti-essentialists – would be nominalists too and the peculiarity of his approach is not thereby highlighted. On my part, I think if a labeling is required – as we feel so when we do philosophy – notions like de-substantialism and negative holism are better choices.

We tend to look at language as consisted of scattered names without intrinsic correlation there-between. This nominalization goes hand in hand with entification as such a notion of language drives us to think of the world we live in as a depository of discrete substantial entities, each of which can be captured and represented by a word. We further engage ourselves in abstract thinking to expose universals and essences hidden from concrete matters. Yet, all the entification and abstraction lead to the rift between ourselves and the ever-changing concrete world we live in, as if we were – to use Wittgenstein's metaphor – in a fly-bottle where we take reflections as reality. Ignorance and distress are the main symptoms of such a bondage.

On the other hand, language conforms to the pattern of convention, something past and common; yet we want to talk about what has not been heard before, about what is special to the present situation. Reality, sadly, eludes our talk.

All in all, shall we then eliminate language? Early Wittgenstein advised his readers to take his propositions as a ladder for climbing up, then throw away the ladder and keep silence.⁴⁹ But this *detachment* from

language is at its root just an *attachment*, for it substantiates language as a whole into a ‘thing’ to be avoided. It fails to note the relationship between language – in its indicative, evocative and even natural forms – and actuality; an arrow sign, a gesture, a smile, a flower in the hand, tracks and a cloud can be as signitive as written scripts or spoken sounds, and to detach from all this is to isolate oneself, making life life-less. Moreover, given the homology between speech and thought one would be prohibited even to think. Instead, we should remain in language to transcend language, striking a middle path between attachment to and detachment from language.

We need not throw away the ladder but just keep it there. We need not forsake language but just need to use language in a way without being, so to speak, used by language. One way out is to understand a word-type as that which is differentiated from other word-types⁵⁰ and understand a word’s signifying its own *artha* as done through precluding other *arthas*. We are then declined to substantiate the word, its meaning and the real thing, and there is no need for positing universals.⁵¹

This is basically Dignāga’s way out. Unlike Ābhidharmic thinkers, he did not conceive real *dharmas* as individually specifiable, nor did he consider conceptual entities, like words and meanings, analytically independent. A word as a word-*apoha* is not a substantial entity. It, being differentiated from other words, negates even itself to refer toward its object, the reference being effected through differentiating the object from others. Here inter-dependent words and meanings play on the field of ineffable *sva-lakṣaṇas*, trying to mimic the texture of actuality. It seems unlikely that such a negative holism would go hand in hand with sensual atomism.

To couch Buddhist tenets Dignāga’s *anyāpoha* doctrine may appear insufficient to a Buddhist metaphysician, who would rather appeal to negations, denials and paradoxes, etc. Yet this doctrine is precisely what we should expect from Dignāga as an epistemologist, as it has shown us a way as to how, despite the limitation of language, not to avoid speaking.

NOTES

¹ I am of the opinion that Dignāga did not take over the Sautrāntika atomism and theory of momentariness. While one may view Dharmakīrti, Dignāga’s most distinguished successor, as a Sautrāntika-Yogācārin, I shall consider Dignāga just as a Yogācārin. Dignāga’s non-idealistic position in *PS* is no reason for proving his Sautrāntika leaning.

² This work was partially reconstructed into Sanskrit by Muni Jambūvijaya and compiled in *Dvādaśāraṃ Nayacakram of Ācārya Śrī Mallavādi Kṣamāśramaṇa* ed.

Jambūvijaya, Śrī Jain Ātmānand Sabhā, Bhavnagar, Part I, 1966, Part II, 1976 [abbr. NCI and NCII]. I am also indebted to Masaaki Hattori's *Dignāga, On Perception* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968) and Richard P. Hayes' *Dignāga on the Interpretation of Signs* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988) for the English translations of the *pratyakṣa* chapter and (partially) the *apoha* chapter of PS respectively.

³ *Dharmino 'nekarūpasya nendriyāt [viz. na indriyāt] sarvathā gatiḥ, svasaṁvedyam anirdeśyam rūpam indriyagocarah* NCI-*ṭippanāni*, p. 104. Cf. translations given by Hattori (1968: 27) and Hayes (1988: 138).

⁴ It is implied in S1 that this *dharmin* can at least be perceived in *some* of its forms. Then, we should take the two occurrences of the term "rūpa" as expressing the same kind of item, not that the first refers to a *dharma* as a *sāmānya-rūpa* (common-form), while the second a *sva-rūpa* (self-form). Refer to fn. 22. Since such a thing cannot be perceived entirely, our access to it would be partially conceptual. This may be the reason as to why Dignāga uses "dharmin" here.

⁵ For Dignāga a conceptual episode, by being aware of itself, is to be deemed as non-conceptual as well. See Hattori (1968), pp. 27, 95.

⁶ This can also be the reason why Dignāga uses the word "dharmin".

⁷ Vācaspati thus interprets the Buddhist view: "Class and other characters are not non-conceptually apprehended as piecemeal (*piṇḍavivekena*). Indeed, class and its bearer, action and its bearer, quality and its bearer ... do not appear as distinctive." Vācaspati Mīśra, *Nyāyavārtika-tātparya Ṭīkā*, ed. Paṇḍit Śrī R. S. Drāviḍ (Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, 2nd edn. 1989), p. 135.

⁸ *Tatrānekārthajanyatvāt svārthe sāmānyagocaram*. NCI-*ṭippanāni*, p. 104. Cf. Hattori (1968), pp. 26, 89. This very verse gives evidence to my reference to the notion of what there is in reality. I think the term "*aneka-artha*" may just mean many gross things, but not atoms in aggregation. In any case, if the atoms can only be thought but not perceived, their existence may need to be conceptually posited and so they may not be considered as real as *svalakṣaṇas*.

⁹ Hayes (1988), p. 268.

¹⁰ Hayes (1988), p. 282. Two verses before, (in verse 15) Dignāga mentions that a blue lotus as a complex entity (**samudāya*) is expressed by the compound word "blue-lotus". See NCII p. 630. So, even the complex entity itself is effable. It is just an expressible object (*abhidheya*), which, as a *dharmin*, bears many features/*dharmas* (See S2 in sec. 3).

¹¹ The fact that Dignāga did not characterize perception with the adjective "non-erroneous" (*abhrānta*) has received a phenomenalist reading. But the phenomenalist's notion of experience, saturated with classical physiological-psychological assumptions, suffers from the tension of an unbridgeable dichotomy between subjectivism and objectivism, between an in-itself *in me* and an in-itself *in itself*. One would do well by returning to a pre-scientific original experience: "We must discover the origin of the object at the very center of our experience ... and we must understand how, paradoxically, there is *for us* an *in-itself*." M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. by Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 71. A *svalakṣana*, paradoxical as it is, is a perceptually experienceable in-itself.

¹² "The notion [that *impressions* occur in perception] derives from a special causal hypothesis – the hypothesis that my mind can get in touch with a gate-post, only if the gate-post causes something to go on in my body, which in its turn causes something else to go on in my mind. Impressions are ghostly impulses, postulated for the ends of a para-mechanical theory." See Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London: Hutchinson & Company, 1949), p. 243.

¹³ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. by G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953, 3rd edn. 1967), p. 31.

¹⁴ Hattori (1968), p. 45.

¹⁵ This reminds us of the Buddhist notion of *vedanā*. The term “*vedanā*” has been translated by some as feeling (i.e. mere emotion) on the ground that it is either pleasing or unpleasing (or indifferent), and by some others as sensation on the ground that a *vedanā* occurs prior to (conceptual) cognition (*saṃjñā*). This discrepancy shows how strongly scholars are under the spell of Western traditional way of thinking. Can a freshly arising perception not be pre-cognitive and affective? Merleau-Ponty (1962: 24) quotes K. Koffka with approval: “An object looks attractive or repulsive before it looks black or blue ...” Incidentally, since a Dignāgean perception is non-conceptual, it can also be pre-cognitive.

¹⁶ Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, trans. by James M. Edie (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 16.

¹⁷ Shōryū Katsura has noted this difference. See his ‘Dignāga and Dharmakīrti on Apoha’, in *Studies in the Buddhist Epistemological Tradition: Proceedings of the Second International Dharmakīrti Conference*, ed. by E. Steinkellner (Vienna, 1991), p. 140.

¹⁸ I say “mainly” because it is also necessary that the reason occurs in at least a *sapakṣa*.

¹⁹ Dignāga meant to say that even if *jāti* exists, we cannot know it distinctively. See Hayes (1988: 246). According to Tom Tillemans, Tibetan Buddhists speak of an “exclusion of the other, which is a *svalakṣaṇa* object.” Since Dignāga replaced universal by the notion of *apoha*, one can just take a particularized character as such an exclusion, which is *not different* from a *svalakṣaṇa*. Significantly, there would then be a ‘homomorphism’ between *apoha* as a *svalakṣaṇa* and *apoha* as an *artha*. See Tillemans, ‘Identity and Referential Opacity in Tibetan Buddhist Apoha Theory’ in *Buddhist Logic and Epistemology*, ed. B. K. Matilal and Robert D. Evans (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1986), p. 215.

²⁰ A *svalakṣaṇa* is neither a bare bearer nor a sheer character, but that which is prior to the conceptual bearer-character (or *dharmin-dharma*) differentiation. This explains why the notion of class-character is not *completely* out of place here.

²¹ For an exposition of what contrary words would be in a given case, refer to Hayes (1988), pp. 205–212.

²² *Bahudhāpy abhidheyasya na śabdāt sarvathā gatih, svasambandhānurūpyeṇa vyavacchedārthakārya asau*. Hayes (1988), p. 306, fn. 51; cf. NCII p. 630, verse 12. The structural semblance between this verse and the verse cited as S1 is noteworthy. It is obvious that since a certain aspect of the *abhidheya* can be known by a given word, the phrase ‘*na ... sarvathā*’ should – in S1 as well as S2 – mean ‘not entirely, but just some.’

²³ NCII p. 607, verse 1; Hayes (1988), p. 300, fn. 1.

²⁴ Hayes (1988), p. 308, fn. 72.

²⁵ NCII p. 629, verse 9.

²⁶ See Dignāga’s commentaries on verse 36 in Hayes (1988: 299) and on verse 14 in NCII p. 630.

²⁷ The reasons are: (i) particulars are unlimited in number, and (ii) the word is errant in respect of any given particular. See Hayes (1988), pp. 255–7. Cf. the commentary on verse 35: “And since [the word] does not express particulars (*bheda-anabhidhāna*), there is no errancy in respect of its own object” (NCII p. 650) – this indicates that a word’s own object is not a particular. Cf. Katsura (1991), pp. 138–139: “I would like to take ‘*svārtha*’ as referring to the perceptual object itself which is something real in our external world. Even in that case ... a name designates its own object, i.e. *svalakṣaṇa*, by excluding others ...”

²⁸ In her *Bhartrhari and the Buddhists* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1986), p. 191, Radhika Herzberger directs our attention to an untraced fragment of

Dignāga's, where it reads: "Thus the *artha* of a word is a thing (*vastu*) qualified by preclusion (*nivṛtti*) but not merely preclusion." See also NCII p. 548. I think this '*artha*' should mean '*svārtha*'.

²⁹ Or the knowledge ... from things in the extension of its contrary words. So, the excluded things are *svārthas* [i.e., meant things as such] of the contrary words.

³⁰ See Katsura (1991), p. 140.

³¹ One can say as well that a word excludes things to which the word is not applicable and so makes no mentioning of the notion in question.

³² I follow Matilal in using 'difference' for '*anyonyābhāva*' and 'absence' for '*atyantābhāva*'. See Matilal, *Logic, Language and Reality* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985, 2nd edn. 1990), p. 147; also p. 153, fn. 1.

³³ This discussion and the alighting crow metaphor below figure in verse 14 of the *apoha* chapter and its commentary. See NCII p. 630.

³⁴ It is important, for example, that we attend to the modes under which items like the day of uttering "today", the place of saying "here" or an object indicated by "this" are presented in the actual context where one uses the words expressing them. These modes cannot be represented by some unique description.

³⁵ Wittgenstein (1967), p. 32.

³⁶ Hence the term "descriptive". Cf. Wittgenstein's remarks: "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only *describe* it" and "Philosophy simply puts everything before us ... For what is *hidden* ... is of no interest to us" (my emphasis). Ibid. pp. 49–50.

³⁷ This aspect constitutes part of what I have called the meant thing as such. An image might be non-conceptually knowable, but it is then not *imagined* but *perceived*.

³⁸ See Hayes (1988), p. 300.

³⁹ NCII p. 650, the commentary on verse 34.

⁴⁰ See Hayes (1988), p. 246.

⁴¹ For this understanding of the two kinds of meaning I mainly rely on David W. Smith's article 'Husserl on Demonstrative Reference and Perception', in *Husserl, Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Hubert Dreyfus (eds.) (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1982), p. 197.

⁴² Herzberger (1986), p. 170. For Herzberger a demonstrative *directly* denotes a spatio-temporal object, which is neither a *svalakṣaṇa* nor a *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*. For a text-based criticism of her views, refer to Katsura (1991).

⁴³ Though a proper name has a generic meaning in that it refers to a plurality of *pudgalas* in a temporal sequence, the word "this" too has a generic meaning.

⁴⁴ Donn Welton, *The Origins of Meaning* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983), p. 318. Welton understands a What as a pre-linguistic aesthetic sense constitutive of the appearances or object of perception.

⁴⁵ Wittgenstein (1967: 120) is bold enough to claim, "if as a matter of logic you exclude other people's having something, it loses its sense to say that you have it."

⁴⁶ The notion of demonstrative *apoha*, though not discussed by Dignāga, also helps to set up the link. In any case, Dignāga did talk about conceptual perception.

⁴⁷ In his *Ch'ü-yin-chia-she-lun (Upādāyaprajñaptiprakaṛaṇa)*, Dignāga contends that the elements of the visible, the audible, etc., are substantially real and *expressible*, whereas entities like a composite whole, being mental constructions, are nominally real and ineffable. According to Hidenori Kitagawa, one may cast doubt on the authorship of the text as its views deviate from that shown in *PS*. See Kitagawa, 'A Study of a Short Philosophical Treatise ascribed to Dignāga' in his *Indo koten ronrigaku no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan, 1965), p. 436.

⁴⁸ Wittgenstein (1967), p. 118.

⁴⁹ Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. by D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961, 2nd edn. 1971), p. 151.

⁵⁰ Dignāga applied the *apoha* method to the word (*śabda*) as well as to its reference. Refer to Ole Pind, 'Dignāga on Śabdasāmānya and Śabdaviśeṣa', in Steinkellner (1991), pp. 269–275. A word-type is then a word-*apoha* as a negative conceptual item rather than a word-universal as an objective real entity.

⁵¹ Indeed, Dignāga also applied the *apoha* method at the sentential level. However, he was there more concerned with the notion of *pratibhā* as an intuitive comprehension, which flashes upon one's mind when one understands a sentence. Hence, I would skip the issue.