A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF THE TREATISE
PRELIMINARY NOTE

Acarya Dignaga takes for granted the grasping by
the mind of its object through process of assuming its
form, i.e. sāraṇya, co-ordination between the subject (mind)
and its object. This theory has served the author as a main
weapon to dismiss the reality of external world in this treatise.

Now we have to find out who pleaded for reality of
our objective universe and who propounded the said co-ordina-
tion-theory. The early Buddhists though they are realists,
ever pleaded for the theory. V. the latest champion of
the school Bhadanta Subhagupta and his treatise Bāhyārttha-
Śiddhi- kārikā in this Bulletin, in 1967. Later Buddhists like
Sautrantikas on the other hand have adopted freely the
theory for their realistic approach to the universe, efr. my
Bā. Siddhi with Notes. But they were not original propound-
ers of the theory.

It appears, therefore, that the Sankhya-yoga-masters were
the first to draw attention to the ever-occurring phenomenon
of co-ordination between the mind or intellect and its object.
The idea will be made clear in the following statements of
Patanjali, the author of the yoga sūtras : yoga is an
absolute check of cittā-vrittis; then at that time the soul
remains in its own form. In the other states the soul is
assimilated with vrittis (mind’s functions). Vrittis are five in all;
they are: sensible experience, its reverse, empty thought, sleep
and memory. Sensible experiences are: perception, inference
and scripture, these 3 Pramanas. Reverse is a wrong knowledge
founded on an absent object, e.g. knowledge of a silver piece
on the shelf, vain thought is devoid of the object occurring in
pursuit of the word-meaning. Sleep is a metamorphosis of the
mind having as the object the idea of non-existence (sadarā-
The absolute check of these Vṛttis are secured by means of constant efforts and desirelessness (yoga sutras, I, 2-12)

Of these statements the most relevant to our purpose is the 4th Sutra which states that the soul in other states assumes the forms of the experienced things, i.e. Vṛtti-Sārdhyā. Other states—when the man is engaged in pursuit of the world activity. The following is another noteworthy statement:

An entity becomes known or unknown to the mind because the mind acquires the image of the entity reflected in itself (IV, 17).

All the metamorphoses are known to the soul (Purusa) because he has no transformation of any kind, अनिपुरुषित v. IV, 18.

On the sankhya side the author of the Karika, Īśvara-kṛṣṇa does not speak much of the Sārdhyā-theory, however the anonymous commentary, yuktidīpikā refers to it more than once. He explains vṛtti as इविस्कन्तमोक्षयुक्त, 'a transformation in the shape of its content' (v. pp. 103, 112-114). More interesting is its citation of two verses from an ancient author on p. 80:

Just as the intellect appears as if it is of the form of an object (स्वातः शरीर) just so the soul being brightened by the intellect (स्वातः शरीर) is said to be intelligent, (buddha) like a jewel (māla). Whichever is the mind's act, i.e. metamorphosis, the soul, Purusa, also assumes all such forms of the intellect which forms pertain to other than the self because he is conscious (ज्ञता).

Ample advantage of Sārdhyā vāde has been taken by the Advaita Vedantins in expounding their epistemology of perception. Refer to the Vedānta Paribhāṣā of Dharmaṇa Ch. I, pp. 13, 18:

Just as the water of a tank, going out through a hole and entering the field through channels comes
to have even like those fields, a quadrangular or other figure, similarly, the internal organ too which is of the nature of light going out through the sense of sight, etc. and reaching to the locality of contents like pot, is modified in the form of contents like the pot. This same modification is called psychosis, vrtti v. the text edited and translated by S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri, Ajgar Library series, Adyar 1942.

Sri Sankaracharya has also accepted Jñāna as sākāra, endowed with the form of its content, v. for example the Gitabhasya, p. 446 of Gita Press edn. ad XVIII, 50.

The above citations would amply prove that the sāripya- vāda was originally expounded by the Brahmanical writers, and then it was grafted on to Buddhism by the Yogacara-Buddhists in order to establish their Idealistic Philosophy. v. My Bāh. Siddhi, Notes: 151, 162, 165, 168—9 170, 183, etc. and my paper on Idealistic Buddhism in the Journal of Tirupati Research Institute, Vol. I pt. 3.

Now let us turn to the topics of the treatise.

The author, Acarya Dignaga in the first part of his treatise, i.e. Aphorisms 1-5, sets up the views of the Realists who consider the objective universe in the external as absolutely real in one form or other which the author proves to be something imaginary. In the second part the author’s own opinion about the issue is presented. This is a convenient method of treatment generally adopted in the ancient India Scientific Treatises. The method goes under the heading: Pārvapaksa and Siddhānta or Aṇumā Sampaya and Sāri-Sampaya, others’ view and own view (cp. Vinitadeva’s Tika, ad 6. Introductory).

According to the author the Realists may broadly be classified under three groups as follows:

1. The advocates of atoms as direct objects of our consciousness.
2. The advocates of the combined atoms acting as before.

3. The advocates of the atomic integrated forms behaving so.

As to the problem of the identifications of these philosophers, the first group may be taken for certain to be the early Buddhists like the Sarvastivadins-Vaibhasikas on the authority of Vasubandhu, Subhagucca and others. As to the second group we have no means to ascertain who they are except the well-known Chinese commentator Kue-Chi who reveals them to the authors of the Sutra-sect, perhaps the Sautrantikas. The advocacy of the third proposition is attributed to Vagbhata, etc. by Vimaladeva and to Sanghabhadra and his followers by Kue-Chi.

Vasubandhu also speaks of three opinions on the external objects: 1) The first opinion pleads that the object of our cognition is one whole, avyaya (like the pot, etc.); 2) the second one holds it to be many separate elements i.e. atoms and 3) the third view is: it is a totality of atoms (svabhava) The first opinion is mentioned there as that of the Vaishesika masters. The advocates of the second and the third view are not stated there. We may, however, surmise that they are the Sarvastivadins-Vaibhasikas from the context. Though the simple atoms do not get combined as they are partless, the molecules of atoms can get combined. So say the Kasmira Vaibhasikas (Vimsika, ad. 13th, ver.)

REALISTS

1. The Buddhist Realists declare: The atoms are truly objects of the sensory consciousness, because they are the real cause of that consciousness.

Dignaga replies: They are not its object, because the atoms are not cognized directly (lit. not reflected in it); example: the sense organ. (Though it causes consciousness,
it is not, at all, cognized by it). Vasubandhu's answer to them is very simple, viz. the atoms are not proved to be real entities, (paramātma na siddhātā).

The reason for Dignaga's complex answer is that he assumes two criteria for judging álambana, (object-cause), viz. 1) causality and 2) image-imposing (ākāra-arpana). Of these two the first criterion has been accepted by all schools of Buddhism and it is brought under the category of the four conditions: hetu, samanāntara, álambana and adhipati (Abh. Kosa, II, 62, Madh. Sastra I. 2. etc.) The import of causality is well kept in view in the usage of the term in the following contexts: The visible discharges the function of álambana towards the visual consciousness (धातु अवतारा को ज्ञान, ज्ञान वित्तमा). The álambana is a thing by support of which consciousness arises, that is to say, a supporting element in the process of cognition is álambana (Madh. Avatāra, my Skt. text. p. 77).

Samjñā is taking up of content and nimitā, content (निमित्त) is the same as álambana. nimitā is particulars of the same, i.e. blue, yellow and others and the factor of their determination (Trimsikābhāṣya. p. 21 & 23). The Satya-Siddhi also equates álambana with nimitā (ch. 77; विज्ञानात्मक विश्लेषण, cp. ch. 191). What is productive of knowledge is álambana (Slokavartika, p. 285: अलंबनको मेयर). The cause is the same as álambana (Umbeka in Slokavartika-ātīptaratika, p. 278). Dharmakīrti also confirms this idea: "Causality is no other than objectivity" pr. var. II, 234: The object is what is a causal entity" Ibid. 246. "A non-cause is non-object" Ibid, 257. It is also noteworthy that Dignaga himself cites a śāstra in his comment on Aphorism 2 to stress the causality a main part of álambana. There is no mention of the other part, image-evoking, which omission Vinitadeva justifies by saying that this image-evoking is accepted in this system [of the Sautrantikas] v. his Tīkka pp92below.
Now we may be sure that the above said second criterion of alambanam viz. image-imposing is a new element introduced by Dignaga under the dominant influence of the Saontaika Realists who hold sway in the field of epistemology of the Buddhists. Since the early Buddhists could not conceive of the image or no-image of a knowledge, they hold that the atoms become a direct object of the sensory consciousness. The atoms are very subtle and invisible; how can they be admitted as a direct object? Bhadanta Subhagapita, a latest champion of the school provides a fitting answer. It is as follows—

An atom which may manifest its own single knowledge cannot appear in life as separated from other atoms. When it appears associated with other atoms it looses its atomic form; how then could each of them appear in our knowledge? (Var. 4) Atoms cannot each individually and independently appear in life and this is also the reason why each of the atoms never flashes out in our consciousness (44). The atoms though they are mutually un-related and devoid of parts nevertheless become integrated and accomplish the gross things like the globe of earth and others (50)...
The person endowed with a sharp intellect and living in a mountain and such other places could count the atoms with their number and other distinction (59). Therefore it is not proper to declare that the atoms do not at all exist......(60). Refer to the Bahgyatha Siddhi in the Bulletin of Tibetology, Gangdeb, 1967 for further details.

The Vaibhasikas appear to hold the view that the atoms are not perceptible to us. They nevertheless form the knowledge-object because they are basically the cause of knowledge. A Digambara Jaina, Sumati by name is also credited to maintain the atoms as direct object (v. our remarks below on the third proposition). There are two opinions about the atoms' behaviour: 1) they exist
allowing some inter space in their midst and 2) they re-
main without any intermediate space (1) कार्यात् वक्ष्यात: 
(2) विद्यमानः वक्ष्यः ). The atoms of no interspace have 
been reciprocal support and are united. Vasubandhu in 
his Kosa says that the Kasnira Vaibhasikas advocate the 
atoms as having some inter space and remaining in a 
close vicinity (कार्यात्मकतृत्वात्) but do not get combined; and that 
Bhadanta, (a Sautrantika master) asserts that the atoms remain 
with no interspace and due to this they are termed combined 
(कर्मोदली कुलसम्बन्ध) He prefers this Bhadanta’s opinion (वक्ष्यात् 
कल्याणः कोशिक्यनि. I. p. 99, 3). See also my discussion on 
this topic in the Abh. Problem, Br. Vidya, XVIII, p. 226f. There 
is one more opinion holding the combined atoms as object-
cause. (See Tattva. s. pañjika, p. 556, and Haribhadra’s 
Abhs. aloka, pp. 372-74). This is probably the opinion 
of the Sautrantikas, see discussion below.

Dignāga elucidates his meaning of “the content” (visaya) 
thus: “A content is that whose characteristics are specified 
by the knowledge; this is so because the knowledge appear 
in the form of content. The atoms cannot behave like that 
hence not object.”

2. Then let us take the combined atoms as object. The 
author demurs to it: “Consciousness does not arise from 
what is represented in it, (i.e. combined atoms do not cause 
the consciousness) because they do not exist in substance 
like the double moon.” For the combined atoms are 
not, in fact, different from the simple ones.

Vasubandhu’s reply to this proposition is also simple.
No atom is proved to be real (paramanah na Siddhyut).

The author further makes his standpoint plain thus: 
“what object evokes the consciousness endowed with its 
own image, that is properly regarded as actual object of
that consciousness: because that atom is spoken of duly as the productive cause of the consciousness. But the aggregates of atoms are not so. (i.e. productive cause. Example, double moon, it is perceived on account of one's own defective eye. Its perception is not caused by the double moon, as there exists no object like the double moon. Similar are the aggregates of atoms."

This proposition, according to Kue-Chi comes from the Sutra-sect, i.e. Sautrantikas; but this finding is not corroborated by any other source. We have, however, enough quotations pleading for the aggregate of atoms to be object-cause. Kue-Chi clarifies their views thus: The indivisible atoms that are substantially existing are not the object of the five-fold consciousness because no indivisible atoms are manifested in it. These seven indivisible atoms constitute jointly one aṣṭarūpa, a gross atom. This gross body of atoms though phenomenally true is the object of the five-fold consciousness, because there this gross form is reflected. . . . . "(see p. below). This opinion of gross body of atoms joining together is also referred to as it is pleaded by the Kāmśīra Vaiśehasksa in the Viśmati-kāda ad 13. The characteristic of this opinion is that the gross body of atoms though it phenomenally true has been accepted as the object of consciousness. It is obvious that in this proposition the second criterion of alambana, i.e. image-imposing has been much stressed and preferred. This is confirmed by the statement of the Pramanavarāvikārā p. 230: अप्रतिक्रिया बन्धुभूतार्थातः। "The characteristic of a content is its capacity of imposing image." Note also Prā. varāıkā, II, 224: The Knowledge in what form appears, that form is spoken of as graspable of that knowledge (गृह्याधिकार स्वातदेष्ट्य नवीनत्वात्). The graspable here is multitude of atoms, (anu-sācaya-vrtti.) This is the reason for citing an earlier authority to the effect that the causality is equally an important ingredient of alambana (v. Tikā p. 92).
Digniga's objection stands on the ground that the aggregates of atoms are phenomenally true, hence cannot serve as the object-cause. This objection is dispelled by Dharmakirti in these sayings: The same self-characteristic of things (svadhisthata) is the ultimate substance (dravya sat) because the substantial thing is that which is capable of discharging a purposive action (Nyāyabindu, I, 14-15). We should remember that the above sayings are made from the Sautrāntikas' point of view. The idea of integrated atom, Sancita-upa, is also upheld by Subhagupta on the same pattern of argument: "The atoms being integrated discharge a uniform function and are termed Sancita, 'integrated' and to the upholder of this opinion how are the atoms non-substance, udaraya? (Bāh. Siddhi, ver. 39). Dharmakirti also justifies this proposition in these sayings: "The effect is caused by several things; yet what (knowledge) arises imitating what form, that form is regarded as "grasped" by that knowledge" (Pr. var. II, 248). All knowledge flashes out from its contents, the knowledge though caused by others (like the sense, etc.) assumes the form of its content only, (but not of the sense-organ)" ibid. 268.

The following citations would enable us to have a glimpse of how the advocates of the combined atoms as knowledge-contents meet difficulties in their way:

Integration, multitude, homogeneity (are synonyms); the sensory consciousness is related to it. The sense of homogeneity (samānyata) is necessarily geared up with discriminative knowledge. Pra. Vār. II, 194, comment. The five consciousness-bodies are of integrated śāmbhava; this is the conclusion, śiddhānta. It is also stated (in Pra. Saṅsucaaya) the perception as it is effected from more than one thing is focused on the homogeneity (Saṅmaya-pucca) as its own content. Thus the multitude of atoms is termed Sancita,
‘integrated’; the same is thought of as śāmānya; the sensory knowledge is centered upon it. The sense of Śāmānya is followed by a discriminative knowledge; how could it be then a discrimination-free perception? So the author says: “The atoms are formed in co-ordination with other atoms, then they are named sanātīta ‘integrated’ and serve as nimitta, object-cause of the knowledge-rise.” The so formed integrated atoms are meant in the saying: The five consciousness-bodies are of integrated śāmbhāna. That they serve as nimitta, cause of the knowledge-rise is meant in the saying because “it is effected from more than one thing.”

Such distinction of atoms is not possible in the absence of other atoms; the same (knowledge) is not fixed in a single atom, the knowledge is said as focused on śāmānya. (Pr. Var. II, 196). Comment: The distinction of atoms, is their capacity of evoking knowledge. The individual atoms are imperceptible, but they, being combined, become perceptible. Therefore, since the knowledge is not invariable with a single atom it is said by the truth-speaker (Dignāga) that knowledge is focused on the śāmānya, that is the knowledge has as its content the multitude of atoms (paramāṇa-saṅghāta-viparyyā). But, it is not to mean that knowledge is focused on Śāmānya, generality other than the atoms. Then how can the objection of the perception becoming a discrimination-haunted be raised on pretext that the perception is focused on the generality? cp. The same idea is stressed in the Chap.1, 88-90.

The above statement of Dharmakīrti in his Pra. Vārtika makes obvious that Dignāga is explaining that the combined atoms evoke a pure perceptive knowledge by saying: तत्तत्त्वार्द्धक्यात् सत्त्व वातस्यायात् ।

This fact admirably tallys with an accepted truth that Dignāga propounded his logical theories on the basis of the Sautrāntikas’ metaphysics. But here in this present treatise Dignaga’s attitude is quite different and unfavourable to the
theory of Sāṅghāṭiśāṅkara, (combined-atom-object); hence he puts it under the category of his opponents' views.

3. Then the author takes up to examine the third proposition: "Some masters say that the integrated form of atoms is the cause of consciousness." Dignāga replies that the atomic form does not become its object, e.g. its solidity, etc. and so on.

The advocates of this proposition are in the opinion of Vīnatadeva: Vāsbhata and others — which opinion is not corroborated by any other source. However, Kue-Chi assigns it to the Neo-Sarvāstivādins, Sāṅghabhadra, etc. The material elements, they maintain, (ṛṣṭadeyo dharmā) have each of them many a form (ākāra) but of these only one part becomes the object of perception. Therefore, indivisible atoms, being in co-operation with one another assume each an integrated form, Svayamāna-ākāra. This form being in substance produces the consciousness which resembles that form and hence becomes the object-cause (dhamma) of the five-fold consciousness. (v.p. more details below).

There is some anachronism here. Dignaga criticises the Neo-Sarvāstivādin, without naming him and the Neo-Sarvāstivādin dispels the criticism naming Dignaga according to Kue-Chi. We must guess that they must either contemporary of Dignaga or Dignaga speaks of some earlier spokesman of the school. It is also interesting to observe here that Dignaga ridicules the Sāṅghāṭa-vāda, (second proposition in this treatise) for which he pleaded in his standard work, Pramana-Samuccaya (see Dharmakirti's comment on p. above). These circumstances may suggest that Dignaga must have turned an arch-idealistic in a later period of his life as his predecessor Vasubandhu did according to the tradition. While composing the Pramana-Samuccaya the author should be a neutral logician as he pleads for the both systems of the Sautrantikas as well as the yogacaras, cfr. my Bud. Idealism in journal, S.V. Institute, Vol. 1, 3, pp. 7ff.

11
Kamalasāla informs us that the above said third proposition was also advocated by a Diganibara Jaina, Sumati by name. His plea is this; Atoms are two-fold viz. of common form and uncommon form in the pattern of all things having a general as well as a particular self. Of the two, the common form of atoms is cognized by the senses and their uncommon one never cognized. Thus the consciousness in a uniform pattern as related to the atoms never comes into clash; hence the atoms are accomplished as perceptible. (Tattva. pañjikā, p. 354).

Dignaga's reply to it is: 'The atomic integrated form is not perceivable like solidity (i.e. hardness,) etc. Though they are in the atoms are not perceived by our eye-consciousness. So is the atomic integrated form.' The author's weighty argument here is: 'All gross things like pot, bowl, etc. would be seen in an identical shape if the integrated form and the atomic form are one and the same. Of course there are differentiations in their sizes, but they are related to things which are only phenomenal entities and which cannot be regarded as causal factors. For, if we eliminate atoms of the empirical things one by one, we shall have no more the experience of such things. What is substantially true and existent never ceases to evoke its perception; for example, colour and other atoms. They never cease to catch up our senses.'

In this argument the author throws a sidelight on the latest phase of the Buddhist theory of matter as adumbrated in the Sātys-Siddhi. According to this theory the so-called qualities, colour, taste, odour and touchal are fundamental elements and all other four elements, earth etc. are formed out of the former four. Read S. Siddhi chs. 36,38-40 and cfr. in my Dvdasamukhs, p. 53,n.105.

4. Now the author set forth his own solution of the problem: "It is the content (artha) which exists internally
in the knowledge as a knowable aspect appearing to us as if it exists externally. Because the content is essentially in the nature of consciousness and because it acts a productive condition (to the consciousness) the knowable aspect is the object”.

The knowable aspect and the knowledge are one and designated differently. How can the principle of cause-and-effect relation be admitted between them? The author answers: “Though it is only a part of the consciousness, it becomes a productive factor of the latter because it is invariably and simultaneously associated with the latter; or it becomes so in succession by transmitting its force (Sakti).” In support of these two answers Dignāga cites the authority of his earlier Rationalists’ saying: “In the presence of cause is the presence of its result and in the absence of cause is the absence of its result this is the characteristic sign of what is the cause and what is the result even if they happen simultaneous or in succession.” This saying proves beyond doubt that there is possibly a cause-effect relation between the two simultaneous events if there is concomiance between them. This relation can be described as Sabaḥṣa-bheṣa, co-existing cause in the Sarvastivadin’s terminology. This causal relation of simultaneity (Sabaḥṣa) is applicable to the phenomenon of the mind and mental state, [śīta-caittika] that are appearing together. This relation also holds good in the case of four fundamental and four secondary elements (bhuta-bhautika) which are mutually inseparable and conditioned. A favourable example cited here is pradīpa-prabhā, lamp and light. They appear together and disappear together, hence they are mutually conditioned under the law of simultaneity (v. Kośavyā, Cal. edn., I. p. 123) conception of Buddhism, p. 25, Abh. Sangaha, Kosambi edn., VII. 22).

This pattern of argument of the Sarvāstivādin is not accepted by a more rational school of Buddhism, like the
Satya-siddhi which disproves both the reason and the example in ch. 36 and 40. Item 1, etc. The Brahmanical logicians like Kumārila also ridicule the causal relation between the co-existing events and its example. Kumārila's criticism of Dignāga's proposition is summed below along with his commentator, Pārthṣastrī: Misra's remarks:

Let not the past be grasped as the Viśbhāṣīkas assume. It may then be possible that between two knowledge that are occurring simultaneously one is the grasped and the other grasper; therefore the following is stated: With reference to the two simultaneous events there will be no possibility of asserting one is proof and the other is proved (mīna-mēṣa) for the reason that two simultaneous events are mutually independent, and that there is a lack of action and actor. Causality in your system is grasped; between the two independent events there is no cause-and-effect-relation, hence no idea of one is grasped and the other grasper (see Ślokavārttika p. 309); Halbo (we have accepted that) the characteristic of the cause-and-effect-relation is nothing but invariable concomitance of Tathārtha-bhāvin, presence of effect on the presence of cause; this characteristic is obtainable in the case of two simultaneous events; so says our great Master (Dignāga): 'It is a simultaneous conditioning factor because of invariable concomitance'. Now, on this point the following is pointed out: The Rationalists do not proclaim that causation is mere Tathārtha-bhāvin, 'presence of the effect on the presence of cause'. That causation is geared up with the succession of time and never bereft of it. This is pointed out in the following:

"The causation-characteristic freed from the time-succession is not permissible between the cow and the horse;
the same is the case with the events of time-succession, or the simultaneous moment-events of a flux of elements with the other flux of elements. Therefore amongst things which are already previously present a thing is regarded as effect of that thing from which it is produced as in the case of pot that is produced in the presence of colour, etc." (note this illustration from the opponent's point of view).

The said example of lamp and light for simultaneous causation is unproved; to this effect the following is pointed out:

"The example of lamp and light, etc. to prove the simultaneous causation has been stated; even in this case there is a very subtle time-distinction. The illusion of simultaneity there is due to the time-distinction hardly discernible (durlakṣya) as 'in the case of a sharp pin piercing through several hundred of lotus-petals (padmapatrasata-vedha)"

........This rejection of causation through the process of simultaneity is also applicable to the knowledge and its part and their graspability and grasping agency; so is said further:

"The rejection of causation by simultaneity is equally applicable to the parts (knowledge and its part)". (see Ibid.)

As to Dignāga's second alternative answer, viz. it becomes so in succession by transmitting the force (Śakti) the same critic continues: Between two successive events the previous may be graspable by the other. It is criticised previously that what is past cannot become graspable, this criticism is not valid; for, it is possible by transmitting its force. The self-form of knowledge on account of impression (vedāṇa) imposed by a previous knowledge (upon itself) is produced subsequently. (This means that) Ālambara is similar to memory (smārakam itaḥ Ālambara). Here also Kumāraṇa says, "Ālambara is not possible by succession through the door of transmitting the force" (Ibid. pp. 311-312).
The above elaboration of the opponent’s criticism is aimed at to acquaint ourselves with a clear understanding of the author’s complicated proposition.

Dharmakirti being one of the strongest champions of this school, his conclusive remark may also be recorded in brief which appears as an echo of Dignāga’s view:

How and by what means do these atoms transform our consciousness as reflex of a gross form? (Pra. Var. II. 321). Therefore one consciousness has two aspects (graspable and grasping) and experienced and memorised; the realization of this in double aspect is regarded the fruit. (Ibid. 337). The self of the Knowledge though indivisible in truth is noticed (i.e. experienced) as though it is divided into graspable and grasping on account of our perverted visions (Ibid. 354).

In order to satisfy the scriptural declaration that the visual consciousness emerges on the basis of the eye and is visible the author states: “The sense-organ, (i.e. eye, etc) is only a sort of ākāti, force as it acts as auxiliary to its objectivity”. The sense-organ is inferred to be only a force of consciousness, but not material in character. It may be a non-contradictory part of consciousness or it may be in its own indescribable self. There can be no difference in the production of its result. Thus the objective aspect and the force of sense-organ go on mutually conditioned from immemorial time”.

The author’s statement about the sense-organ as of the indescribable is suggestive. It shows that he does not side with the Vaibhavikas for whom the senses are material, but with some early scripture according to which they are other than the visible etc. and supra-sensuous and inferable from the sensory consciousness and seated on the eye-ball, etc. (v. Yasovijñāna’s comm. Kośa, I, p. 24-25). Dharmakirti too holds the
same view. v. Pra. Vartika II, 48 a-b: They are transcendental and designated as senses...Refer to Vinitadeva’s comment for other opinions on the senses (p. 92 below).

The author’s explanatory part of his last aphorism is very well elucidated by Vinitadeva in his Tiki, one may read my summary in English, pp. 33-36 below.

NOTES 33-36

1. The early Buddhists plead that the atoms though too subtle and imperceptible, serve as a hidden cause of our knowledge, because their gross forms that we experience are phenomenal and cannot be regarded as either different from or identical with the atoms, is not at all counted as a cause. The same principle holds good in the Buddhists’ denial of the soul theory. The soul is not something real apart from its several parts, cfr. Sam. Nikīya, I,135, the saying: 

| यथा अन्तः ज्ञातुपर्वतसु ज्ञातं सत्त्वे पस्य। |

१०:

Cited in Satya - Siddhi, Ch. 38, p. 190.

The above position of the early Buddhists renders much easier the task of Dignaga of rejecting the combined atom-object proposition (i.e. his second one). However the Sautrāntikas assign some reality to it on the score that it discharges a purposive action. See discussion on this topic below.

2. See Tattvas Panjika (p. 556) mentioning such three opinions: 1) Atoms get combined one another (Samyajante pratimāṇāśeśaḥ), 2) they always appear with some interspace, but do not come into a neutral contact (Santara eva ribhāna sprānanti.) 3) when they appear without interspace, we call them combined (nirantarastātu sprastasamjñāḥ). Similar three views are noticeable in Advait, Alokā, (p. 372-74): 1) Sutrasthata-paksa, view of the combined atoms, 2) Santara-parivarapaksa, view of atoms encircled with interspace, 3) nirantarast-parivarapaksa, view of the same without interspace. These three are termed knowable categories (Jneya-pakṣa):
According to Th. Slicherbatsky’s finding the combined atom alone appear in phenomenal reality. Simple ones or infra-atomic elements presumably were relegated to a transcendental reality......(v. Conception of Buddhism, p. 12).

2a. Kuechi’s interpretation of Vasubhandhu’s verse 11 in the Vinsesika as referring to four views: 1) “eka-paksa” of the Vaseisikas, 2) eva-kapaka of the old Sarvastivadin, 3) Paramapadagraha of the Satra-sect and 4) Sambhata-paksa of the Neo-Sarvastivadin (Nyamasara) is not admissible and it is quite opposed to Vasubhandhu’s own comment. (v. his comments on the vinsesika-vijnapti-chinese, Fas. III p. 2.) Vasubandha refers to the three views only, viz., 1) the view of the Vaseisika, 2) the view of the Sarvastivadin as atom-object and 3) the view of the Saunarikha holding the integrated-atom-object (Sambhata-paksa).

3. सिन्धुः युद्धदा यथा जातीयः।
शास्त्रायुक्तिः वाक्यं बिच्छयते हनुमन्तः॥

विनेतनोऽधिकारः ॥ १९१।

गृहः । गृहावलिकन्या यथावैधिकस्यम् हि गृहावलिक।
लोककिर्तिविशेषः भावापूर्वः संग्रहितस्य करिकै त्रिभुजः ॥

तथा व गृहावलिका विशेषः (नामे रषिम्यान्तरसमालोचनः)
शास्त्रायुक्ति शय्याः। स तथा व सत्यान्वयः
सत्य न सत्यान्वयः ॥

तथाश्च कामिनः गृहावलिकाः ॥

उपायनी साध्यसाध्यशास्त्रायुक्तिः सः तथा योगिवेदीः ॥

इदैः ॥ १९५।

गृहः । तथा व गृहावलिका नामे सिन्धुः यथा। आदिकल्पना यथावैधिकः वाक्यं द्विविधाः करिकैः।

संग्रहितस् विशेषः “साध्यसाध्यशास्त्रायुक्तिः” प्रश्नमितः॥

तथाश्च विशेषः द्विविधाः। आदिकल्पनाः ॥

तथाश्च कामिनः गृहावलिकाः ॥

इदैः ॥ १९६।

गृहः । यथावैधिकः यथाप्रयोगसहितः ।
न निधनावलिके द्विविधाः।

सिन्धुः यथा तत्त्वावलिकः यथावैधिकः।

सिन्धुः तत्त्वावलिकः यथावैधिकः।

सिन्धुः तत्त्वावलिकः यथावैधिकः।

सिन्धुः तत्त्वावलिकः यथावैधिकः।

The same idea in Chapter 1, 88 – 90.

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The same idea in Chapter 1, 88 – 90.
The above criticism proves that in pleading for a simultaneous causality Dignaga might have employed the Lamp-
and-light-example, but we miss it in the translations of the Alambanapariksā. Vinitadeva employs it in some other context, viz. self-affecting-action (atmanī kriya). It is the Sarvastivadin who first pleaded for the simultaneous causation with the same example; cfr. Poussin, Kosz, II, p. 253; Vyākhyā ad II, 51, edn. p. 123; Kosalabhāṣya p. 84-85.

5. 

Vijñaptimatrata in Pramanavartika II, 320-371.

DIGNAGA'S VERSES (KARIKA)

1. Though atoms serve as cause of our sensory consciousness they are not its actual object like the sense-organs; because the consciousness does not represent the image of the atoms.

2. Consciousness does not arise from what is represented in it, because it does not exist as substance like the double-moon. Thus both the external things are unfit to be real objects of consciousness.

3. Some masters hold that the integrated form of atoms (sancitakara) is the cause of consciousness. The author replies: The atomic form does not become the content of consciousness e.g. the solidity, etc.

4. In that case the different perceptions of the pot, the bowl, etc. will be identical.

If the perception differs in accordance with the different forms of the pot and others, they never exist in the substantial atoms.
5. Their dimensions are different and therefore they are related to substantially non-existent things. For, if we remove the atoms one by one the perception illuminating the image of the pot, etc. will immediately vanish away.

6. It is the object (artha) which exists internally in the knowledge itself as a knowable aspect which appears to us as if it exists externally.

Because that object is essentially in the nature of consciousness and because it acts as the condition (to the consciousness) the knowable aspect is the object.

7a-b. Though it is only a part of the consciousness, it becomes condition to the latter because it is invariably and simultaneously associated with the latter.

Or it becomes condition also in succession by transmitting the force (sakti).

7c-d. What is the sense-organ is (nothing but) the force itself in consciousness by virtue of its acting as an auxiliary (samkarin) to its objectivity.

8. That force is not contradictory to the consciousness. Thus the objective aspect (visayarupa) of consciousness and the force (sakti) called sense-organ go mutually conditioned from immemorial time.

SUMMARY OF THE TIKA BY VINITADEVA

The author Dignaga presents the first disputant’s proposition by stating: Those who...

In this sentence the topics to be discarded are expressed. The opponents’ perverse reasons are expressed in the sentence: “Because the atoms are cause of consciousness” and because the aggregates are productive of their image-bearing consciousness.”