Parmenides and Nāgārjuna
on Dual Truth

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I  PREFACE

The ‘alétheia’ was, for Parmenides, nothing other than the very
thing, which he discovered and gave it a name ‘to eón’ for the first time.
To eón itself is, according to Parmenides, the alétheia.

The denomination of a novel concept like that of ‘to eón’ inevitably
forces one to grapple with a traditional system of language, to which
s/he is necessitated to conform and under which everything that is al-
ready known is comprised.

The language presupposes necessarily a whole of conventional things
that has been traditionally established by social consensus or surround-
ings. It is an original field where the so-called Urdoxa casts its anchor. The
words of a language qua language are fully charged with various pre-
conceptions imposed by collective usage that may conceal and pervert the
real state of things; the un-concealed state of the things, namely the a-
létheia as ‘un-concealed-ness’ (Unverborgenheit). In order to reveal the
real state of things (alétheia), one must un-cover the veil of concealed facts.

Thus, the act of alétheiein necessarily has to be a kind of apo-calypsis,
which could be expressed by a series of negative terms such as ‘un-dres-
sing,’ ‘un-covering,’ ‘un-veiling,’ and so on. Seen from such a view-
point, the Parmenidean Way of Truth might be viewed as nothing other
than *the way of methodological negation*\(^5\) by which the naked and patent reality as ultimate truth could be revealed and disclosed.

About 2500 years ago, Parmenides the Eleatic, a Western philosopher, went along this way to *alētheia*, and came back again to the native land of mortals (*brotoi*) in order to tell them the truth of *to eón* in human language; namely in the so-called *Doxa*-language.

By the way, contrasting with Parmenides’ case, it is very interesting that, in the second and third centuries A. D., Nāgārjuna, another philosopher in the East, followed a very similar way of negation. He too preached to people on the doctrine of dual truth, namely truth relating to worldly convention (*samvṛtisatya*) on the one hand and truth in terms of ultimate fruit (*paramarthatya*) on the other hand.

Both philosophers’ motives and ways of thinking are so strikingly similar one another that their theories of dual truth, which are originally based on a kind of divine revelation or religious experience,\(^6\) will be worthy of comparison. Let me start with the Western philosopher.

II  PARMENIDES

Parmenides’ fragment Bl, 28-32 runs as follows:

..........\(\text{chreō dē se pānta puthéstai}\)  
\(\text{ēmēn alētheiēs eu̱krykeos atremēs étor}\)  
\(\text{ēdē brotōn dōxas téis ouk éni pístis alēthēs.}\)  
\(\text{all’ émpēs kai taúta mathēseai, hōs tā dokoûnta}\)  
\(\text{chrēn dokimōs eînai dià pantōs pānta perōnta.}\)

The cited locus is one of the most controversial passages in Parmenides’ fragments. Leaving aside the details of my reading of the line 30 *téis*, and the line 32 *perōnta*,\(^7\) the pivotal points consist in the reading of *tā dokoûnta chrēn dokimōs eînai*; especially in the reading of the terms *tā dokoûnta* and *dokimōs*. I present here my view in its essential points.

Having regard to the achievements in the past,\(^8\) I think, it is
preferable that *dokimōs* is to be taken as meaning ‘acceptably.’ In that case *tā dokoünta* have to naturally refer to some objective things opined true by mortals, whereas from Goddess’ viewpoint they are regarded as something like bricks with which “kōsmon ... epéōn apatēlōn” (fr.8.52) is constructed. Namely, I assume that Parmenides in this locus is suggesting the entrance of *morphas dìo* in fr.8.53 and *pháos kai mix* in Fr. 9.1 beforehand. This assumption will make “two forms” more neatly fit in the phrase “*dià pantōs panta perōnta,*” since Goddess’ words ‘once all things have been named Light and Night,’ all things were filled equally with both of them at the same time, so that ‘there is nothing which does not belong to either’ (fr.9) will be put in their proper stations. Such being the case, finally, *eînai* the complementary infinitive of *chrēn* modified by *dokimōs* (adverb) conveys some existential sense. Accordingly, the above quoted lines can be translated as follows:

“You should learn all things, as well the unshaken heart of well-rounded truth as the opinions of mortals in which there is no true belief. Nevertheless you shall learn these things too, how it was necessary that the objects opined true by mortals, which pervade all things through all things, had to be acceptably.”

Thus, there is no doubt that Parmenides the Eleatic philosopher, drawing a clear line between “*alētheïēs eukukléos atremēs ētōr*” and “*brotōn dóxas*” on the one hand, notifies beforehand the condition under which the latter should obtain a kind of acceptability or reliability on the other hand; to put it tersely, a kind of human truth endorsed by the divine truth of the real.

The case may give a considerable weight to scholars who somehow concede that *alētheia* and *dóxa* are two sides of the same reality and who read the last part of Fr. 8.38 as “*tōi pant’ onōmastai*” (the reading E). Of course, there can be various counter-arguments on this reading, including the view that the verb *onomázesthai* in Parmenides has a double nominative so that it cannot be connected with a dative.
Nevertheless, I think that tōi here should refer to tō eón in some way. For it is indisputable that Parmenides gave his approval to the case that the legitimate naming had to always obtain in relation to their genuine referent. The so-called “empty (or “mere”) name” is so called because of its insulated relation to the genuine referent to eón. In order to be charged with meaningfulness, the “empty” name in question has to recover its proper circuit in relation to tō eón. Thus, the route connecting alétheia and dóxa still remains to be acceptable.

If the above mentioned is proper, the route in question is probably a circular one (eukykrēos). This conjecture will be strengthened, if we place the solitary fragment 5 “xynón dē moi estin, hoppóthen árxōmai, tóthi gár pálin hixomai aúthis” before fragment 2. As far as its subject matter is methodological, the fragment 5 has an affinity with fr.2 or fr.8, but not with the so-called Doxa part itself. On the other hand, the fragment expresses a kind of circular movement, which does not fit into the patterns of axiomatic or deductive arguments in fr.2 or fr.8. Moreover, the meshes of fr.5 are too large to pick up the items involved in fr.8.

Thus appealing to the elimination by substitution, I come to a conclusion that fr.5 refers to the two terms alétheia and dóxa in the context of the fragment 1.29-30. If this is to be acceptable, we may assume that the Goddess in fragment 5 speaks as follows: ‘it is the same to me from which between alétheia and dóxa I begin to tell you, since to that point from which I start I shall come back again.’ Namely, according to this interpretation it follows that there are two ways connecting alétheia and dóxa: one is the way of negation (the so-called Way of Truth) and the other is the way of multiplication or linguistic proliferation (the so-called Way of Doxa), and they are reciprocally united in the framework of Parmenides’ onto-methodo-logical thinking.

The last word may need an explanation bearing on the Parmenidean logic. On the nature of Parmenidean logic in the context of the Way of Truth, the so-called “standard Anglo-American interpretation of Parmenides” has so far produced many different variations. For an example, I pick up one, which is my Revised Version of F. J. Pelletier’s.
According to this version, Parmenidean way of Negation is accomplished as follows:

I. Either every statement itself is meaningful or its negation is meaningful, but not both.

II. The meaning of statement is the case referred to by the statement at issue.

III. What is the case can be referred to only when it obtains.

Now, for example, the sentence “Theaetetus is not flying” is, according to I, either meaningful or meaningless. If Theaetetus is not flying, it is not the case that Theaetetus is flying. Hence, by III, the case cannot be referred to. Therefore also, by II, the sentence “Theaetetus is not flying” is meaningless.

Repeating this procedure likewise, the Parmenideans could sweep away in a moment not only the statements of non-existent things but also the statements of (apparently) existent things, all of which the public firmly believes to be real. As the result of this, in the end, they will realize that “mónos ἐ’ ἔτι μῦθος ἡδοῖο λειπεῖ, ἕσε ἔστι.” (fr.8.1-2) Thus, the way may be called “the way of negation.”

Now, let me go to the way of multiplication or linguistic proliferation. The pivotal locus disclosing the mechanism of multiplication (fr.8.55-58) is the following: “tantia d’ ekrinanto démas kai sémat’ étento chōris ap’ allélōn, ...heōtōi pantote tóutón, tói d’ hétérōi mé tóutón” (“they divided form contradistinctively and set them marks apart from one another”). The phrase discloses the identity of principles by which mortals constructed the world. The division had to be completed simultaneously; whereas once being divided they had to be here and there topologically and succeed one another in front and in rear in time series19). Where Light (day) is now, Night is not there. Note that this “now” is radically different from that “now” in fr.8.5. The “now” in fr.8.5 is the absolute “now” (nún éstín homoĩ pán, hén, sunechês; fr.8.5-6) standing comparison with ἕσε ἔστι. Thus, mortal’s principles are based on the bridgeless contradiction, on
the connection of *being* and *not-being*.\(^\text{20}\)

By the way, it is notable that the starting-point of linguistic proliferation consists in the very connection of *being* and *not-being*. Our thinking inevitably presupposes a dichotomy between affirmation and negation, active and passive, agent and action, one and many, and so on. Even a single sentence presupposes at least two terms. For example, the sentence ‘Zeno is tall’ requires the two terms of “Zeno” and “tall”. In addition, “Zeno” also presupposes “not-Zeno”, and likewise “tall” “not-tall”. Without connection of being and not-being there cannot be any linguistic activity.

Let me observe further some peculiarities of mortals’ principles. They are ‘everywhere identical with itself but not identical with other.’ We can liken them to the positive and negative poles between which an electric current flows. They are in a complementary relation one another, so that they are also in a reciprocally dependent relation one another. Thus, (1) Light (Φ) is a complement of its counterpart Night (N), and conversely (2) Night (N) is also a complement of its counterpart Light(Φ), so that (3) the sum of them (Φ ∪ N) represents a universe of discourse. Then, we can translate the Goddess’ utterance as follows:

1. Φ is the same as Φ, and, Φ is not the same as Non-Φ.

Can we decide the truth-value of this sentence? It seems to be clear that the left side factor

2. Φ is the same as Φ

is acceptable to both Goddess and mortals; its acceptability to mortals is self-evident; and it is true for Goddess too, since 2 does not refer to not-being and the statement ‘Φ is the same as Φ’ is reduced to ‘it is the case that Φ is.’ Note that ‘Φ is’ is universally true in the domain of discourse where there is no other than Φ. However, the Goddess will flatly reject the right side factor

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3. \( \Phi \) is not the same as Non-\( \Phi \),

since 3 involves ‘Non-\( \Phi \)’ which refers to not-being.

However, we, mortals will be much embarrassed by the fact, since 3 is a tautology and is equivalent to the above 2 which will be sanctioned by the Goddess. Therefore, anyone who is mortal should press the Goddess with a question: ‘why do you not accept a tautological truth such as “\( \Phi \) is the same as \( \Phi \),” and “\( \Phi \) is not the same as Non-\( \Phi \)”?’ The Goddess’ reply might be as follows:

“Oh Koïre,\(^{21}\) I do not reject your opinion simply, but I am prepared to concede your point, provided that you could gaze upon those absent things with your mind as present steadfastly so that you will never cut off being from holding fast to being.\(^{22}\) For, your Light and Night, to which the wandering dikranoi stack,\(^{23}\) really were not to be ‘two’ but one. For this reason, the conjunction between them had to refer to the only one ultimate truth: ‘\( \ell \varepsilon \tau \iota \)’. Keep this truth in your mind firmly, then the whole order of things (\( \delta \iota \alpha \kappa \varphi \omega \mu \sigma \mu \)os) based on it will become a probable one (\( \varepsilon \omega \iota \kappa \omega \tau \alpha \)ta) among all (\( \pi \alpha \tau \alpha \)ta), so that any mortal shall never outstrip you in so far as your knowledge is concerned.\(^{24}\) Now, you are an enlightened man.\(^{25}\) You must come back again to your homeland, since there live those men, who naively believe that ‘everything were born and now are and they will afterwards grow and perish.’\(^{26}\) Because of this, they are in need of enlightenment. Your message of truth, not of ultimate truth itself, but of truth in human language, has to be conveyed.”

III NÄGÄRJUNA

It is significant that a parallel case with Parmenides happened in India. Nāgārjuna the Mahāyāna Buddhist (150-250 A. D.) declared in his \( Mū\)-lamadhyamakakārikā \( \) (XXIV) as follows\(^{27}\):

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The teaching of the doctrine by the Buddhas is based upon two truths: Truth relating to worldly convention and truth in terms of ultimate fruit. (XXIV.8)

Those who do not understand the distinction between these two truths do not understand the profound truth embodied in the Buddha’s message. (XXIV.9)

Without relying upon convention, the ultimate fruit is not taught. Without understanding the ultimate fruit, freedom is not attained. (XXIV.10)

Nāgārjuna’s doctrine of two truths originates in the Gautama Buddha, who was an eastern contemporary of Parmenides. Nāgārjuna begins his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (hereafter: Kārikā) with the verse of salutation to Gautama Buddha:

I salute him, the fully enlightened, the best of speakers, who preached the non-ceasing and the non-arising, the non-annihilation and the non-permanence, the non-identity and the non-difference, the non-appearance and the non-disappearance, the dependent arising, the quiescent of linguistic proliferation, the auspicious.

The heart to be grasped consists in the words ‘the dependent arising (pratītya-samutpāda), the quiescent of linguistic proliferation (prapāncopāsamā).’ The original idea goes back to the Buddha-words in Kaccayana-gotta Sutta. The Buddha in Kaccayana-gotta-Sutta preached to Kaccayana, who asked him ‘what is a right view,’ the necessity of middle way avoiding two extremes between “is” and “is not”, and showed the doctrine of dependent-arising (pratītya-samutpāda).

The dependent arising has two aspects, which are inseparably connected: pravṛtti (activity) and nivṛtti (cessation). The former is also prapanca
(linguistic proliferation) by which the entire mass of sufferings in the profane world arises. The latter is the negation of *prapañca*, by which the ceasing of entire mass of sufferings will be attained.

It is significant to note that Nāgārjuna identifies “the quiescent of linguistic proliferation” with “emptiness” (*śūnyatā*). He says, ‘The linguistic proliferation is extinguished in emptiness (*śūnyatā*).’ (XVIII. 5)

What is then the “*śūnyatā*”? A brief historical survey is necessary. Between the first century B. C. and first century A. D., the concept of “emptiness” (*śūnyatā*) made its grand appearance in the contexts of the early Mahāyāna scriptures such as *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*. In revolt against Abhidharma Buddhists who sought to define the world as having own-nature, the Early Mahāyāna Buddhists of *Prajñāpāramitā*, who aimed at the spiritual salvation of lay believers, were bold enough to nullify the entire world under the slogan of “form (*rūpa*) is emptiness (*śūnyatā*)”, where “*rūpa*” is a generic name of the physical and mental constituent elements, perception, conception, volition and so on.

In the second and third centuries A. D., when Nāgārjuna was active, the orthodox Brahmanic schools also were making efforts to formulate their respective systems of thought. The Śāmkhya, Nyāya and Vaiśesika described the world from their realistic standpoints. According to the Vaiśesika school, the world has a multistoried structure composed of six (or seven in later time) categories which are themselves imperishable. In addition, the Buddhist school such as Sarvāstivādin too held a similar world-view to that of the Vaiśesikans.

Nāgārjuna leveled severe criticism at their views. He maintained that it was wrong to describe the structure of the world. No world with a describable structure was, according to him, real. Its essence is emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and only a product of the linguistic proliferation (*prapañca*). Thus, Nāgārjuna’s main aim in the *Kārikā* was an exhaustive negation of *prapañca*. His main work *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* consists of approximately 450 verses and is divided into 27 chapters which represent nothing other than the nullification of linguistic proliferation: the nullification of verbal expression, concepts or ideas, acts of expression, referents of verbal

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expression, and the very structure incorporating all the above elements, namely the entire world.\textsuperscript{30}

His logical skill is worth seeing, because of its striking likeness to Parmenidean or Zenonean argumentation. For the simplest case, I take up just a part of Chapter II entitled ‘An examination of the traversed and the non-traversed.’ Chapter II.1 runs as follows\textsuperscript{31}:

“That which has been traversed is not being traversed, nor is that which has not been traversed being traversed. That which is being traversed other than that which has been traversed and that which has not been traversed is not being traversed.”

Imagine an arrow (let it be the top of it $\alpha$) which is flying from point A to B. Assume that a point, where the top of arrow is now, be C. Let the line AC be ‘that which has been traversed’ and CB be ‘that which has not been traversed,’ then this verse may be legitimately translated as follows:

(1) AC is not being traversed by $\alpha$, because AC has already been traversed.
(2) CB is not being traversed by $\alpha$, because CB has not yet been traversed.
(3) C is not being traversed by $\alpha$, because the sum of AC and CB represents the sum total of that which is to be traversed.
(4) Therefore, the flying arrow $\alpha$ is not flying.

The argument should remind us immediately Parmenides’ refutation of “growth” in fragment 8: “How and whence grown? I shall not let you say and conceive, from not-being” (fr.8.7-8).\textsuperscript{32} The patterns of argumentation by both philosophers are strikingly similar.\textsuperscript{33} However, considering the implication of the above (3), I think, Nāgārjuna’s skill is more aptly compared to Zeno’s one. Zeno’s fragment 4 runs as follows: ‘what moves does not move either in the place in which it is or in the place in which it
is not.’ The similarity becomes patent, if the above mentioned “$a$”, “AC”, “CB”, and “C” are substituted for Zeno’s context: ‘$a$ does not move either in C, or, in AC and CB.’

Thus Nāgārjuna gave a logical exposition of the slogan “form is empty” advocated by early Prajñāpāramitā scriptures, and provided early Mahāyāna Buddhism with a theoretical model.

However, someone may ask: ‘Was Nāgārjuna a nihilist?’ Really, there were some Buddhist metaphysiarians who reproached him as follows: ‘if all this is empty, then there exists no uprising and ceasing. These imply the non-existence of the four noble truths.’ Against this, Nāgārjuna replied: ‘you do not understand the purpose of emptiness ($pravṛjanaṁ sūnyatāyām$). As such, you are tormented by emptiness (sūnyatā) and the meaning of emptiness (sūnyatārtha)’ (XXIV.7).

Nāgārjuna suggests here three aspects of emptiness: (1) the emptiness as negation of linguistic proliferation, (2) the emptiness as ultimate truth, and (3) the emptiness actualized in our profane world. He says that these aspects of emptiness should be understood correctly and further adds: ‘whatever is the extremity of freedom ($nirvāṇa$) is the extremity of the life-process ($samsāra$);’ and further ‘between them even a subtle gap does not exist.’ (XXV. 20)

We can schematize the linkage between these aspects as follows:

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)

The meaning of this diagram can be roughly explained as follows:

(1) The profane world ($samvṛti$): this is the world of appearance which is multiplied by the linguistic proliferation and the world of “the entire mass of suffering,” wherein we live and naively believe the reality of

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things.

(2) The ultimate truth or dependent arising (*paramarthatya*): this is the extremity that is attained through (a) the way of *nivṛtti* or by the emptiness (*śūnyatā*). The “*nivṛtti*” means etymologically “withdrawal from a certain thing.” The way of *nivṛtti* means an exhaustive withdrawal from *samvṛti* and the cessation of all activities in the profane world. Thus, the solidarity of world as well as the substantiality of self is puffed out completely by the ultimate truth and the *nirvāṇa* is attained.

(3) The freedom (*nirvāṇa*): This is the extremity of enlightenment attained by *paramarthatya*. This extremity cannot be expressed by the language.

(4) The conventional truth (*samvṛtisatya*): Nagarjuna calls this “provisional designation” (*praj’apti upādāya*) and identifies it with “the middle way” (*madyama*) (XXIV. 18b). The “provisional designation” means the verbalized form of ultimate truth. Therefore, the conventional truth is no other than ultimate truth in verbalized form. It shows ultimate truth projected to the profane dimension. In other words, it is no other than the *nirvāṇa* realized through (b) the way of *pravṛtti*.

The two reciprocal vectors of *nivṛtti* and *pravṛtti* are so tightly united into a circular way those two truths and two worlds become two facets of just the same reality. Thus, the circle of *pratītyasamutpādā* was brought to its completion.

**IV  CONCLUSION**

Two philosophers in West and East went along the way of methodological negation to the ultimate truth and came back again to their fellowmen’s native land in order to tell them the truth in human language.

They preached to people on the doctrine of dual truth, namely the doctrine of two truths, which respectively relate to worldly convention.
and ultimate vision of the reality. Thus telling the dual truth, they never divorced themselves from the conventional world; on the contrary, they announced a fundamental guiding principle, which connects the conventional world-view to what is real. By virtue of their own original methods of argument, they pointed to a path negating the conventional world-view and led to ultimate truth. In addition to this, they also showed a way founding conventional views on ultimate truth. Once ultimate truth is attained, the conventional becomes something to be sanctioned as a kind of truth.

Two philosophers in West and East recovered a port of truth, whereto one should finally make a homeward voyage.
NOTES

1) This paper is a revised version of my article ‘Parmenides and Nagarjuna on Truth,’ which originally was presented at the Twelfth International Conference on Greek philosophy which took place in Samos the birthplace of Pythagoras, Greece in August 2000, and which was included in K. Boudouris (ed.), Greek Philosophy and Epistemology Vol. I, International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, Studies in Greek Philosophy Series, Athens 2001.

2) See J. O. Gasset, The Origin of Philosophy, W. W. Norton & Company INC. New York, 1967., pp. 60-1: ‘Language is precisely something not created by the individual but something that is found by him, previously established by his social environs, his tribe, polis, city, or nation.’

3) Here I have in my mind the Husserlian conception of “Urdoxa” as a basic and universal belief of one’s particular experiences. Cf. E. Husserl, Erlebnis und Urteil, 32.


5) Cf. B2.2: dízēs. Note that Parmenidean dízēs is a methodological one: ‘haimer hodoi moindai dizēs eis noēsai.’

6) For Parmenides’ religious connotations, cf. the fragment 1 and see also my book Kodai Girisia no Shisou (Ancient Greek Thought) Kodan-sha, 1993.


8) P. A. Meijer, Parmenides beyond the Gates, The Divine Revelation on Being, Thinking and Doxa, Gieben, Amsterdam, 1997 gives a recent and skillful survey of the scholarly views on ‘tā dokoūnta’ and ‘dokimās.’

9) In this respect, I accept Tarán’s interpretation: ‘Certainly “acceptable,” “trustworthy,” “approved,” seem to be more likely meanings for δοκίμως.’ “This
is what the goddess means when she tells Parmenides that he shall learn how the appearances came to be regarded as real by mortals.’ See Parmenides, pp. 212-213 and n. 27.

10) Following Simplicius’ manuscript I take the reading perônta rather than perónta.

11) In other words, Parmenides in this locus notifies beforehand the conditions under which mortal’s confused orientation to the all was to be restored as a truthful one. Taking side with this line of interpretation I am taking a stand against the mainstream of scholars who regarded the Doxa section of Parmenides’ fragments as an utterly deceptive or false account of the reality, which includes Mourelatos, Owen, and Barnes:


14) Curd, P., The Legacy of Parmenides, Princeton University Press, 1998, p. 115 read ‘tôi’ as ‘with respect to this [that is, to eón].’ In any way, considering the context of Parmenides’ argument here, obviously it cannot mean “therefore” or “on this account” in an absolute sense of this being testified at b8. 25. Depending on Plato’s Theaetetus 180d7-e1 John Palmer took it as the dative form of the article with the dative panta (for the all) ; cf. Plato’s Reception of Parmenides, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1999, pp. 208-210, albeit it is the case that by “the all” Palmer understands Parmenides’ Being.

15) One should here refer to fr.8. 35-36, provided taking line 35 eph’ hôi instead of en hôi.


17) Yamakawa, Kodai Girisiano Sisô (Ancient Greek Thought), Kodan-sha, Tokyo,
19) Concerning the identity of mechanism with which the linguistic proliferation proceeds one should remember that doing of *esprit* characterizing modern scientific view of nature which H. Bergson in *Essai* severely criticized; see *Essai sur les donnés imméates de la concience*, PUF, 1927, pp. 84-85.
20) Patricia Curd regards Parmenidean opposites “Light” and “Night” as Enantiomorphobic objects, which are mirror images of one another. Cf. *The Legacy of Parmenides*, pp.107ff. The idea is provoking, but it is not successful, since the idea fails to explain the time-aspect of the opposites in question. The enantiomorphobic objects always appears at the same time, whereas “Light” and “Night” have to be *here* and *there* topologically and *succeed* one another in *front* and in *rear* in time series.
22) See fr.4.
23) See fr.6.5.
25) See fr.1.3.
26) See fr.19.
27) In my citing from Nagarjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* in English I consulted mainly David Kalupahana, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā of Nāgārjuna*, The Philosophy of the Middle Way, Introduction, Sanskrit Text, English Translation and Annotation, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Private Limited, Delhi, 1991, 1996. However, I consulted also the following books:


   Jay L. Garfield, *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, Nāgārjuna’s Mū-
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28) The Buddha’s famous discourse to Kaccayana reported by Ananda begins as follows (for the translation of Kaccayanagotta-Sutta see Kalupahana pp. 10-11): “Thus have I heard: The Blessed one was once living at Savatthi, in the monastery of Anathapindika, in Jeta’s Grove. At that time the venerable Kaccayana of that clan came to visit him, and saluting him, sat down at one side. So seated, he questioned the Exalted one: “Sir [people] speak of ‘right view, right view.’ To what extent is there a right view?“ This world, Kaccayana, is generally inclined towards two [views]: existence and non-existence. To him who perceives with right wisdom the uprising of the world as it has come to be, the notion of non-existence in the world does not occur. Kaccayana, to him who perceives with right wisdom the ceasing of the world as it has come to be, the notion of existence in the world does not occur. The world, for the most part, Kaccayana, is bound by approach, grasping and inclination. And he who does not follow that approach and grasping, that determination of mind, that inclination and disposition, who does not cling to or adhere to a view: “This is my self,” who thinks: “suffering that is subject to arising arises; suffering that is subject to ceasing, ceases,” such a person does not doubt, is not perplexed; Herein, his knowledge is not other-dependent. Thus far, Kaccayana, there is “right view.” “Everything exists,” – this, Kaccayana, is one extreme. “Everything does not exist,” – this, Kaccayana, is the second extreme.’


31) Here I follow Tachikawa’s translation; See p. 54.
32) In fragment 8, the goddess argues as follows:

1 [Being introduced a proposition “it grows”] “how and when did it grow?” (frag.8.7).
2 And “what need would have made it grow later or sooner, beginning from nothing?” (frag.8.9-10).

The proposition “it grows” must resolve into “nothing” i.e., into the proposition “it is not;” namely, if it grows, just the following two cases are necessary: either “nothing” implies “it grows” or “it grows” implies “nothing.” Thus, the proposition “it grows” is equivalent to the proposition “it is not.” However, “it is not possible not to be.” (Axiom, frag.2.5.) Thus, in the end, the assumption “it grows” is led to the absurdity, which cannot be acceptable. See my paper ‘Reductio ad absurdum’ in my book Greek philosophy and the Modern World, studies in Greek Philosophy Series, International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, Athens, 1998, pp.59-62.


34) For the detailed explanation of Zeno’s refutation against motion, see my book Zenon, Yotsuno Gyakuri (Zeno, Four Paradoxes of Motion), Kodan-sha, 1996.

35) Mituyoshi Saigusa in his ‘Shoki Daijo no Ninshikiron (Epistemology of the Early Mahayana Buddhism)’, Koza Bukkyo-Shiso, Vol. 2, 1974 showed the following schema:

\[ \text{samvṛti} \rightarrow \text{samvṛtisaty} \rightarrow \text{paramarthathy} \rightarrow \text{nirvāna} \rightarrow \text{samvṛti}. \]

However, his interpretation seems to be contradictory to Nāgārjuna’s words. According to Nāgārjuna, \text{samvṛtisaty} is \text{praj'apti upādāya} (provisional designation=the verbalized form of ultimate truth) which is identified with “the middle way” (\text{madhyama}) (XXIV.18b). Presenting the above diagram, I deferred to Tachikawa’s interpretation.
Parmenides and Nāgārjuna on Dual Truth

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The act of \emph{alētheúein} is, according to Parmenides, a kind of \emph{apo-calyps},
which could be expressed by a series of negative terms such as ‘un-dressing,’ ‘un-covering,’ ‘un-veiling,’ and so on. The Parmenidean Way of Truth is nothing other than \emph{the way of methodological negation} by which the naked and patent reality as ultimate truth could be revealed and disclosed.

About 2500 years ago, Parmenides the Eleatic, a Western philosopher, went along this way to \emph{alētheia}, and came back again to the native land of mortals (\emph{brotoi}) in order to tell them the truth of \emph{to éón} in human language; namely in the so-called \emph{Doxa}-language.

Contrasting with Parmenides’ case, it is very interesting that, in the second and third centuries A. D., Nāgārjuna, another philosopher in the East, followed a very similar way of negation. He too preached to people on the doctrine of dual truth, namely truth relating to worldly convention (\emph{samvrētisatyā}) on the one hand and truth in terms of ultimate fruit (\emph{paramarthaatyā}) on the other hand.

Both philosophers’ motives and ways of thinking are so strikingly similar one another that their theories of dual truth, which are originally based on a kind of divine revelation or religious experience, will be worthy of comparison.

Two philosophers in West and East went along \emph{the way of methodological negation} to the ultimate truth and came back again to their fellow-men’s native land in order to preach to people on the doctrine of dual truth, namely the doctrine of two truths, which respectively relate to
worldly convention and ultimate vision of the reality.

Thus telling the dual truth, however, they never divorced themselves from the conventional world; on the contrary, they announced a fundamental guiding principle, which connects the conventional world-view to what is real. By virtue of their own original methods of argument, they pointed to a path negating the conventional world-view and led to ultimate truth. In addition to this, they also showed a way founding conventional views on ultimate truth. Once ultimate truth is attained, the conventional becomes something to be sanctioned as a kind of truth.

Two philosophers in West and East recovered a port of truth, whereto one should finally make a homeward voyage.