DUALISM AND PSYCHOSEMANTICS: HOLOGRAPHY AND PANSEMATISM IN EARLY BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT: *In the Indian philosophical debate, the relationship between the structure of knowledge and external reality has been a persistent issue. This debate has been particularly prominent in Buddhism, as evidenced by the earliest Buddhist attestations in the Pāli canon, where reality is described as a perceptual defection. The world (loka) is perceived through cognition (citta), and the theme of designation (paññatti) is central to the analysis of the Abhidhamma. Buddhism can be viewed as navigating between nominalism and cognitive normativism, as it deconstructs language, which is seen as an obfuscating element that separates the subject from the world. In this article, we explore these issues through a philosophical dialogue between Early Buddhism, Abhidhamma, and Madhyamaka, utilizing methodological tools from Western philosophical traditions, both ancient and modern. We engage in a clash between nihilism and absolutism, in search of the substantiality of entities, which, behind the emptiness of conventional designations, conceals a complex fractal network of pansematism.*

Keywords: *abhidhamma, dualism, early Buddhism, fractal, holography, Nāgārjuna, psychosemantics*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this article, the focus of inquiry will be Buddhist philosophy through the lens of Neo-Parmenidian ontology proposed by philosopher Emanuele Severino. This investigation will benefit from a shared theme between the two philosophies, namely, the notion of reality and the world in relation to the interplay between designation and immediate perception. Emanuele Severino is recognized as one of the most prominent thinkers of the 20th century, and his ideas have significantly transformed the fields of ontology and metaphysics (Pitari 2022). Despite his influence on Western philosophy, there has been limited engagement with Eastern philosophies, such as Buddhism, which offers a fertile ground for comparison. Such a comparative approach can enrich the

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understanding of both philosophies and further elucidate a potential ontology and metaphysics of Buddhism. As the primary objective of this work is not to expound on Severino's philosophy, this article will only reiterate its central implications and employ it as a framework for exploring the intersections between Buddhist thought and Neo-Parmenidian ontology. Specifically, this article will examine the Abhidhamma and Nāgārjuna, with particular attention given to their origins, which can be traced back to the Pāli canon. To begin, it is essential to note that the holographic principle of reality serves as a fundamental tenet of Severino's philosophy. The holographic conception underlying Severino's thought can be revisited in these fundamental points:

(a) Phenomenal reality constitutes the unity of a multiplicity that is manifested in its constituent parts, yet it remains essentially unique and without alternatives;

(b) The *entia*, or parts, that constitute the unitary reality cannot be considered as isolable or separable units (*ēns*), as their connection to the unity is such that each part encompasses all possible determinations of the whole. Stated differently, each part of the whole encompasses the whole infinitely;

(c) The whole is the "what-is" (*ciò-che-è*), and consequently, its determinations are existents in their own right. While each part is inseparable from the holographic web of the whole, it is essentially itself, i.e., a particular determination that is distinct from other parts to which it is inseparable. As Severino articulates:

> Every *ēns* (viz., any part of it) stays in the necessary relation with any other *ēns*; and such a relation isn't just general, namely, it is not relevant just because any *ēns* is eternal, but it is also particular, i.e., it exists because any *ēns* is that exact *ēns* that *is*; hence, this twofold nature of relation implies a specific presence of any *ēns* in any other *ēns*: a presence for which in any *ēns* it is present the totality of its other *as negated*, namely, as *other*, as what is not that *ēns*. Such a presence is the *trace* of any *ēns* in any other *ēns*. (Severino 2007, 523)

Due to the variability of human perceptions, they cannot be deemed 'real' for objectivists, who regard truth as being external to human perception. Conversely, subjectivists may encompass human perceptions within the realm of truth, considering humans to be an integral aspect of what exists. Consequently, each individual perceives only particular facets of the truth. This view culminates in the development of the notion of truth/being as a comprehensive 'whole' or 'totality' that gradually becomes manifest.

Holography is a sophisticated technique that enables the acquisition of three-dimensional photographic representations of objects through the interference of two coherent light beams emitted from a laser source. An intriguing characteristic of holography, as its etymology suggests, is that each fractional component of the hologram preserves the complete set of holographic information. Consequently, dividing the hologram into multiple sections yields an identical three-dimensional image, albeit with a reduced field of view. The information is "written everywhere", hence the term *hólos*, "all", and *graphḗ* "writing". This characteristic of a 'whole contained in every part of itself' has allowed holography to be used as a metaphor to

indicate some philosophical principles that attributed the same property to the structure of reality. The holographic metaphor has been used also to explain Vasubandhu's notion of three natures (Kaplan 1990), but I believe that a holographic principle is traceable to the very foundation of ancient Buddhist philosophy. We know that, in Parmenides' philosophy, the Being is identical in all its parts (*pân homoion*). This instance was subsequently developed by Emanuele Severino's Neo-Parmenidism. He came to argue that the differences within the Being that appear to us as separate entities, are actually all 'identities' in reciprocal relation, inseparable from the Whole of which they are a part, and in turn, they contain the totality of Being (*quisque ēns continet omnia entia*). I call this principle 'pansematism' (everything is sign: *sêma*) since, as we shall see, Severino sees every part of Being as signifying. Pansematism and holography can, to some extent, be considered synonymous principles. In fact, both these terms share the characteristic of being definable by a fractal pattern, which is geometrical *homothety*, i.e., internal self-similarity. The fundamental interdependence of all *ēns* dictates that the absence of any one *ēns* is inconceivable without the presence of another.

> For this bond, every *ēns* is, and possesses the sense that pertains to it, just inasmuch it is joint to all the other *entia*. Being with all the other *entia*, nothing excluded, relates to the essence of every *ēns*. The part is in All, not fortuitously, but necessarily: neither the part can escape the All, annihilating itself, nor the All can obliterate itself, ceasing to encompass the part. (Severino 1980, 114)

Buddhism states that identities are a particular phenomenon of association and superposition of different phenomenal states. Human identity is an aggregate of psychophysical factors (*khandha*), and therefore identity (*attā*) appears only in the relational coexistence of these psychophysical states, but in itself identity is not self-existent, it is dependent (*paṭicca*) on the relationship of these aggregates, and the same is true for every phenomenon of reality. Hence, the notion that reality is fleeting and transitory, and therefore fails to manifest in the absence of phenomenal circumstances, inclines us to posit, albeit with uncertain veracity, that all aspects of reality eventually lapse into non-being, or that existence merely encompasses what is apprehensible through our perceptions, namely, identities. Aristotle writes "being must be *when* it is, and it cannot be when it is not" (Severino 1982, 22). With this statement, Aristotle accepts the *possibility* for the Being to, contradictorily, 'be a nonbeing'. This impractical possibility has been interpreted as a clear breaking point from the Eleatic tradition, which, conversely, argued that being always exists, even when it does not appear to us (Parmenides, *fr*.2). Since it is impossible (*panpethéa*) for 'what is' not to be (*hópōs éstin te kaì hōs oŷk ésti mề eînai*).

Nihilism is "the thought that, from the beginning of Occident's history, *isolates* things – the manifold determinations of the world – from one another" (Severino 2013, 108). Becoming means, from a nihilistic perspective, that anything that appears has come from nothing and returns to nothing when ceases to appear (Severino 1980, 196). Nihilism, however, points towards an impossible way: "precisely because being is identical to itself, identity necessarily implies a difference between being and itself"

(Severino 1992, 179). The self-contradiction of nothingness is what follows: that 'nothing' means something, viz., the absence of any meaning (Severino 2013, 107). A term can only refer to a specific entity if that entity is manifested and identified by the various signs that reference it. According to Severino, it is essential that the entity is manifested, even though it is inseparable from the differences that comprise the semantic determination of the signified (Severino 1992, 154). It is imperative to provide additional clarification at this juncture: Severino's differentiation between the plane of language and the plane of reality appears to be absent. His written works employ terminology such as "abstract" and "concrete" in a divergent manner from their customary usage. In essence, he argues that what can be articulated through language is identical to material reality. In his view, what is perceived through cognition is ontologically equivalent to what is perceived through vision. Consequently, defining the reality of nominal entities poses a challenge that is analogous to defining entities in general. This perspective, which can be considered a more intricate conception of reality and language, shares resemblances with Buddhism, as will be explicated in subsequent analysis. According to Severino, Parmenides' *alēthḗs hodós* is implied in the nature of the determinations of Being: "a plurality of associations" (Severino 1982, 58). The *òn hễ òn* is described as having a twofold meaning: the very absolute Being which cannot be nothing and, for this reason, transcending the becoming. On the other hand, what is transcended cannot be a "nothing", for it is also a positive, a Being, a positive which is totally included in the immutable totality of Being (59). Thus we are facing an *apparent* twofold reality (made of 'pieces' as single entities) which is only the reduction of the One-Whole. Early Buddhism seems to define a theory of cognition based on a peculiar mechanism of *cognitive splitting* and *internal representation*.[1]

In the Satipaṭṭhānasutta (MN 10) the Buddha states that there are several perceived doublets on which one must meditate: there is a body in the body (*kāye kāya*), a cognition in the cognition (*citte citta*), a sensation in the sensation (*vedanāsu vedāna*), a norm in the norm (*dhammesu dhamma*).

This is a fairly frequent formula in Buddhist literature, also present in SN 22.94 where it is spoken of a "world's dharma in the world" (*loke lokadhammo*). We find this refrain also in the Abhidhamma, *Tathatākathā* (Kv 19.5), which speaks of "formality of the form" (*rūpassa rūpatā*) distinct from the "feelingness of feeling" (*vedanāya vedanatā*). Nāgārjuna also speaks of this doubling mentioning an *idea* of true nature (MK 13.8) as different from the truth itself. The model of a reciprocal interpenetration, a "body in the body" but also a "cognition in the cognition", seems to resemble fractal images or to the Aristotelian "thought of thought" (*nóēsis noḗseōs*).

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[1] According to Foucault, the human being is an "empirical-transcendental allotrope" (Colaci 2019, 138). The term 'allotrope' refers to two or more forms of a chemical element that occur in the same physical state. The different shapes result from the different ways in which atoms can be bonded together. Foucault adopts this term in his philosophy as the allotrope is like an alternative form, a copy that is not entirely identical or superimposable with the original, although it is doubtful the very existence of an original, as it is more properly spoken of alternative forms. In this article I do not intend to use the term 'allotropy' in the exact same way as Foucault does, but I do intend to use his definition as a starting point.

In the Satipaṭṭhāna, the Buddha speaks of dimensions that cannot be distinguished between merely material or immaterial, since we are dealing with data which, for a Cartesian way of thinking, would be purely psychological, such as *citte citta* and *vedanāsu vedāna*.

The expression of a body-in-body (*kāye kāya*) could easily resemble the Husserlian binomial of *Leib* and *Körper*. The intuition may seem right also because the Husserlian problem is mainly cognitive: the body of life (*Leib*) is the body as it is experienced by the subject, and also the body that is the protagonist of one's own perceptions. *Körper*, on the other hand, is a body objectified by the gaze of another subject, who therefore not only experiences a detached perception, and it is the model of objective science and organicism (Husserl also speaks of "Body-as-thing": *Körper-ding*). This is partially incorrect since the medical discourse is not present in Buddhism.

This splitting also occurs in *vedāna* and, more curiously, *citta* and *dhamma*, leading us to exclude that the doubling of which the Buddha speaks is between organ and image. Indeed, if *kāye/kāya* indicated an opposition between the organic body and the mental image of one's own body, it is not clear what the *dhammesu/dhamma* dualism represents, not to mention that of *citte/citta*.

These ancient formulas of cognition analysis became the starting point for later Abhidharmic constructions. The Abhidharma will be indeed a central interlocutor in this work. The psychological vision of the Theravāda Abhidharma (henceforth: *Abhidhamma*) describes the process of cognition (*citta*) as marked by three main phases: Reception (*sampaṭicchana*), Investigation (*santīraṇa*), and Determination (*votthapana*).

Subsequently, the cognitive process is characterized by a state called *javana*, which Karunadasa defines as "running swiftly over the object in the act of apprehending it" (Karunadasa 2019, 173).

Each *dhamma* is seen as empty of a self or anything related to self-identity (*attena vā attaniyena vā suññaṃ*). This is the true sense where we must recognize the Buddhist 'non-self' (*anattā*) as a nominal and continual existence, which therefore reveals the entity to be 'empty', 'ephemeral' (*suññā*).

nāma-paññatti	*attha-paññatti*
Nominal designation	Designated meaning

The designation, or signifier, is sometimes defined as "that which makes known" (*paññāpanato paññatti*), as well as the agent of designation (*abhidhāna*). The signified is the very object of designation (*abhidheya*) as well as "what is made known" (*paññāpiyattā paññatti*). Both the signifier and the meaning "have a psychological origin and, as such, both are devoid of objective reality" (60).

Only going beyond convention, the absolute nature of reality (*paññattiṃ anatikkamma paramattho pakāsito*) is revealed. The Buddha does not deny pluralism, but just the idea that plural entities are separate. Rather, he offers the notion of a unified

Whole (*sabba*), whose manifestations are aspects of unity. Deception is division, truth is integration (*samādhi*).[2]

In the Pāli Canon, the expression "all entities" (*sabbe dhammā*) is used in a very generic sense, as 'all things' that make up the world. It is in the Abhidhamma that the concept of norm/entity (*dhamma*) is used to address true constituent elements of a reality that can be broken down and analyzed, although this apparent innovation refers anyway to the understanding of the perceptive reality that the Buddha had already taught.[3]

> The interconnection and interdependence of these dhammas are not explained on the basis of the dichotomy between substance and quality, what the Pāli Buddhist exegesis calls "the distinction between the support and the supported" (*ādhāra-ādheya-bhāva*). A given dhamma does not inhere in another as its quality, nor does it serve another as its substance. The so-called substance is only a figment of our imagination. The distinction between substance and quality is denied because such a distinction leaves the door open for the intrusion of the theory of a substantial self (*attavāda*) with all that it entails. (Karunadasa 2019, 26)

The idea of a perfect identity is instead expressed by the authors of the Abhidhamma as *vasavattitā*, being in itself independent. A true *attā* should be *vasavattitā*. However, since the Abhidhammic analysis found that any identity is the mere fruit of the interaction of multiple elements, it follows that the true nature of identity is not to be independently-existent, which means that is void of self-existence (*suññatā*), thus implying that the psychological ego, being a factor conditioned by manifold elements, is not endowed with self-existent independence (*attaniyena*).

Karunadasa (56) points out that the term 'convention' (*paññatti*) is already mentioned in the Saṃyuttanikāya, which states that the temporal designations of past, present, and future are the product of three phases: expression (*nirutti*), designation (*adhivacana*) and conceptualization (*paññatti*). However, the Abhidhamma denies that the dhammas are *paññatti*, whereas the position of Nāgārjuna seems to break with them on this point.

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[2] What the authors of the Abhidhamma affirmed is not that the emptiness of the factors implies their being nothing, but rather that they are not radically separate (*bheda*), and which therefore all leads back to a monism in which the apparitions of being are manifold, not independent. It is the misunderstanding of the principle of plurality (*nānatta-nayassa micchāgahaṇa*) that leads to nihilism. The idea of a radical separation of things is also nihilism (*ucchedābhinivesassa kāraṇaṃ*).

[3] The entities are vacuous alone because they are all interdependent. This can lead to a further error, explained by the authors of the Abhidhamma, namely that of absolute non-distinction (*accantaṃ abhedagahaṇa*). One could believe that everything is substantially identical. Since *dhamma* A co-depends on *dhamma* B, and both are manifestations of the one *Dhamma*, one could slip into the easy trap of identifying the two phenomena (A = B). A contradictory identification, because it would be affirming that what appears different is actually the same. But it is not an overestimated principle of unity (*ekatta-naya*) that the Buddha wanted to promote. Something can never become different from itself (*na ca sabhāvo aññathā hoti*). Indeed, it would be equally nihilistic to affirm that a thing is not itself (A = B), as one would implicitly accept to cancel one of the two *de facto* identities.

For the Abhidhamma, the only meaning of *paññatti* is 'that which lacks an objective referent' (*asabhāva-dhamma*). The delicate question involves the Abhidhammic idea for which phenomena come into being from a state of previous nonexistence (*ahutvā sambhanti*), just as they would cease to exist when they disappear (*hutvā paṭiventi*). This nihilistic idea is completely absent in original Buddhism, and in fact it is not found in the Pāli canon. Contextually, Nāgārjuna, who ostensibly outlines a drastic return to original Buddhism, writes outstanding verses on the logical impossibility that a being can become from a non-being, as well as from another being. Truthfully, a 'non-being' cannot logically become neither from a being nor from a non-being (MK 21.12-13).

Theravādins argued instead that there are dhammās existing in an objective way (*paramatthati vijjamānatā*), and that they would be such because, unlike other dhammās – which are interdependent and therefore intrinsically vacuous and conventional (*sammuti*), or just empirically knowable – objective dhammās would be knowable (*ñeyya*) in the ultimate sense (*paramatthato upalabhamānatā*), since they are not decomposable into further elements of interdependence, proving to be independently-existing (*saṃvijjamānatā*). Nāgārjuna, conversely, while using a typically Abhidhammic lexicon, rejects the idea of self-existent entities, affirming that everything is interdependent. When in the *Mahānidānasutta* (DN 15) it is asked "is there a specific condition of the name and of the form?" (*atthi idappaccayā nāmarūpan ti iti puṭṭhena satā, ānanda*), the answer reveals that they are such because of consciousness (*viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpan ti iccassa vacanīyaṃ*).

In Nāgārjuna's demonstration, it is clear that neither the object is equivalent to the subject nor is it independent from it. The relation between the two is like an ouroboros: a snake eating its own tail. Since one equally depends on the other by virtue of their mutual interdependence, it must be concluded that they are neither generated nor destructible. "If the going and the one who goes were conceived as different, then there would be a going without one who goes and one who goes without a going" (MK 2.20).

In MK 4 the same problem is analyzed. Each object has, in our perception, a specific form, but this is not found independently of the human choice to organize certain formal aspects in a specific way. Form is perceptible only because of perception (*rūpakāraṇanirmuktaṃ na rūpam upalabhyate*). This means that in the absence of this cognitive discernment, there are no independent forms different from each other. There is no objectively real form of things. Rather, what is given is the 'idea-of-the-form', beyond which there is no cause, no reason that requires forms to be as we have chosen to perceive them. Therefore, apart from the concept of 'form', there is no cause that makes forms appear (*rūpeṇāpi na nirmuktaṃ dṛśyate rūpakāraṇam*). If the cause that justifies an identity of the perceived forms were independent of other forms, it would be like saying that there would be a cause without a fruit (*rūpeṇa tu vinirmuktaṃ yadi syād rūpakāraṇam | akāryakaṃ kāraṇaṃ syād nāsty akāryaṃ ca kāraṇam*).

A being without characteristics (*alakṣaṇa*), however, is not found anywhere (*alakṣaṇo na kaścic ca bhāvaḥ saṃvidyate kva cit*): everything we name has an identity

precisely because it is definable by a series of characteristics. In this context, sign (*nimitta*), name (*nāma*) and characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*) converge.[4]

2. DEFINING COGNITION AND 'UN-COGNITIVE'

It is plausible to infer from the assertions of the Cittamātra school that our lived experiences are merely constructions of mental cognition. Such claims are frequently deemed radical and significantly removed from the tenets of early Buddhism. However, in the Cittasutta (SN 1.62), we encounter a sequence of inquiries posed to the Buddha: what sustains the world? What propels it? Succinctly, is there an element that influences everything we experience? Consistently, the response to these questions is the same: *citta*. In order to identify a potential elucidation, it is essential to discern what the Buddha intended by *citta*.

In this context, I shall utilize the term *citta* to denote "cognition" rather than "mind", as the notion of the mind is more closely associated with Western philosophical traditions. To grasp the nature of cognition, it is imperative to comprehend its organization in relation to its antithesis: *acitta*.

In Buddhist psychology, one can identify a variety of terms that, whether positively or negatively, can be linked to the notion of the unconscious. Through meticulous etymological examination, it becomes evident that these concepts, although analogous and interrelated, delineate psychic reality with far greater precision than merely the term 'unconscious' alone.

We start from the idea of *acitta*, the state of lack (*a-*) of cognition (*citta*) which arguably resembles some kind of unconscious or non-cognition. In fact, it will soon be discovered that several other terms (from the *bhavaṅga* of the Abhidhammic tradition to the *ālayavijñāna* of the Cittamātra) can be understood in a similar way. These are

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[4] In his study D'Amato reports a translation of the Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra which intersects the Yogācāra theory of the three natures (*trisvabhāva*) with linguistic metaphors. Incidentally, the author proposes the following equivalences: *lakṣaṇa*-signifier, *lakṣya*-signified and *lakṣaṇā*-signification. The term *lakṣaṇa* typically indicates a distinguishable sign or feature. He also conceives *nimitta* as a possible 'sign'. However, it is not necessary to look for rigid correspondences. By carefully reading the Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra it becomes clear that the doctrine of signs presented there appears more as a reformulation of the theory of signs that we have read in the Pāli canon, hence the very idea of *lakṣaṇa*/*lakṣya* may be the Mahāyāna equivalent of the *nāma*/*rūpa*. The correspondence between semantic perception, expressed in D'Amato's text with the term *saṃjñā*, remains perfectly equivalent to the explanation for the *saññā* of the Pāli canon. The *nimitta* is described as consisting of three aspects analogous to the *trisvabhāva*: one is the *parikalpita-lakṣaṇa*, explained as the perception of the name and the object. This aspect indicates the relationship itself of the two bifacialities of the sign and includes in itself the phenomenon of the conceptualization of discourses (*yathā 'bhilāpam*). Habits (*vāsanā*) are generated by thoughts, along with the perception of distinctiveness or what we have called 'discernment'. The second aspect of *paratantra-lakṣaṇa* pertains instead the duality of subject and object. The latter understood as the appearance of words, meanings and forms; while the subject is associated with mind, apprehension and conceptual discrimination. Finally, the last semantic aspect, the *pariṇiṣpanna-lakṣaṇa*, pertains to another dichotomy, that between being and non-being (*abhāva-bhāvatā*). This makes "this sign is indistinguishable from reality itself [...] and it is pacified because that is the fundamental nature (*prakṛti*) of the perfect signifier" (D'Amato 2003, 198).

true technicalities that need to be distinguished properly. De Silva is skeptical in translating the concept of *bhavaṅga* as "unconscious" or "subconscious". Notwithstanding, he admits that there are works in which *bhavaṅga* has been connected to Freud's idea of the dynamic unconscious (De Silva 2010, 53).

The concept of *citta* appears slightly problematic, but it is necessary to unravel it in order to understand the question of its state of absence (*acitta*). This term is, in my opinion, incorrectly translated as "mind". In DN (Karunadasa 2018, 7), *citta* is described as a combination of names (*samaññā*), expressions (*nirutti*), speech (*vohāra*) and designations (*paññatti*).

Primarily, *citta* is described as a product linked to the thought process, capable of independent agency and emotions. Another important aspect concerns the possibility that *citta* may "get polluted", needing to be purified by the meditative process. Purified *citta* is called 'luminous' cognition (*sappabhāsaṃ cittaṃ*). Johansson then reminds us that it is denied that the *citta* is in any way identifiable with the self-identity (*attā*). Except for one notable occasion, the same is denied as such for the *viññāṇa*. *Citta*, however, does not even seem to be generically identifiable with the person, that, in contrast, can be dissociated from one's own *citta*, as in the case of the verse quoted by Johansson: "*ahaṃ iminā cittena nikato vañcito paladdho*" (Johansson 1965, 169): "I was deceived, cheated and betrayed from this mind [of mine]".

Undoubtedly, the most fascinating aspect concerns the state that defines the nature of the *citta*. Cognition is in fact "incorporeal" (*asarīra*), and this is explicitly acknowledged in the texts. The activities of the body are distinct from cognitive activities (*cittasaṇkhāro*) to the extent that dynamics such as semantic perception, sensation, and cognition (*saññā ca vedanā ca cetasikā*) are considered part of this activity.

Another term, *ceto*, etymologically related with *citta*, is actually used numerous times as a synonym for *citta* – perhaps as both derived from the same root *cit(i)* – but which in other conditions, as Johansson points out, assumes its own specific technicality typical of a more instrumental function, different from that of *citta*, comparable instead to an organ-like managing different cognitive mechanisms.

In the scheme of the cognitive process, the trigger factor can be considered as the moment of contact (*phassa*) between *rūpa* and *citta*, which would force us to consider *citta* not so much as a process but more similarly as the cognitive organ. However, since it cannot be assimilated either to the self or consciousness (*viññāṇa*) or even mind (*mano*), it is plausible that this *citta* vaguely represents the sphere of conscious psyche. Consequently, the state of *acit* indicates the unconscious psyche. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that sensory and cognitive processes such as *vedanā* and *saññā* are clearly described as depending on *citta*.

Returning to the problem of *rūpa → citta* contact, the texts show that a skillfully trained *citta* is able to avoid the influxes derived from contact with forms (*rūpa*). The actual attainment of a state of complete awareness (*sammāsamādhi*) corresponds to the fixation of *citta* in a state of "one pointedness" (*cittassa ekaggatā*). Albeit it is not the 'person' as subject, *citta* seems to be a core inextricably linked to subjectivity and personality.

Other elements reported by Johansson supporting the psychic *citta*-conscious theory are: 1) its internal organization; 2) the fact that it includes the conscious phenomena, and it is related to personality; 3) it may apparently "get sick" or present unstable conditions. The term, *citta*, is also connected to the verbal root *citi-* which means "to know". In the Abhidhamma, *citta* is the second of the four categories in which dhammas can be analyzed, together with *cetasika* (the "consciousness factors").

A final mention should be made for the concept of the liberated cognition (*cetovimutti*). For the Buddhist texts, the status of the liberated *citta* corresponds to a series of conditions, among which the one of greatest interest to us is undoubtedly that of being "without signs" (*animittaṃ cetosamādhim*). Despite the lack of signs, Buddhist texts clearly declare that "a person in such a state is conscious (*saññī*), not unconscious" (Harvey 1986, 27), therefore, signs are not indispensable for humans to experience reality. Then, we can find the term *acitta* to indicate both the state of unconsciousness and the condition of an object that is devoid of consciousness (*na passati acittakattā*).

The term *bhavaṅga* is also central to the Abhidhammic theory of cognition, so it would be incorrect to think that it is a particular type of consciousness. As a state of consciousness, the *bhavaṅga* is rather referred to a type of function or moment that occurs between several cognitive phases constituting becoming. In ancient Buddhist psychology two states of cognition were included: the first is identified as processual (*vīthi-citta*) and contextually refers to the moments in which one is actually conscious, present to oneself. However, we are not conscious in every moment of the day. Numerous physiological processes are carried out unknowingly, and numerous daily actions are performed automatically, without our subjectivity being fully aware. This second state is called *vīthi-mutta*, and it is probably the origin of the subsequent elaboration around the state of *bhavaṅga*.

The authors of the Abhidhamma must have deduced that, if there are cognitive stages in which the subject's consciousness is suspended, another type of cognition must necessarily intervene, and this is subconscious. The *bhavaṅga* is a state of suspended consciousness that arises to manage the physiological activities when the body is guided by the subconscious or the mechanism of psychological automatism described by Pierre Janet.

For the Abhidhamma, *bhavaṅga* is a state of *vīthi-mutta* that serves to ensure continuity of subjective experience in an uninterrupted way. The *bhavaṅga* intervenes between two conscious cognitive processes, separating them into cognitive units. The same cognitive activity, in the processual sense (*vīthi-pātha*), begins with the alteration of a previously active state of *bhavaṅga*, an alteration (*calana*) caused by the contact between the sensory organ and the cognitive datum. With the beginning of the cognitive process, the subconscious state ends (*bhavaṅga-upaccheda*).

Each cognitive organ is described in the Abhidhamma as the carrier of a specific function (*kicca*). The eye-organ (*cakkhu*) carries the visual function (*dassana-kicca*), just as the ear-organ (*sota*) carries the auditory function (*savaṇa-kicca*), and so on for any other organ that is part of this group: nose for smell (*ghāna*), tongue for taste (*jivhā*), body for touch (*kāya*). More specifically, the Abhidhamma indicates six "doors"

(*dvāra*), or channels, of cognition. They coincide with the perceptive organ (*pasāda*) that performs the cognitive act. The first five constitute a theoretical unity of five sensory processes (*pañca-dvāra-vīthi*), while the sixth organ is represented by the thinking function itself, or mental gate (*mano-dvāra-vīthi*).[5]

The *mano-dvāra* is seen as the process director of the other five sensory functions, which is why we refer to a process of mixed doors (*missaka-dvāra-vīthi*). Furthermore, the processes of ideation "that occur solely at the mind door are also called bare mind-door processes (*suddha-mano-dvāra-vīthi*)" (Karunadasa 2019, 172). Ultimately, the cognitive experience is represented in the Abhidhamma as an interruption of the suspended state of automatism (*bhavaṅga*). This suspended state vibrates (*calana*) after a contact-impact between a perceptible object and the sensory door. In the "eye" case, for example, it could be said that it is the contact between photons and the retina that generates vision. Following this contact, the flow of *bhavaṅga* is stopped (*upaccheda*), but this is merely the beginning of the actual cognitive process (*vīthi-pāta*) of vision.

3. AGAINST THE ABHIDHARMA

We said that for Severino the definition of reality does not lie in a distinction between objective and subjective, and that therefore reality is like a language and its semantics also describes its ontology (Severino 2021). In Nāgārjuna's formulations, the problem of perceptual dualism that we are dealing with could be expressed as the problem of the relation between subject and object. Both, subject and object, exist on the same plane, therefore dualism does not lie in an opposition between abstract and concrete. Only abstractedness must be considered. Severino exposes the problem in this way: let us consider A_1 as the immediate perception whose consciousness is self-awareness, and then imagine a projection on a mirror plane that configures a relation with a 'double imaginary'. In this Severino's model, consciousness, thinking of itself as an object, projects itself as object-image (A_2), and when it looks at itself as A_2, Consciousness is no longer A_1, but a *sub-iectum*, subject of experience (A_3).[6]

It is said that in the debate regarding the nature of objective reality, Nāgārjuna is explicitly opposed to the Sarvāstivādins, subtly suggesting that there is rather a concordance with the Pāli Abhidhamma. This assumption is unsustainable if we realize

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[5] The term *mano* is something related with the act of thinking, like a function rather than a dimension. For this reason, Buddhist psychology conceives "thinking" (*maññati*) not as coinciding with an organ, but as a quality of the whole body. I will refer to *mano* as both "mind" and "thinking" for practical reasons, but we must remember that "mind" is quite an inaccurate translation.

[6] This is Severino's pansemic principle, which involves the understanding of the Whole in every part of the Whole itself. But this should not be confused with a *regressus in indefinitum*, as there is nothing indefinite in the Sense. The identity of A_1, A_2, and A_3 excludes any regression to indefinite, as pointed out by Severino (1981, 95). The potentially infinite development is the same consciousness as self-awareness. *De facto*, $A_3 = A_2 = A_1$ not because they are identical configurations, but because their manifestation is co-implied: A_3 can appear only if it implies A_1 within it, while A_1 is the same configuration as the appearance of A_2 and A_3 (see also 318-329).

how the Abhidhamma drastically affirms something that for Nāgārjuna would be unacceptable.[7]

Nāgārjuna seems to support the *Prajñaptivāda* theories of the Mahāsāṅghika school (Walser 2005, 230), which states that all reality, including the five *skandhas*, are only nominal designations, and therefore they act and influence us as long as we are not aware of their true nature. Understanding the importance and reasons for this opposition leads us to a possible solution to the aporia of identity. We can summarize the positions of the Abhidhamma criticized by Nāgārjuna.

For the Theravādins, *dhammas* can be identified as having their own-nature (*sabhāva*, cf. Karunadasa 2019, 42-43). This doesn't mean that they are independently existing, since the *dhammas* are dependently produced. Their *sabhāva* is referring to the fact that each dhamma carries peculiar and specific characteristics (*salakkhaṇa*). So, ultimately, all *dhammas* are empty of own-nature (*sabhavena suññam*), which is something that can find Madhyamaka's consensus. However, the problem with the Theravāda Abhidhamma lies in two orders of reasons: first, it establishes a difference between entities of convention (*paññattis*) and entities of nature (*dhammas*), thus creating an implicit dualism between *asabhāva* and *sabhāva*, a split between relative reality and objective reality. Secondly, it affirms the nihilistic possibility of the cessation of the existence of a *dhamma*. In fact, in Theravāda's analysis of temporality, it's postulated a moment of origination (*uppādakkhaṇa*), one of presence (*ṭhitikkhaṇa*) and finally one of destruction (*bhaṅgakkhaṇa*). That is to say, the existence of a *dhamma* can be annihilated (*jaratā*), which implies an *ucchedavāda* position: "they cease to be after having been" (*hutvā paṭiventi*).[8]

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[7] Regarding the objective reality in the Abhidhammic conception, a distinction must be made. In fact, it appears evident that the Abhidhamma differentiates between two dimensions of conceivable reality: conditioned and unconditioned. The Pāli Abhidhamma distinguishes between "conventionality" (*sammuti*), which is dominated by designations (*paññatti*), and *paramattha*, which concerns objective reality. It is not sustainable that Nāgārjuna agrees with this view only because he uses apparently similar terms (*paramārtha* and *saṃvṛti*), as it appears very evident that Nāgārjuna does not mean *paramārtha* in the same way as the Abhidhammic *paramattha*. Nāgārjuna denies the existence of an objective reality in a material sense or independent of cognitions, just as the distinction between subject and object is denied (MK 1.8, and 5.4,8) as a consequence of his demonstration of the emptiness of all dharmas. For Nāgārjuna, the term *paramārtha* indicates the *śūnyatā*, that is the truth itself understood as emptiness of everything that appears, and this coincidence of truth with *śūnyatā* is *tattva*, the "as it is" (Saitō 2010). However, this does not deny the ontological existence, the *tattva* is "*something*" sensible, but in some way, it is incommensurable to perceptions, which conceive reality only in the form of *saṃvṛti*. Also in this case, the term *saṃvṛti* does not coincide with that of *sammuti* in Pāli, and they are also etymologically distinct (Sasaki 1986, 79-80: see the difference between √*sam-man* < *sammuti* and √*saṃ-vṛ* < *saṃvṛti*). For Nāgārjuna, the dimension of *saṃvṛti* indicates the set of empirical and conventional visions that the human community establishes through the use of language. It is not another 'different' reality, because there is only one reality which is *tattva* (Jones 2020). Rather, *saṃvṛti* indicates the set of possible partial (and potentially infinite) or incorrect views of the one reality.

[8] Precisely (Karunadasa 2020, 131), dhammas are considered to be devoid of own-power or own-sway (*dhammānaṃ savasavattitābhimāno paṭisedhito hoti*), albeit they are endowed with self-nature (*svabhāva*). For more than one reason that we can now easily imagine, this statement is quite contradictory.

It must be said that the Abhidhamma recognizes the possibility of a knowable entity (*ñeyya-dhamma*) only in the relation between *paramattha* and *sammuti*, that is, between the absolute and its relative configurations. In total disagreement with the Sāṃkhya principle of *satkāryavāda*, the Abhidhamma states (Karunadasa 2020, 131) that the cause *cannot* pre-contain the effect (*na phalena sagabbho*). The effect is empty of any cause (*hetu-suññaṃ phalaṃ*). However, the Abhidhamma does not deny the interdependence of all dhammas, affirming indeed their mutual correlation (*paccayākāra-naya*). Nevertheless, this statement presents a problem, and this problem involves internal coherence with the Abhidhammic system. Nāgārjuna opposes this theory because it would lead to an indefinite regress. Therefore, it seems logical to consider cause and effect not as two separate events, but rather as two distinct moments of appearing. Furthermore, in Ud 80 it is stated that the cessation of *dukkha* stays in recognizing the non-existence of the dichotomy between cause and effect.

The Abhidhamma also states that something that has arisen can act as a precondition for something that is becoming (*purejāta/pacchājāta-paccaya*), but this is inconsistent: if we affirm that the previous entity does no longer exist in the future for the arising of a future entity, this would implicate that the past entity (A) 'becomes' the future entity (B), annihilating its previous 'existence' (for B is evidently ¬A, therefore, if A becomes B, consequently A becomes ¬A).

The position of Nāgārjuna not only holds that all dependently arisen entities have merely conceptually constructed existence (*prajñaptisat*), but also that it is impossible to detect anything that is independently existing (*svabhāva*). Consequently, Nāgārjuna demonstrates that it is not possible to think of any entity that is "itself" without its identity being endowed with mutual opposition to other entities of the system.[9] There is no "A = A", but there is a system in which mutually *tout se tient*: (A = A) ⇔ [(A = ¬B) ∧ (B = ¬A)] and so on *ad infinitum*. In a system where each identity depends on the others, no identity is substantially real, because the only thing that matter is the whole, where its positional determinations are inseparable, though defined.[10]

Even the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma presents a weak ontological articulation which can lead to the opposite excess, that is to the *sassatavāda* vision, and for this reason it is opposed by Nāgārjuna. Indeed, for the Sarvāstivādins, the identification between

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[9] It must be noted in particular, as Shulman (2009) points out, that for the Madhyamaka, the lack of *svabhāva* of a certain phenomenon is intended as the fact that the phenomenon in question is originated by ignorance and developed as it appears to cognition through a process of conceptualization.

[10] This is evident from the passages in which Nāgārjuna explains the reciprocal relationship between identity and diversity (MK 14.5-6), whose analogous setting in Greek philosophy can also be traced back to Aristotelian formulations on identity (*tò gàr aytò háma hypárkhein adiýnaton tô kai kata tò aytó*). The identity of what is different from oneself is that of being "other" (*anyat*), but from the point of view of the other, identity is given only insofar as it is conceived as "other" (different) from that which draws its identity precisely because it defines itself as not different. In other words, if A is "identity" because it is opposite to "other/different" (B), for B it is the opposite: A *is* "the different", but then how can there be *independent* identity? An "identical", which is *identical only to itself* and which does not depend on anything else, is unthinkable from our reasoning, and in fact Nāgārjuna dismantles any possibility of thinking an *identical* on the basis of the model of the relationship between subject and object, observer and observed, agent and action, and so on.

dharma and *svabhāva* is chronologically older and claims that dharmas are those gradients of reality endowed with an intrinsic nature. I suggest to call this a "weak" type of existentialism, also because for the Sarvāstivādins there is an opposition between what is real and what has no intrinsic nature. The Sarvāstivāda's three-temporal theory implies a relationship of causality: future existence is contained in the present one, and present existence calls for the past one (*hutva hoti, hutvā hoti*).

The Abhidharmakośabhāṣya is a long compendium of the Sarvāstivāda positions. Here Vasubandhu exposes the distinction of *dve satye* in a peculiar way: something no longer appears (*na pravartate*) because it has been broken down. To elucidate this, he gives the example of a vase. A vase appears to our knowledge as a vase until the shape that is recognizable as such appears to us as associable with the nominal identity: "vase". The shape (*rūpa*), however, is recognizable because in us there is already a prototypical ideal shape that acts as a model for all perceptible "vases". He explained how the psychosemantic association between a formal meaning and a nominal signifier takes place.

Indeed, when the vase is broken into pieces, the shape is lost, it is no longer recognizable by our cognition. For Vasubandhu, when something 'shatters', it is also dissolved in the mind (*apohyān dharmān*): this is conventional reality (*saṃvṛtisatya*). On the other hand, if even under the prove of mental analysis, the idea continues to persist, it means that it exists in the ultimate sense (*paramārthasat*). Walser reports from the translation: "for example *rūpa*; one can reduce the *rūpa* to atoms, one can withdraw by the mind the flavor and the other dharmas, and the idea of the essential nature of *rūpa* persists" (Walser 2005, 235). More precisely, for Vasubandhu, something is "conventionally existent" if it is revealed to be divisible (*bheda*) through analysis. The center of the cognitive process therefore appears to be the recognition of form. Ideal forms are the model of comparison that allows cognition to recognize something, because a specific name (*nāma*) is associated with each form (*rūpa*). However, "Nāgārjuna has shown that *rūpa* ultimately does not exist at all, but is only conventionally existent" (238).

Both the Abhidharmas remain somehow stuck in the deception of the *double imaginary* generated by cognition (like a mirror mirroring itself in another mirror). We find curious expressions in the Abhidhamma, such as *rūparūpa* "formal form", which seems to refer to the need for a *natura naturans*. We must therefore bear in mind one thing: there are several possible meanings of the term *rūpa*,[11] but one use in particular can be intended as referring to the original form, which cannot be named, unitary and

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[11] It is possible to identify several meanings of the term *rūpa*, thus it doesn't merely mean "physical" or "material form". The "form" addressed by *rūpa* concerns more specifically "the sphere of visibility" (Karunadasa 2020). The first thing we must understand is that, theoretically, also a mental object can be, to some extent, 'visible'. Since the object we see during the process of perception cognitively constructed, the experiencer deals only with a 'mental object', which nature is incidentally the same as an object elaborated by a process of mental imaging. A "figure" can be included in the sphere of visibility (*rūpāyatana*). So, what I suggest here is to interpret *rūpa* as an ancient idea for "cognitive form". This seems confirmed by some of the nine meanings (*atthas*) found by Karunadasa for the term *rūpa*, which include "figure/configuration" (*saṇṭhana*), "condition/cause" (*paccaya*), "meditation object" or "sign" (*kasiṇa-nimitta*) and that outlines a conception of 'form' as "image, figure, sign, appearance" (3).

immanent, preceding the perception of language, a sort of proto-form undefined and undivided.

According to Karunadasa (2019, 196), in the commentaries of the Abhidhamma appears clear that the form (*rūpa*) is regarded as mutable (*ruppana*), while entities (*dhamma*) are described as having 'self-existence' (*sabhāva*), viz., 'independent'. Since the Abhidhamma argues that the *entities* are of two main categories (the 'interdependent' *paññattis* and the 'independent' *dhammas*), it follows that two main groups are outlined: concretely produced (*nipphanna*), and not concretely produced (*anipphanna*) entities. Thus, the possibility of a self-existent matter (*sabhāva-rūpa*) is outlined. The Abhidhamma seems also to postulate the existence of "nominal entities" (as *anipphanna*), but these are conceived as such only because they lack an 'objective referent' (227: cit. "Objective counterparts").

The concept of *ruppana* is used to address the condition of a *rūpa* which is subject to deformations (*ruppati*) or alterations (*vikāra*). This idea reminds to a pseudo-nihilistic conception of becoming, for which "change came to be interpreted not as the alteration between two stages in the same material factor (*rūpa-dhamma*), but as the disappearance of one material factor and the immediate emergence in its place of another" (Karunadasa 2020, 11). We must pay close attention to this Karunadasa's interpretation: "the *disappearance* of one material factor and the *immediate emergence* in its place of *another*". The one which disappears, is inevitably *destroyed*, so it must die in order to let born something *else* (*avici-jāra*). This fact, which is called "genesis of dissimilarity" (*visaduppati*) is fundamental because it allows us to detect a surprising similarity with the positions of Neo-Parmenidism, even though the latter rejects the nihilist possibility in favor of an indistinguishability of the abstract and the concrete (Severino 1981, 457), like Nāgārjuna clearly affirms.

Let's imagine, as Nāgārjuna does in MK 10, the transformative process involving comburent and fuel, and compare it with Severino's metaphor of wood and ash. If we ignite a piece of wood, what we perceive is precisely what is supported by Abhidhamma: the disappearance of one material entity (wood) and the subsequent emergence of another in its place (ash). As the wood is transformed into ash, it ceases to exist, being inevitably destroyed. This concept of transformation necessarily implies the annihilation of one entity in favor of another, and as the wood is destroyed, the ashes emerge from nothing. Nevertheless, when we assert that wood becomes ash, we do not imply that nothingness becomes ash. However, by affirming the transformation of wood into ash, we inevitably fall into the identification of the two substances. This problem has two possible solutions: the solution of Sāṃkhya philosophy calls into question the difference between substance and appearance. For the Sāṃkhya, substance is invariable, what changes is appearance. Therefore, in the transformative activity (*pariṇāma*), it is only the formal aspect that changes, not the substance. This is an idea which somehow recalls the *bhāvānyathātva* of Dharmatrāta. This conception also seems analogous to the statements of Heraclitus. Transformation is not intended as a

destruction, since "by changing it remains the same" (*metabállon anapaýetai*).[12] Secondly, there is the solution of Neo-Parmenidism which, just appears to be analogous to that given by Madhyamaka.

In summary, the question of becoming implies two fundamental aspects: the first is an aporia inherent in logic. For Severino, it cannot be said that A becomes B, since the identity of B is precisely that of being not-A. If A became what it is not, it would be annihilated, or it would contradict the *bebaiotátē arkhḗ*, which is *principium firmissimum*. An analogous relationship is that between subject and predicate (Chiurazzi 2021, 44). This statement is therefore the essence of madness (Severino 2011, 113-114). The second aspect concerns a perceptual deception: we believe that becoming happens because we confuse the appearance of a series of independent states as a development of an entity, while in reality the interconnection of these states and their succession is, for Severino, the appearance of a series of eternal instants, therefore, for his philosophy, although wood no longer appears when ash appears, it cannot be said that wood has ceased to exist. Severino interprets the "saying by necessity" (*khrḕ tò légein*) of Parmenides (*fr*. 6.1) as the truth of the impossibility of any entity to be a "nothing". For Buddhist philosophy, to put it just in one sentence, something "arises and perishes in relation to immediately antecedent and consequent events. Since every event depends on, or is conditioned by, these relations, and since every event itself is a relation, the event cannot be distinguished from the conditions that cause it" (Brown 1999, 265).

4. SPLIT AND SPLICE

We must face what appears to be a fundamental ontological problem in Buddhism. Incidentally, I do not agree with Shulman's idea for which Nāgārjuna was troubled "by existence in general" (Shulman 2009, 144). In a philosophy like the Buddhist one in which every extreme is drastically denied, it makes no sense to speak of problems with "existence in general", but rather with the *idea* of existence, which, like any idea, is a conceptual reification.[13] Each concept, as it is said in SN 12.15 and 22.90, is based on

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[12] Such a view also appears connected to what McGilchrist notes (see note 20) about the world view in the RH, for which everything is conceived as constantly inserted in a dynamic flux. Everything flows in the sense that everything is inextricably interconnected. Rather, the LH thinks of change in a nihilistic way, to mean it with Heidegger (*Vereinzelung*). That is, it thinks of the things of the world as fixed and isolable, manipulable entities. If an isolated entity changes, this transformation must necessarily pass through its death. For Severino, this desire to isolate entities in order to control them (and their consequent loss of semanticity, which manifests nihilism and the *Unheimlichkeit*) is attributable to language: "Language, in fact, isolates the subject and the predicate, and as a consequence of this isolation their relationship is understood as a passage from one to the other, and therefore as the passage from what the one (the subject) is to what it is not (the predicate), or as a passage from being to non-being. Western thought remains entangled in this contradiction, which is the contradiction of becoming" (Chiurazzi 2021, 44).

[13] We know that early Buddhism was equally opposed to these two ideas: the eternalism (*sassatavāda*) of the existentialist view (*bhava-diṭṭhi*) which affirmed the existence of all things (*sabbaṃ atthi*), and the nihilism (*ucchedavāda*) of the materialist and anti-existentialist (*vibhava-diṭṭhi*) view which proclaimed the nonexistence (*sabbaṃ natthi*) of all things. Likewise, it denied the monist (*sabbaṃ*

its opposite, as the system of cognition itself is dualistic: the world is based on two (*dvayanissito*), and this is therefore the key to any Nāgārjunian "trouble" since, for him, "all dharmas are nothing but composite *prajñapti* and there are no foundational substances or essences anywhere" (Walser 2005, 235). Nāgārjuna warns indeed, that confusing the absolute with the idea of the absolute is as dangerous as a mishandled snake or a misspelled magic formula (MK 24.11).

Therefore, beyond the incorrect formulation of "existence in general", Shulman properly recognizes that cannot be attributed to Nāgārjuna any nihilism as the latter radically denies this theory (Shulman 2009, 146). The attention therefore shifts to entities understood as plural elements (*bhāvāḥ*), which cannot exist as independent, that is, as separate from each other.[14] This brings us to the ontological problem of being and of the separateness of entities.

Upon a cursory examination, Nāgārjuna appears to assert, in a seemingly contradictory manner, the absence of inherent self-nature in all phenomena, while simultaneously affirming the existence of something truly existent, thereby implying some form of inherent-nature (Jones, 2018). With regard to this issue, my position is less moderate compared to that of Shulman, who contends that the theory of language holds significance, albeit not at a fundamental level (Shulman 2009, 146). Because of this intrinsic linguistic limitation, it is impossible to talk about the true nature of emptiness (MK 13.8). Language can describe only the concept/idea of "the true nature of emptiness". This fact, contrary to what Shulman says, makes language the central element of Nāgārjuna's work.

For the Abhidhamma, the words are just arbitrary denominations. Such a statement is akin to the main point Saussurian linguistics.[15] The designation (*paññatti*) is the mask through which the very understanding of reality is mediated, but here is the big problem: our own Ego, since it is endowed with an identity is itself a conventional reality. According to the Theravāda Abhidhamma, the designation can be understood as nominal-designation (*nāma-paññatti*) or meaning-designation (*attha-paññatti*). These two technical terms correspond, respectively, to the two-sided nature of the linguistic

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ekattaṃ) as well as the pluralist (*sabbaṃ pututthaṃ*) paradigm. The last denial, which we can also consider psychological, concerns the nature of the cause of the phenomena, which in the case of psychology corresponds to aetiology. For Buddhists, world is neither internal (*sayaṃ-kata*) nor external (*paraṃ-kata*) to the entity or individual who experiences or undergoes it.

[14] The ontological difference declined by Heidegger (for further information see Nicholson 1996) is commented on by Severino as it would lead to nihilism. Heidegger postulates an ontological difference between being (*Sein/Seyn*) and beings (*Seiendes*), conceiving beings as what-it-is. For Severino, Heidegger's vision ends up by bringing the Being back to Nothingness as it poses a difference between *Sein* and *Seiendes* isolates the Entity from the Being (Chiurco 2019).

[15] The Saussurian distinction between signifier and signified is nothing more than the representation of a distinction already intuited by the Indian world. In Buddhism this distinction begins with the recognition of a literal sense (*nīta-attha*) and an attributable sense (*neyyattha*) of the Buddha's words. Later, this second concept will evolve into conventionality (*paññatti*).

sign according to Ferdinand De Saussure: namely, the *signifier* and the *signified*, also called "acoustic image" and "concept".[16]

Nominal expression imposes a distinction by division (*abhede bheda-parikappanā*) between agent and action. Thus, for example, we say "consciousness discerns" (*viññāṇaṃ vijānāti*).[17] The technical term is a function described by the verb. More precisely, the verb (action), describes the function indicated by the technical term (which, not surprisingly, is etymologically connected to the same verbal root). The term *saññā* is described, in the Pāli canon, simply as "to recognize" (*sañjānāti*).[18]
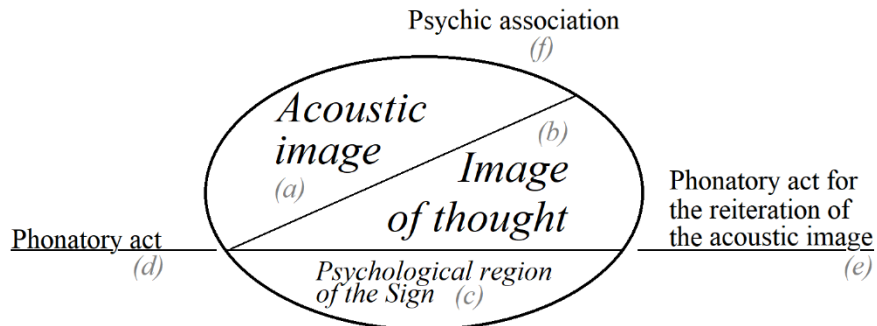

Fig.1

In this scheme I report the conception of the linguistic sign found in Saussure's manuscripts. As we can see from this scheme the sign outlines a reality built exclusively on the psychic level, on which the psychosemantic dualism also develops, which is therefore not an ontological dualism between physical and mental reality. The "*acte phonatoire*" (d.) does not represent a physical or physiological datum, as the latter are only conformations that adapt to a psychic construction. Point d. in fact refers to a. (*image acoustique*) while the concept b. (*image de pensée*) is expressed by e. (*acte phonatoire en vue de répéter l'image acoustique*). All these elements are, as Saussure specifies, in the *région du Signe* (c.), which is "*psychologique*". Finally, the relationship between a. and b. is the "*association psychique*" (f.) thus, a psychosemantic dualism.

To discern means to organize a knowledge based on *divisions*.[19] Thus, *viññāṇa* is not a "consciousness" understood as "self-awareness", but rather a form of cognitive organization based on separations: knowing (*jānāti*) through divisions (*vi-*). What I

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[16] Identity, "identité linguistique", must be, according to Saussure, the center of linguistic interest. This identity "a cela d'absolument particulier qu'elle implique l'association de deux éléments hétérogènes". Also, both the signifier and the signified must be considered psychological: "les deux éléments du mot son réciproquement dans l'ordre spirituel" (Saussure 2002, 18-9).

[17] This definition is reported by Karunadasa 2018, 6-7.

[18] We find such analysis, for example, in MN 43: *sañjānāti sañjānātī'ti kho, āvuso, tasmā saññā'ti vuccati*.

[19] In Latin, *discernō* literally means "to see" (*cernō*) by "divisions" (*dis-*). Furthermore, the root *cernō*, *cernere*, also has within its meanings that of "divide" or "separate". Cfr. the Greek *krínō* with the Proto-Italic root **krinō*. Also the term "dis-criminate" contains the sense of dis-cernere, "to cut", cf. *discrīmināre*, *discrīmen*, *discernō* from *dis*: 'two' as Sanskrit *dvis*, and *cernō*: 'to cut', see Greek *krínō*.

have chosen to interpret as "semantic cognition" (*saññā*) is, by definition of the Buddhists themselves, a re-knowing. The process of recognition is, in some respects, the opposite of discernment. Whereas discernment organizes by division, recognition proceeds by re-composition and association: putting together (*saṃ-*) in order to know (*jānāti*). These are the two fundamental phases of linguistic understanding: decomposition and association, *split* and *splice*. Each concept is associated with its acoustic image: each name is associated with its concept (cognitive form).

Splitting (*vijānāti*)	Splicing (*sañjānāti*)
Consciousness (*viññāṇa*)	Recognition (*saññā*)

In DN 15 it is said that Consciousness (*viññāṇa*) is also an emergent property of the name-form instance (*nāmarūpa*). This implies that discernment is conceived by Buddhists as closely related to the Saussurian *signifiant-signifié* semantic unit (*nāma-rūpa*). Where, the term *rūpa* is to be understood as a more primordial and preceding concept to that of the attributed meaning (*attha-paññatti*).

> Whereas *vijñāna* simply produces an awareness of a thing, *saṃjñā* produces an understanding of that awareness. For example, *vijñāna* registers the presence of a blue cup while *saṃjñā* is responsible for the understanding "it is a blue cup." (Walser 2005, 160)

It appears evident, therefore, that the *nāma-rūpa* unity expressed by Buddhist thinkers indicates a function in which a *nāmization* takes place starting from an original and indistinct *rūpa* through, precisely, the process of *vijānāti*.

We refer to the idea of *viññāṇa* in Early Buddhism as a personal function of "discernment", that is, separation and organization-recognition of entities. Nevertheless, in the Abhidhammic context, *viññāṇa* refers to the "mere awareness of the presence of the object" (Karunadasa 2019, 173), where the mere (*matta*) act of vision (*dassana*) or hearing (*savaṇa*) is sufficient to activate the process, which however does not "produce" any *ñāna* (knowledge, *jñāna*) in particular.

Going forward, we come to the definition of *vedanā* as an aspect of experiencing (or seeing). This term is also connected to the idea of "knowing" but using a root different from *jñā* that we have seen up to now (and which is etymologically connected to the Greek *gnôsis* and the old English *cnāwan*). Our "vision" instead derives from a type of knowledge that can be experienced personally, to the extant that its root *vid* has to do with "vision". It is no coincidence that the "seen" is also the "known" (the title of the sacred text of the *Vedas* indicates more generally "knowledge"), and in fact the Buddhist term to indicate ignorance (*avijjā*) is nothing other than negation (*a-*) of knowledge (*vijjā*, cf. Sanskrit *vidyā*, from the root *vid-* that we have just mentioned). According to Attwood's translation, therefore, "*vedanā* is the process that causes us to know" (Attwood 2018, 6), also, "*Vedanā* is not simply what you know about an object, but what you are *made* to know about it because of contact with it" (*ibidem*). Based on these proposals, we can reread *vedanā* not simply as a sensation, but as a process of knowledge based on experience (Attwood literally speaks of "affective tone").

McGilchrist (2019, 10-11) reported some key points of the difference between LH and RH that I believe it can help us better understand this issue.[20] The LH sees things as isolated, fragmentary, while the RH sees them as "interconnected wholes". The LH constructs a world based on stasis, while the RH tends to think of it as a flow. The image of the world of the LH is that of a world composed of pieces that act mechanically, while the RH sees a complexity of interconnected entities. Consequently, the LH sees things "as explicit and decontextualized, whereas the RH tends to see them as implicit and embedded in a context". Mechanisms such as metaphor, irony, myth, poetry, are misunderstood by the LH, because they imply a non-fragmented vision of reality. Language is also experienced differently. In understanding the category, the LH makes use of exclusion (A = ¬B) while the RH uses associative strategies based on Wittgensteinian family resemblances. In fact, a damage to the RH leads to the inability to recognize individuals.

This last aspect is of the utmost importance, and is accompanied by a greater analyticity, lexical and syntactic properties of the LH, while the pragmatics is typical of the RH (as well as the ability to contain the image of one's own body as an organism). In the representation of the world, therefore, the division of totality into manipulable (understandable) entities is the peculiarity of the LH, while the "RH is better as seeing things as they are preconceptually".[21]

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[20] The acronyms LH and RH refer respectively to *Left Hemisphere* and *Right Hemisphere*. More and more scholars of Buddhist philosophy and the philosophy of language and mind have begun to collaborate with neuroscientists in the perspective of a 'neurophilosophy'. However, as regards specifically the area covered in this article, I consider the work of McGilchrist to be fundamental. McGilchrist has considerably modernized the conception that one has of the two cerebral hemispheres. Generally, the LH focuses on details, thus confers an analytical type of cognition, while the RH has broad field attention. This double nature is, according to McGilchrist, inevitably incorporated and unconsciously experienced. Human beings possess this double nature, and periodically, one can prevail over the other. In fact, he believes that it is possible to recognize in great historical events, or cultural and artistic movements, and even religions, prevailing tendencies of one or the other hemisphere (Gare 2012, 434). Beyond this, McGilchrist also defines religion as an experience tending to be associated with the RH. However, the religious phenomenon is more complex. In fact, some studies have shown that atheism itself is based on the RH, while the ritual action, albeit religious, would be governed by the LH (McGilchrist 2019, 7). He therefore rejects any reductionist view about the brain, both mechanistic (the brain as a machine) and centralist (identification of subject and brain). Rather, the brain appears to be a form of mediation between reality and the perception of the world. It builds a world by giving shape to the same psychological identity of the experiencer. This involves an inevitable *doubling*, which is perpetual: the subject obtains an idea of the world, which is virtual, resulted from the synthesis of two abstractions of the world: that of the RH, and that of the LH. From McGilchrist we know that the LH sees the world as populated by separate elements. This is functional to the manipulation of the environment, where the RH sees the whole as an indivisible unit, which gives it the ability to see the whole picture.

[21] The world of the RH is a world where nothing appears separately. Everything that appears implies a constant chain, a dragging behind of all the other interconnected aspects, that is, everything appears accompanying this totality: one apparition follows another. As the philosophy of the Primal Structure speaks of a "necessary tie" of entities, for which the appearance of one implies the constant appearance of all the others. In this sense, Severino's philosophy is a philosophy of the right hemisphere, "in which things are related when they co-occur without necessarily implying causation" (McGilchrist 2019, 14).

Therefore, if both instances are internal to perception, we should not be surprised if Buddhist philosophy has clearly used specific terminologies in its philosophy.

Left Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
Discernment (*vi-jñāna*)	Recognition (*saṃ-jñā*)

Truth cannot be understood as something external and alien to the human being, like something that can be 'grasped', such as the LH would like to do. The incontrovertible truth in the sense of a denial of apparently irreconcilable possibilities to a given system cannot be sustained: "ultimate reality is paradoxical" (p. 15).

Returning to the Buddhist view of truth and reality, we know that one crucial phase of meditation is the state of *samādhi*. This term is a compound of two roots: *sama* "together" and *dhā* "to put". Nāgārjuna specifies that *samādhi* is the loss of distinction between subject and object and the cessation of *discriminating thinking*.[22] Therefore, if McGilchrist's theory is applied to Buddhist thought, we must also remind that discriminating thought (LH) is considered by Buddhism as the source of all discomfort (*dukkha*), and is therefore a mechanism that must be ceased (*nirodha*) in favor of another, unifying thought (*samādhi*). McGilchrist himself, commenting on neurological studies on meditation, states that "meditation and mindfulness succeed primarily by freeing RH consciousness from LH processing" (p. 18).

Let us now analyze how Nāgārjuna deals with the problem of perceptive dualism. He undoubtedly proves to be an attentive connoisseur both of ancient texts and of the Abhidharma. However, Nāgārjuna does not directly quote any text, except for one, which he calls "discourse to Kātyāyana" (MK 15.7). We cannot say with certainty, which was the original one read by Nāgārjuna, as there are several possible parallels both in the Āgamas and in the Nikāyas,[23] but if this were part of a lost canon, perhaps written in other vernacular languages, we would not be able to know. If we refer instead to the Pāli canon, the most probable hypothesis is that the text in question is the Kaccānagottasutta (SN 12.15), also known as Kaccāyanagottosutta.

According to this sutta, the world (*loka*) is based on a dualistic structure (*dvayanissito*), and this duality is based on two opposite ideas: that of existence and that of non-existence (*atthitañceva natthitañca*). At this point it is said that after having

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[22] Within Dan Arnold's (2019) critique, one notable aspect is the extrapolation made by McGilchrist regarding Asian philosophies and the concept of an all-encompassing and ambiguous 'Oriental Culture' as a source of value due to its RH-driven nature. Nevertheless, I do not share the view of Arnold when, in an attempt to demonstrate that Buddhism embodies an irreducible pluralism, he gives the example of Dharmakīrti and Nāgārjuna. The great analytical capacity of Nāgārjuna did not in fact prevent him from recognizing in *samādhi* the key to enlightenment, where a truly analytical thought would have been exclusionary. For Dharmakīrti, it must be said that the doctrine of exclusion (*apoha*) falls within the already canonical Buddhist tendency to use negation to affirm the contradictory nature of language (Sasaki 1986). For Buddhism, the absolute lies precisely in this contradiction, expressed as the empty and ephemeral value of all statements (*śūnya*). It cannot therefore be an analytical-exclusionary thought from the point of view of an LH, but it is rather the same reasoning that Severino makes about the Primal Structure, in which it is stated that the negation of its Sense is self-denial.

[23] SA 262, SA 301, SA 550, SA 595 and SN 12.15 SN 22.90, AN 6.26, SN 44.11.

reached the correct understanding (*sammappaññāya passato*) of "things as they are" (*yathābhūtaṃ*), the existential notion (*atthitā*) as well as the nihilistic one (*natthitā*) stay no longer (*... sā na hoti*) in the world (*loke*). This is the knowledge of the world's origin (*lokasamudayaṃ*) and cessation (*lokanirodhaṃ*).

5. ENTITIES AND SIGNS: THE PROBLEM OF 'WHAT IS REAL'

One of the central aspects of the theory of cognitive allotropy that I am presenting here is certainly the relation between the real thing, its reified perception, the concept, and idea of the concept. In this context, discernment (*viññāṇa*) is related to distinction, while *saññā* to the process of inclusion. In an article, Del Toso analyzed the main functions of the *saññā* in the Pāli canon and its relations with the dhammas and provides us with these starting points (Del Toso 2015, 692):

1. *dhammas* are related to concepts or mental images;
2. *saññā* can process dhammas to our cognition;
3. the activity of *saññā* depends on sensory stimuli.

These considerations bring us back to the initial question: what is real? If Del Toso's thesis on the use of the terms *dhamma* and *saññā* in Pāli are correct, it means that the Abhidhamma innovated the original conception of a world developed on a plane of imaginary doubles, assuming that the dhammas were instead real entities (objectively independent) therefore endowed with *sabhāva*, thus separating them from the cognitive-imaginary plane, populated by concepts (*paññatti*). On the contrary, in the ancient Buddhist conception, there is no distinction between the real and the cognitive world: the imaginary plane is the only reality, as confirmed in SN 1.62: "cognition is that unity that has everything under its control" (*cittassa ekadhammassa, sabbeva vasamanvagu*).

As part of the cognitive process, "*saññā*, *vedanā*, and *viññāṇa* are inseparable" (Del Toso 2015, 696). Furthermore, it is fundamental to remember that for the Madhyamaka "there is no true existence; the object is not real", which implies the fact that "it is ideation which creates the object", so there is "no unitary reality which conditions experience, and hence the objects of experience, which appear to be unitary, are created as part of the way they are envisioned by consciousness" (Shulman 2009, 166). For the Madhyamaka, objects are not perceived since they result as a projection of the "perceptual process", which leads us to the logical consequence that "it is not the object which conditions experience, but experience which conditions the object" (*ibidem*).

Furthermore, "both *saññā* and *vedanā* are said to arise from the contact (*phassa*), the difference between the two lies in the fact that the latter depends *directly* on the sense organs and on the characteristics of the objects" while, "*saññā* processes the bare contact and the result of the bare contact (that is, *vedanā*) in order to transform such a result into an actual sensory 'information'; that is, into a datum that is so made available to the consciousness" (Del Toso 2015, 698).

$$\textit{vedanā} \qquad \textit{saññā} \qquad \textit{saṅkhāra}$$
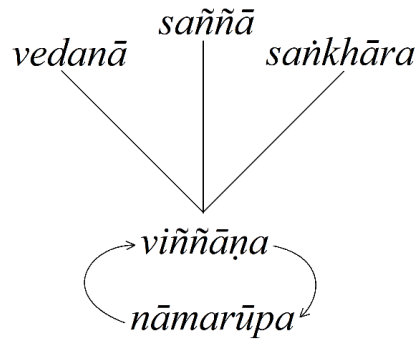
$$\textit{viññāṇa}$$

$$\textit{nāmarūpa}$$

Fig.2

Cognitive cycle that represents specifically the connection between discernment (*viññāṇa*) and semantic unity (*nāmarūpa*).

Albeit we admit that a pen we perceive on table is 'truer' than a pen we dream of during a peaceful sleep, it is still incorrect to believe that the two pens are actually different. As compared to the 'real' pen we touch while awake, the cognitive data are actually identical. It could be said that the pen experienced while awake refers to an alleged real, objective and material pen, but even in that case we would be wrong.

The pen we experience while awake is still an elaboration of our perceptive apparatus, and what we believe we see, hear and touch are actually the depiction that our brain makes of the data it has learned from the environment. In this context, therefore, even a dreamed pen 'refers' to a real ('objective') pen as much as a pen experienced while awake. Whether the perceptual data are the product of a cognitive re-elaboration of what one is seeing, hearing, and touching, or whether it is based on memory, what we experience is just the mere cognitive construct that reaches our experience. Both pens are 'mentally constructed' and experienced as real. Even those who believe in the existence of an objective reality agree on this aspect.

> According to the Buddhist scholastics, objects do not exist in reality, but owe their existence to language, to the words by which they are designated. On this view, the phenomenal world is determined, even created, by words. Note that this position postulates a connection between the objects of the phenomenal world and individual words. (Bronkhorst 2011, 37)

The act of perception establishes a peculiar relationship between subject and object. This dichotomy is introjected into the psyche of all those who perceive. The dual perceptual relation structures an indefinite reiteration in which a subject of perception becomes an object of the perception of another subject. In this relation of objectification, the perceived *is given* to the subject (Del Toso points out that in Latin 'what *is given*' is called *datum*), and it is in this perceptive relation that the perceived object is distinguished from the subject by becoming 'other': "at this level of the perception, the perceived object becomes a *datum* actually distinguished from the subject, and, as a consequence, it can be accepted and handled by the subject itself" (Del Toso 2015,

700). As I said earlier, in the process of cognitive doubling of which Buddhism speaks, the interesting thing is that it is not a relation between a material object external to cognition and a mental 'cognitive copy' of it: both duplicates we are talking about are mental objects. It is therefore not a question of a *yaṃ* (external object) as opposed to a *taṃ* (internalized object) as hypothesized by Del Toso, but rather of something that we could define as an idea and its mirror image (*imago*). Of these two mental objects, however, it is impossible to identify an original and a copy, as they mirror each other.

We now understand why the cognitive dualism already described in MN 10 is based on a *double mental image*. A mental image is in fact already present in our memory as the prototype of an idealized cognitive model. Then, when we see a grove, our view draws from the visual data a series of shapes that can be traced back to the ideal image of a tree. What happens, therefore, is that a mental image of a tree comes into contact (*phassa*) with another mental image.

Here the distinction between *sabba* and *loka* becomes fundamental. The world (*loka*) is described in the Pāli canon as exclusively constructed by knowledge (SN 35.107), and the All/Whole (*sabba*) seems to be an analogous concept. In the Sabbasutta (SN 35.23), the All is described analogously to the world: "it's just the eye and sights, the ear and sounds, the nose and smells, the tongue and tastes, the body and touches, and the mind and entities".[24] The Buddha states: "suppose someone wants to describe *another* Whole", according to the Buddha this claim is groundless and therefore unable to answer the fundamental questions. With this, the Buddha declares, they are in the indeterminate, in the error (*avisayasmin*).

The term *sabba* is somehow problematic. It almost never appears in the canon as a noun, but frequently as an adjective (for example in the expression *sabbe dhammā*), so it is difficult to establish whether the Whole as a concept has any value in ancient Buddhist thought.[25]

A similar conception of *sabba/loka*, reworked by Nāgārjuna's thought, has often been confused with a dualism. Nāgārjuna speaks of an absolutely non-binary opposition between the 'whole' absolute (*paramārtha*) and the 'worldly' relative (*saṃvṛti*), but the absolute is *not* the other side of the relative. Both conditions are described as truth: "two realities" (*dve satye*), one worldly and conventional (*lokasaṃvṛtisatyaṃ*), and one absolute and permanent (*paramārthataḥ*). The absolute reality is, to a certain extent, the only 'ultimate' reality, as the etymology of the term

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[24] *cakkhuñceva rūpā ca, sotañca saddā ca, ghānañca gandhā ca, jivhā ca rasā ca, kāyo ca phoṭṭhabbā ca, mano ca dhammā ca…*

[25] A key definition for understanding the Whole could lie in the double rejection that the Buddha gives of two worldviews that he believes are incorrect: the first is the unity of the whole (*sabbaṃ ekattaṃ*) and the second is the plurality of the whole (*sabbaṃ puthuttaṃ*). By denying that the Whole can be both single and multiple. The Buddha denies the two hypotheses as they are mutually exclusive (if everything is one then everything is not multiple and vice versa), therefore, it would be appropriate to consider the hypothesis that he is actually affirming both. That is, everything is both one and multiple, but since the logic of language experiences this as contradictory, then it cannot be said that everything is only one, nor that it is only multiple. To use Brown's words, Buddhist philosophy concerns a problem of "whole-to-part" relation (Brown 1999, 268).

itself indicates (*paramārtha* is "definitive", from *parama* "main, predominant", and *artha* "sense").

We can see how this distinction, without having to call into question reciprocal influences, is also present in Greek philosophy. In Parmenidean philosophy the perception of worldly reality does not coincide with truth, but it is rather the result of visions and opinions (*dóxa*). We find the same term in Pyrrho's philosophy, in the form of negation. In his philosophy the reality of entities (*prâgma*) is being undifferentiated (*adiáphora*). Since we conceive them as isolated, they appear to us unstable (*astathmēta*) and, therefore, undecidable (*anepikrita*). Consequently, our opinions (*dóxai*) describe a reality that is made-up, illusory. Pyrrho's solution is to be free of opinions (*adóxastoys*). About the term *dóxa* or also *tà dokoŷnta*, Cornford (1933, 100) gives three possible meanings: 1) what seems real because it appears to the senses; 2) what seems true because it is corroborated by beliefs and convictions (today we would also say "cultural habits") that can be called *dógmata*; 3) what seemed right following the association made by human society between appearances and beliefs by means of the institution of language (*onomázein*).

In AS 8.31 is reported the relation between concepts and knowledge: concepts are presented as "what makes known, name, nomenclature, etc." (*paññāpanato paññatti pana nāma-nāmakammādināmena paridīpitā*). The process of conceptualization goes through a *sixfold* (*chabbidhā*) mechanisms: 1) the concept of the real (*vijjamānapaññatti*,); 2) the concept of the unreal (*avijjamānapaññatti*,); 3) the concept of the unreal by means of the real (*vijjamānena avijjamānapaññatti*); 4) the concept of the real by means of the unreal (*avijjamānena vijjamānapaññatti*); 5) the concept of the real by means of the real (*vijjamānena vijjamānapaññatti*); 6) the concept of the unreal by means of the unreal (*avijjamānena avijjamānapaññatti*). What is revealed in this context is that everything we speak of is devoid of an independent referent: human knowledge progresses only by increasing conceptualizations (the idea and the idea of the idea).[26] In AS 8.31 is then asked whether is possible to reach something existent in the ultimate sense (*paramatthato*) through the designations of names such as 'land', 'mountain' and so on. This phenomenon is called "direct concept of the unreal" (*tadā'yaṃ avijjamānapaññattī ti pavuccati*).

6. "IDENTITY" AND "IDENTICAL"

In this section I will outline some possible explanations of the points that Nāgārjuna and Neo-Parmenidism would have in common, and which represent the solution to the problem of an alleged nihilistic Buddhism.

Severino speaks of 'identicals' as different from 'identities'. Entities are conceived as 'identical' and 'eternal', while *identity* is something that is configured following the

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[26] Furthermore, every idea is based on its own anti-idea idea: the idea of A is opposed to the idea of a B = ¬A. However, neither A nor ¬A have a real referent, since both are mentally existent. The doubling intervenes in the evocation of the word: by thinking or speaking of A (which is always the idea of A, or A'), cognition develops a mirroring plan of speculation: the idea of A is referred to the idea of the idea of A (A ≈ A' ≈ A'').

mechanism of attribution and designation. According to the logic of the Primal Structure (PSt), since names are existents, the attributed identities are also *identicals*, albeit they do not coincide with the identity of the entity itself. Therefore, the predication of the identity of *a* (i.e. of the identical named *a*) actually refers to another identical, an *a'*. For Severino, indeed, the only concrete identity is the "identity of the identity with itself" (183) or, the 'identical'. In the cognitive process, on the other hand, the mechanisms of designation build relations of identity: ($a = a'$) creating an apparent contradiction.[27]

The notion of the Primal Structure (PSt) refers to a Whole encompassing innumerable entities, each one being an 'identical'. The entities are different, but not reciprocally exclusive, nor in a relation of generative subordination. They support (and refer to) each other, therefore they are co-implicated. For this, Severino comes to affirm that they also *contain* each other. The holographic conception, at the base of both Severino's thought and Buddhism, can be reassumed in these fundamental points: 1) the reality of phenomena is the unity of a multiple that manifests itself in its parts, but it is substantially unique and there are no alternatives to it; 2) the parts that make up the single reality are not isolable or separable entities, as their link with the unit is such that each part contains within itself all the possible determinations of the whole or, in other words, each part of the whole contains in itself the whole, thus the whole is infinitely self-contained; 3) the whole is 'what is', therefore its determinations also exist. Although inseparable from their holographic web of wholeness, each part is essentially itself, in the sense that it is a peculiar determination, positionally determined as different from the other parts from which it is inseparable.

I suppose that Nāgārjuna understands the *ātman* as an *attributed* identity. Certainly, he believes in an absolute reality (*paramārtha*), which is not nihilistic. Nāgārjuna does not deny the *svabhāva* as such, but 'the *svabhāva* of the dhamma understood as material reality distinct from conventional entities'. For Nāgārjuna, a division between the abstract and the concrete plan is unthinkable, since all entities are identical (all vacuous, because all empty if separated from the whole). This is also why Nāgārjuna assumes that in the end, once this deception is recognized, *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* appear the same (MK 15.19-20).

For Severino, identity "is a real relationship, and indeed is being itself in its appearance, therefore inseparable – not isolable – from its appearance" (Chiurazzi 2021, 48). There is no clear distinction in Severino's formulations between the perceptual identity and the being-itself of an entity. This is the Abhidhamma's forgotten value of the *tattva*, which in fact Jones correctly identified as 'what-is-[real]' for Nāgārjuna (Jones 2020).

For the Abhidhamma, even the smallest material unit (*rūpakalāpa*) contains in itself all the four *mahābhūtas*.[28] Considering that the *mahābhūtas* are for the Abhidhamma

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[27] These positions of Severino are a clear reworking of Parmenides' ideas on names and knowledge (see Woodbury 1958 and Vlastos 1946).

[28] However, despite these classifications, matter is still conceived as unitary (AS 6.6). To put it another way, these twenty-eight aspects are manifestation modalities of the possible determinations of matter, but they, as determinations, are neither separate nor separable. If there is no separation, there is only

everything that is independently real, a relationship is built between them and what 'appears' in the ephemeral reality in the same way as the principle of pansematism present in the Primal Structure (Severino 1981, 261 and 422 for its implications).

The most important aspect of the great elements is their co-existence (*niyata-sahajāta*), so they are inseparable from one another (*padesato avibhoga*). This is surprisingly coherent with the property of entities expressed in the PSt. The appearance of the PSt originally includes itself in its content (Severino 1981, 90), but it also comprises its own negation, and in this, Severino's formulations diverge from the Abhidhamma. Appearance itself takes place in language, which is the form of the self-awareness of consciousness (92). For this reason, "the original meaning is the *original overcoming* of a plurality of positional horizons which are therefore valid as abstract moments of the original" (265).

We can now return to the non-separateness of the *mahābhūtas*. The great elements are interconnected to each other; thus, they can only exist together (*sahajāta/sahabhū*) and "none of them can exist independently of the other three" (Karunadasa 2020, 33). This concept of reciprocal co-nascence (*aññamañña sahajata*) is compatible with Severino's idea of the rising of the entity, but not in the sense of a *creātiō ex nihilō*. Any element is a condition (*paccaya*) for the other in a *mutual sense*. This is an inseparable (*avinibhoga*) association (34). The Abhidhamma does not seem aware of this, since it affirms that certain entities can cease to exist, annihilate themselves. The reason for this impossibility of justifying the extinction of any entity (even the conventional) is explained in the PSt. Severino (1981, 408) formally accepts the Anaxagoras' principle for which "everything is in everything". According to Severino, all entities are different, although they contain all the determinations of the Being, viz., the totality of other entities. Therefore, I define this philosophy as a 'pansemic principle' (from Greek *pan < pâs* "all", and *sêma* "mark, sign", see also *sēmaínō* and the English *semantics*). Each meaning implies the "semantic whole" (413) and thus no meaning can be isolated.[29] The absolute is just one 'Being', but it comprises in itself infinite possibilities, infinite beings, any of which "stays in the necessary relation with any other" (Severino 2007, 523). Accordingly, "precisely because being is identical to itself, identity necessarily implies a difference between being and itself" (Severino 1992, 179).

The isolation of any entity implies a nihilistic act, since every being *continet omnia*: a conception that find enormous success also in the Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* which conceives in every manifestation the nature of the Buddha (*busshō*).[30]

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totality (*sabba*), and with this the determinations are distinct aspects of the totality (distinct, not separate, or isolated). Furthermore, the determinations appear in the world, and appear as dependent, but, as a matter of fact, their being traced back to the totality is implicit in their being isolated determinations. They appear clearly in the world (*lokiya*), subject to taints.

[29] Only if the entity is isolated from the Being (cognitively conceived as outside this semantic totality) can it be posited (thought) as Nothing (Severino 1981, 31-2 and 96), but for the reasons already explained, this isolation, although it is thinkable, is impossible, therefore it is experienced in all its distressing prefiguration by a mind unaware of the aporia of nothingness.

[30] Moreover, in the Genjōkōan section of the Shōbōgenzō there is a surprising parallelism with the example of Severino on wood and ash. According to Dōgen, firewood becomes ash and cannot, conversely, become wood again. Even if this is the case, it must not be considered that the ash is the

The Abhidhamma instead outlines a conception of material dhammas as divided into great elements (*mahābhūtas*) and dependent matter (*upādārūpa*). These two are a simultaneous condition for the arising of events: "there it means that the presence and non-disappearance of the *mahābhūtas* ensures the presence and non-disappearance of the *upādā-rūpas*" (Karunadasa 2020, 23). The *mahābhūtas* are the condition that supports (*nissaya*) the arising of the *upādā-rūpas*. In other words, the condition of presentification (*atthi*) must be sustained by a *way of support* which allows them to dwell in the condition of "non-disappearance" (*avigata*).

sahajāta (co-nascence)	*atthi* (presentification)	*nissaya* (support)
uppada (rise)	*ṭhiti* (presence)	*bhaṅga* (disappearance)

On the contrary, for Severino, albeit something disappears "taking itself out of the field of appearing", it does not mean at all that it has ceased to exist: "since the semantic whole is constant of every meaning, if the whole semantic is not posed as such, no meaning is posed" (Severino 1981, 411).[31] Which brings us to the last part of our analysis. This statement by Severino is substantially analogous to that made by Nāgārjuna in MK (14.5-7). What he is telling us in this passage of fundamental importance is that affirming an identity ($a = a$) has value only within a system in which it is opposed to all other identities (all the others $\neg a$). At this point, it becomes necessary for an identity of the 'non-identity' to exist for the identity to be defined. Since *idem* is not *alius* ($id. = \neg al.$). This analysis of Nāgārjuna proves what is in effect an aporia of language.

> *anyad anyat pratītyānyan nānyad anyad ṛte 'nyataḥ | yat pratītya ca yat tasmāt tad anyan nopapadyate ||5||*
> "What is 'other' is *other* in dependence on that from which is *other*; it is not *other* apart from that from which is defined as *other*"

> *yady anyad anyad anyasmād anyasmād apy ṛte bhavet | tad anyad anyad anyasmād ṛte nāsti ca nāsty ataḥ ||6||*
> "If what is defined as 'other' were *other* from that from which it is *other*, then it would be *other* than it without that from which it is definable as 'other'"

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future thing and the wood the past one. It should be known, however, that the wood remains in the state of dharma of the wood and has a before and an after (Severino 1992, 23). In other words, the ash and the wood are what-it-is in every moment, for their identity (or state of dharma) is not due to an independent nature, but is part of an inseparable wholeness. The only thing that changes in our perception is the appearance of their becoming: "does *this being-nothing appear*, *or does nothing appear of that object anymore* (nothing of the way of being that suited it before being burned)? Does it *appear* that the object is now *nothing*, or does *the object no longer appear*? [...] The ash remains ash, and *therefore* the object that has become ash has been destroyed and is no longer anything." (Severino 1995, 85).

[31] The way in which the "semantic whole" arises is described by Severino (1981, 426).

nānyasmin vidyate 'nyatvam ananyasmin na vidyate | avidyamāne cānyatve nāsty anyad vā tad eva vā ||7||
"*Otherness* is not found in what is defined as 'other', nor it is found in what is non-*other*"

It is clear where these conclusions lead us to: if it is impossible to find something that is 'by itself' other (*al.* or *anyat*), nor will be possible to find something that is by itself identical to itself (*id.* or *svabhāva*).[32] Nāgārjuna's last statement implies a final consequence: *if* an identity needs its opposite (*an 'other'*) to be defined, consequently, an identity needs its negation: □∃(*id.* ∧ ¬*id.*), but this is the decisive contradiction of any identity. Indeed, Nāgārjuna's point is precisely this, and it could be re-expressed in Severino's words: it cannot be sustained an identity *per se* to the extent that this identity is conceived as 'the need to be identical regardless of all other identities'.

Subsequently, it would be incorrect to say that 'nothing' has no meaning. In the words of Neo-Parmenidism, nothingness has a meaning, that is the meaning of self-contradiction (Severino 2021, 14). The self-contradiction of nothingness is what follows: "nothing means something, viz., the absence of any meaning" (Severino 2013, 107). A word can refer to something, only if that thing appears, i.e., if appears the identity to which the different signs refer to. For Severino, it is *necessary* that it appears, even though it cannot be separated from the differences, which constitute the semantic determination the signified consists of (Severino 1992, 154).

7. UNITY AND TOTALITY IN PANSEMATISM

Considering what we have said so far about Buddhism, what comes closest to PSt is undoubtedly the philosophical content that speaks to us of a holographic-pansemic principle of reality, and which has been the subject of analysis on the allotropic level of the double imaginary. To use Parmenides' philosophy, the holographic principle can be defined as an infinite set which is also "a proper subset of itself" (Allen 1974, 716).

To begin with, the Structure of material (or formal) reality is considered by the Abhidhamma as arranged in two dimensions (*duvidham*): that of the four great elements (*cattāri mahābhūtāni*) and that of the elements derived from the first four (*catunnañ ca mahābhūtānaṃ upādāya rūpaṃ*). As said before, we could speak of concretely produced elements (*nipphannarūpa*) and non-concretely produced entities (*anipphannarūpa*). At this point, it is necessary to understand production not as a *creātiō ex nihilō*. Production has, in Buddhist terms, a very different meaning from the one it has in our language. A 'product' in the Buddhist lexicon is any entity that appears to us as in relation to causes and conditions. It is not the entity that is created from nothing by other entities: its *appearance* is possible following the concomitant interlocking of certain causes and conditions. Even though the cold temperature below zero degrees Celsius is one of the expected causes, together with the state of

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[32] We could indeed visualize these MK 14.5-7 verses in this formula which helps us to better understand the logic of the author: ||5|| (*al.* = ¬*id.*) ↔ (*al.* = *al.*) ∴ ¬◇[(*al.* = *al.*) ∧ ¬∃ (¬*al.*)] ||6|| *al.* ≠ (¬*al.*) ⇒ □ (*al.* ∧ ¬*al.*) ||7|| (*al.* ⇔ *id.*) ∵ *al.* ⇒ □¬*al.*

atmospheric pressure as one of the conditions, for the water to freeze, it would be incorrect to affirm that ice is "created" from these conditions.

In the definition of the PSt as anapodictic structure of knowledge (*arkhḗ tễs gnṓseōs*), Severino understands it as a "unity of a manifold" (Severino 1981, 70) that is structured as immediacy. In this structure the concreteness of the abstract is determined, consisting in being posited as such, that is, as 'abstract' (117). However, "immediacy cannot be proved: indeed, if it were to be proved it would not be immediacy" (Stella et al. 2020, 58).

For the Abhidhamma, the channel of the mind is seen as the process director of the other five sensory channels, which is why we refer to a process of mixed doors (*missaka-dvāra-vīthi*). The processes of ideation "that occur solely at the mind door are also called bare mind-door processes (*suddha-mano-dvāra-vīthi*)" (Karunadasa 2019, 172). Based on the impact that the perceptual organs have on the system, they can be characterized as very strong (*ati-mahanta*), strong (*mahanta*), light (*paritta*) and very light (*ati-paritta*). Previously, we have seen how empirical reality in the Abhidhammic vision can be summarized in these three phases:

uppāda → ṭhiti → bhaṅga
production → presentation → disappearance

These three stages are all included in the horizon of the PSt, in a slightly different conception. For the PSt the Being is atemporal, and for this reason what we understand as disappearance it is only a cognitive defection that misunderstands the going of a phenomenon out of the sphere of appearance with its destruction. In fact, in the context of PSt, every entity is always existing, and what appears as transformation concerns what can prefigure its appearing and moving outside of appearing.

prefiguration → appearance → disappearance

Even for the Abhidhamma, 'production' is not necessarily understood as arising out of nothingness. The general sense of *uppāda*, in fact, involves an apparition subordinated to the manifestation of several simultaneous concurrent causes, a step behind the other (*ut-pāda*).

What therefore the authors of the Abhidhamma affirmed is not that the emptiness of the factors implies their being nothing (that is, an unreasonable "being a non-being" which would be self-contradictory), but rather that they are not radically separable (*accanta-bheda*), and that therefore everything leads back to a monism in which the apparitions of Being are plural, not being in itself. The misunderstanding of the principle of plurality (*nānatta-nayassa micchāgahaṇa*) leads instead to nihilism. The idea of a *radical separation of things* is adherence to the notion of annihilation (*ucchedābhinivesassa kāraṇaṃ*).

Now, all this matter is singlefold since it is all rootless, conditioned subject to taints, worldly, concerning the sphere of the senses, objectless, not to be abandoned. However, when conceived as internal or external, it becomes manifold. (AS 6.6)

Only *when conceived as manifold* the matter appears as follows: five kinds of sensitive material phenomena as internal, the rest as external (*pasādasankhātaṃ pañcavidham pi ajjhattikarūpaṃ nāma; itaraṃ bāhirarūpaṃ*, AS 6.7). Among the possible ways to originate matter there is also consciousness (AS 6.11). Only one other thing is called to be *singlefold*, and this is Nibbāna, which is also known as over-worldly (AS 6.30 *nibbānaṃ pana lokuttarasankhātaṃ…* and AS 6.31 *sabhāvato ekavidham…*). This means that the very essence of matter, when recognized in its truth, unveils Nibbāna. Matter is singlefold, Nibbāna is singlefold and overworldly. The Buddha is the one who is called the world-ender (*lokantagū*). If the Buddha is the one who has attained Nibbāna and at the same time is the one who brings the world to its end, then this same Nibbāna, which is defined as the oneness of the whole, is in every aspect of matter, also defined as singlefold, but our conceptions see it as manifold, moving us away from Nibbāna. Hence, Nibbāna reveals itself as a holographic reality, intrinsic in everything. The Buddha only, who brought the world to its end, sees things as they are, that is, as singlefold and not as manifold.

	The Absolute	The Conventional
Early Buddhism	*sabba*	*loka*
Madhyamaka	*tattva*	*dve satye*
Abhidhamma	*paramattha*	*sammuti*

The Abhidhamma, in fact, specifies that Nibbāna is singlefold due to its intrinsic nature (AS 6.31), but that perception can be experienced as a twofold (and here the level of cognitive doubling returns) or, rationally, even as a threefold since our linguistic conception of it recognizes three aspects: emptiness (*suññataṃ*), absence of signs (*animittaṃ*), absence of ambitions (*appaṇihitaṃ*).

This scheme should represent a theory of the hypothesized development of the concepts of relativity and absoluteness of truth in Buddhism. As already said, the truth indicates what inevitably "stands" (*sat-ya*), like the Severinian concept of *dē-stinō*. The philosophy of Abhidhamma, introducing a distinction between physics (*dharma*) and psychology (*paññatti*), moves away from this conception that truth, even if conventional (*sammuti*), is not distinct and separate from the ultimate (*paramattha*). While in the Madhyamaka, there is a rapprochement with the original conception. In fact, Nāgārjuna does not separate the absolute from the relative, as he understands them both in the double aspect of truth (*dve satye*), namely the *saṃvṛti-satya* and the *paramārtha-satya*, which therefore are worldly (MK 13.8) and part of that larger system of "conventional worldly truth" (*loka-saṃvṛti-satya*). The real distinction that Nāgārjuna makes is therefore between an essence (*tattva*) and appearances (*dve satye = paramārtha-loka-saṃvṛti-satyas*).

The PSt is the Original Meaning itself, as the original disclosure of meaning which is itself signifying as 'being-what-is' (Severino 1981, 129). In this system, Severino conceives the meaning as *structure* (not in the sense of linguistical *structuralism*), i.e., 'the original *syntax of phenomena*'. It is not a world reinterpreted in a linguistic key, but it is the linguistic structure that expresses the original, thus drawing from it the meaning of what it expresses. Therefore, Severino considers Wittgenstein as self-defeating (130). Certainly, as Severino points out, Wittgenstein's aporias are the same as those of any mathematical or rigidly logical language which, as a metalanguage, do not realize the convention of its own terms. The solution to the *regressus in indefinitum* implicit in the use of meta-levels is proposed by Severino in the recognition of meaning as a self-referential process (self-signification, meaning in itself significant) and not as the signification of an otherness. The sense of the aporia that Severino identifies in §6.54 of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* can be summarized as "the proposition p is meaningless", which we can translate as:

$$(p \rightarrow q) \wedge (q = \neg p) \therefore p = \neg p$$

The contradiction is obvious: saying that the same proposition we are affirming is false ($p \vee \neg p$) leads to a short-circuit of thought, but only because we are unable to attribute a meaning to the actual expression, which should be more correctly rendered as $\forall p$, $\exists$ "$\neg p$" as the negation of the proposition can appear ($\exists$) only as a determination of the proposition itself. Therefore, it is a misconception of the mind to think that a proposition can negate itself. Rather, the 'proposition-which-is' implies the appearance of the 'non-proposition-*which-is*'. It is a question of two beings. However, what the preposition $\neg p$ preaches is the preaching of an essence. To put it in other words, since it is impossible to deny the very essence of language without thereby denying one's own instrument of negation which is the syntactic principle of the structure of language, it follows that negation can only affirm belonging. If the denial were to affirm non-existence, it simply could not name it. The name 'nonexistence' is, of course, existing. Denial is therefore part of consciousness as apperception.[33]

For Neo-Parmenidism, the Being is omnisignificant, it is *tò di' aytò gnṓrimon* (known by itself). This fact, for which nothing else can be said except that "being is", is the *principium cognitionis* (Severino 1981, 144). In the formal expressiveness, in which every word is semantically isolate, the proposition "this lamp is lit" is analyzed as the identification of two signs ("this lamp" A, and "being lit" B), which leads to

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[33] The problem therefore is not in recognizing a truth of all things, but not being deceived by one aspect of it, namely relative becoming, which is also what constitutes the world (*loka*, *lokasaṃvṛti*). Saying "world" is therefore like saying "relativity". In the symbolic representation that I have reported above, therefore, *loka* (Nāgārjunian *dve satye*) is the surface, while *sabba* (Nāgārjunian *tattva*) is the totality.

another contradiction: if A is B, then A is ¬A.[34] The determination of Being lies in its positional horizons.[35]

The negation of Being is "removed" immediately since Being is the very foundation of the affirmation that poses it (166). The authentic relationship with identity is self-relationship, while identity as a noetic moment is a relationship between two distinct noetic moments and posed as associated. The same applies to the affirmation of Being that leads Severino to the formulation of the 'Being-that-is' of which being is preached (183) in the formula $[(E\,' = E\,'\,') = (E\,'\,' = E\,')]$ as a solution of identity. To represent the Pansemic configuration, it will be enough to reflect on how the thinking of any identity takes place. Every moment of thought of an entity/*dhamma*, even our self-awareness, is like gazing into an infinite series of eternal moments, as a mirror reflected in another mirror, which we can represent here in two different ways: the chain (perpetual interrelation between beings) and the holography (the presence of the totality of determinations in every single determination of the whole).[36]

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[34] Severino proposes to re-analyze this contradiction in a different form. He says that being lit by the lamp is not referred to a "lamp" but to "this-lamp-that-is-lit". In this relationship of A open to predicate B, the apparent contradiction of the semanteme "this lamp is on" would be resolved, therefore it would not be constituted in the identity of the two signs (A = B). Equality (=) is rather a relationship between "this lamp that is lit" (A) and "being lit" (B), which Severino re-elaborates as A (= B) = B (= A). The original identity that connects A = B to B = A in [(A = B) = (B = A)] is not the identification of A and B, which is instead a contradiction (affirmation of the identity of which is non-identical). The synthetic proposition (A = B) would therefore be an alienation of the truth. The propositions "are self-contradictory connections, that is, alienation of the truth". Semantemes are determinations of Being. Therefore, if we intend a hypothetical set x, y, z as all the determinations of being per se notum, then saying $\exists(x, y, z)$ corresponds to saying that being is (Severino 1981, 145).

[35] We see P_1 as the position of Being and P_2 as the position of its abstractly separated immediacy. Severino states that the original positional integer (I) is expressed as $I = P_1 + P_2$, i.e. with P_1 as positional positivity not included in the position of P_2, which however coincides with the integer ($I = P_2$), and therefore $P_1 = P_2 = I$ (Severino 1981, 162-163). Although not knowing it, Severino exposes the Holographic Principle when he states that in the relation $P_1 = P_2 = I$ that we have seen before, P_1 includes P_2 as its possible determination, but P_2 also includes P_1 as the content of P_2. In Pansemic Principle, identity is a relationship between the entity and itself. The semantic structure of Being is not a construction of parts that produce an action or an event in their mutual work, but it is an inseparable Being (Stella et al. 2020, 66).

[36] The first mode of representation, which I call 'the chain', is inspired by Severino's PSt. The chain reveals how every instant and every appearance of every image is not merely an identical and eternal instant in itself, but it is also interrelated with every other identical and eternal instants. By the appearing of the first, by virtue of the indivisible bond between any other, the entirety of this chain is destined to emerge. Therefore, although they are the 'presentification' of a series of distinct and eternal entities, they appear as mirroring each other, despite being distinct (Stella et al., 67). Their interrelation is necessary and inevitable. However, this mode fails to explicate another fundamental aspect of Pansemic Principle, namely that every appearing entity, even if distinct from the others, fractally includes in itself all the other entities related to it. The second mode, the 'holography, is inspired by Buddhist philosophy and focuses on the fact that every being is different from the others, peculiar, unique, and particular. Albeit distinct from the others, it is in no way isolable or separable from the whole Being. The positional determinations of Being contains the totality of the other determinations, thus the whole Being itself. Therefore, no determination is isolable from all the other existing, which are indissolubly included to it (and into each other). Such is the infinite semantic interrelation of every 'identical' being. Each identical is, inevitably, eternal.

In an outstanding article, Brown describes Buddhist conception of reality as a holographic principle, more precisely, a "holographic representation and fractal self-similarity", where "each point-instant is a microcosm of a phase in becoming, and each phase in becoming is a microcosm of the mental state" (Brown 1999, 273). By virtue of this principle of interdependence, entities exist only in their reciprocal relation, for they are also the relationship itself. It is an intricate web whose knots, which he calls *points*, "do not exist individually", whichmeans they do not have an independent identity.

The word 'nothing' is a self-contradictory meaning (Severino 1981, 213), but it is still *a meaning*. Therefore, it is *something*. Given that the position of the totality of possible signs is in fact no distinct position, even though any determined position implies necessarily the totality of all the others, it follows that the nothingness, as the sign which negates any position, has no place in the Being, therefore no sign: viz., the *nothing* (noun) is *nothing* (adjective), that is to say, it is devoid of semantic determination. For this reason, Severino says (422) that any a single entity *continet omnia* as *essence*. The position of each self implies every possible semantic determination, so we will say that: the world unfolds as an object of Consciousness, but since there is nothing other than Consciousness, the world is the consciousness of the only possible object for Consciousness, that is, the Consciousness itself which as a subject sees itself as an object. But becoming subject, Consciousness is not just Consciousness (C_1), but subject-Consciousness (C_2), and looking at itself as an object, the Consciousness that gives itself as C_2 also gives itself as object-Consciousness (C_3). Here, then, that we return to the Triple Unity, and we also understand how Consciousness is neither subject nor object, but it includes both of them as different determinations.

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System of abbreviations used:

DN : *Dīghanikāya*	DA : *Dīrgha Āgama*
MN : *Majjhimanikāya*	MA : *Madhyama Āgama*
SN : *Saṃyuttanikāya*	SA : *Saṃyukta Āgama*
AN : *Aṅguttaranikāya*	EA : *Ekottara Āgama*
Ud : *Udāna*	Kv : *Kathāvatthu*
MK : *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*	AS : *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*

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