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Logos as "weaving together or communion of indications about *ousia*" in Plato's *Sophist**

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Abstract. In this paper, we set out to show that in the *Sophist* the interweaving of Forms (*sumplokē tōn eidōn*) is the substantial presupposition of the existence of *logos*, because what we do when we think and produce vocal speech is understanding by our *dianoia* the way in which the Forms are interwoven, and what we weave together in our speech are indications about *ousia* (*peri tēn ousian delōmata*). *Dianoia* conceives of the relations between the Forms, and these relations are reflected in our thought and its natural image, vocal speech. We support the idea that we cannot interpret the Platonic conception of the relationship between language and reality through the Aristotelian semiotic triangle, because according to it the relation between *pragmata* or *onta* and *logos* becomes real through the medium of thought (*noēmata*). On the contrary, *logos* in Plato has an unmediated relation with reality and is itself reckoned among beings. In parallel, we set out to show the difference between the Platonic conception of *logos* and the Gorgianic approach to it, as well as the approaches of other Sophists and Antisthenes. *Logos* itself in Plato is a weaving which reflects the interweaving of Forms, while vocal speech is a natural image of thought. *Logos* in its dual meaning, *dianoia* and vocal speech, is illustrated in Dialectic, because as vocal speech is a mirror to *dianoia*, so Dialectic is a means which clearly reflects the thinking procedures of *dianoia*.
Keywords: Plato, the *Sophist*, communion of Forms, *logos*.

In 259de of Plato's *Sophist*,[1] there is a remark which shows that the communion of Forms is important not only for the implementation of

[1] Throughout this paper, I follow the translation of the *Sophist* by White (1993), with slight changes in some cases.

Dialectic but also for the very existence of *logos*. The Visitor stresses that it is inept to try to separate everything from everything else, such an attempt being the sign of a completely unmusical and unphilosophical person, since to dissociate each thing from everything else is to destroy totally everything there is to say. The interweaving of Forms with one another is what makes speech possible for us. The main purpose of this paper is twofold. Firstly, to construe the relation of *logos*, considered as συμπλοκὴ or κοινωνία τῶν περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν δηλωμάτων, with οὐσίαι or εἴδη (Forms) and their own κοινωνία or συμπλοκή. Secondly, to interpret both the dual meaning of *logos*, considered on the one hand as *dianoia* or thought and on the other, as vocal speech, i.e. speech that occurs with the aid of the voice, and the relationship between these two meanings.

1. Sumplokē tōn eidōn *as a presupposition of* logos

Before proceeding to these analyses, we must consider the meaning of the sentence "the weaving together of Forms is what makes speech possible for us" (259e5–6). As the syntactic structure shows, namely the preposition διὰ + accusative, the interweaving of Forms is a compulsory cause of the existence of speech, which means that it is prior to it.[2] Consequently, the existence of speech depends on this interweaving. Cornford[3] claims that "weaving together" (συμπλοκή) here is not a synonym of "combining" or "blending".[4] He believes that it includes all statements, affirmative or negative. Also, he points out that it is not meant that Forms are the only elements in the meaning of all discourse, since we can also make statements about individual things, but

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[2] Cf. Peck 1962: 48 who comments that there is no doubt that by the word διὰ Plato intends to refer to a precondition of some sort.

[3] Cornford 1935: 300.

[4] It is true that the word συμπλοκή is known in Plato for its use with the meaning "a combination of letters to form a word or of words so as to form a proposition", see *Plt.* 278b, *Sph.* 262c, *Tht.* 202b. Also, the word is known in Aristotle for its use with the meaning "a combination of mental acts so as to form one entity", and even more specifically, "the combination of subject and predicate", see *De an.* 428a, 432a, *PA* 643b, *Top.* 2.7, *Cat.* 1a, 1b, 2a. Cf. Cornford 1935: 300, n. 2. Also, in the language of the Grammarians, συμπλοκή means "copula"; see LSJ s.v.

every such statement must contain at least one Form, namely one of those "common terms" which are necessary to all thought or judgement about the objects of direct perception. By "common terms" Cornford means those referred to in *Tht.* 185cd, namely terms such as ἔστιν (is) or οὐκ ἔστι (is not) or ταὐτὸν (the same as) or ἕτερον (different from) etc., which the thinking mind uses in the kind of judgements previously mentioned.[5] Cornford compares the latter passage with *Sph.* 252c2–5, where the Visitor objects against the separatists (like Antisthenes) that they could not express their theory at all without connecting in their statements terms like εἶναι (being), χωρὶς (apart from), τῶν ἄλλων (from others) and καθ' αὑτό (of itself). Ackrill[6] notes that Cornford seems to take it for granted that Plato is saying something about Forms being "contained in" or "used in" statements. But since he notices that not every statement does "contain" a plurality of Forms, as it is shown in Plato's own examples a few passages later, Cornford construes the sentence in 259e5–6 as meaning not that every statement contains or is about a συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν (interweaving of Forms) but that it necessarily contains at least one Form. Ackrill remarks that this of course is not the meaning of the sentence, as is particularly evident when we take account of the word ἀλλήλων (one another), which Cornford omits in his translation. According to Ackrill, if a συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν is not contained

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[5] Cornford (1935: 105–106) notes that these terms are called "common" (κοινὰ) in contrast with the "private" (ἴδια) or "peculiar" objects of the several senses; they are common to all the objects of sense. He stresses that "common" means no more than that and that they are not to be confused with the "common sensibles" of Aristotle. The judgements involving them are made by the soul, thinking by itself (αὐτὴ δι' αὑτῆς ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ κοινά μοι φαίνεται περὶ πάντων ἐπισκοπεῖν, *Tht.* 185e1–2), without any special bodily organ. Apart from the separate sense organs, there must be a receiving centre, i.e. a mind which receives the several reports of the organs and is capable of reflecting upon the sense-data in order to make judgements about the objects of perception. So, these common terms are apprehended not by any sense, but by thought, i.e. by the thinking faculty of the soul. Cornford believes that these "common" terms are, in fact, the meanings of common names; that they simply are what Plato calls "Forms" or "Ideas". He further critisizes those who confused these terms with Aristotle's categories (see Cornford 1935: 106, n. 2).

[6] Ackrill 1971: 201–202.

in any *logos*, then we must question the assumption that the sentence in 259e5–6 does say something about Forms being contained in *logoi*. I agree with Ackrill's criticism of Cornford because I believe that Plato's later examples are not exhaustive of what συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν means, but are only indicative of what a false statement could be; namely, we cannot use these examples to make exclusive inferences about the meaning of the sentence in 259e5–6.

Ackrill[7] also criticizes the way Ross deals with this passage. Ross[8] translates the sentence in *Sph.* 259e5–6 as follows: "all discourse depends on the weaving together of Forms by the speaker or thinker". He further characterizes it as in fact an overstatement, since a sentence may have a proper name for subject (Plato's own examples a few passages later do), and a proper name does not stand for a Form or universal. But he stresses that the *predicate* of a sentence normally stands for a Form, and all subjects of statements except proper names stand either for Forms or for things described by means of Forms. Ackrill notes that Ross takes the sentence in 259e5–6 to mean that every statement involves at least two Forms and then shows this to be false; but he glosses over the falsity of the sentence (in his interpretation) by calling it an overstatement. According to Ackrill, since of course Plato is claiming to say something true of *all logoi* (259e4, 260a9), Ross' interpretation is glaringly false. Although I generally agree with Ackrill's criticism of Ross, it needs to be said that he fails to notice another equally serious error made by Ross. What I refer to here is the fact that Ross adds in his translation the words "by the speaker or thinker", which do not exist in the original sentence and lead to a misinterpretation. My claim that this is an indisputable error will be justified by reference to other opinions.

Hackforth[9] states that if we compare the sentence in 259e5–6 with the use of συμπλοκὴ at 262c, and with συμπλέκων τὰ ῥήματα τοῖς ὀνόμασι at 262d, the inference is that εἰδῶν must mean what we call "parts of speech". Hence according to him, the weaving together of the εἴδη

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[7] Ackrill 1971: 202.

[8] Ross 1951: 115.

[9] Hackforth 1945: 57, n. 2.

that constitutes a λόγος cannot be the same as the κοινωνία εἰδῶν ἢ γενῶν which has been hitherto discussed, and it is almost by a play upon words that the Visitor effects the transition from the "blending" or "communion" of kinds to the weaving of ῥήματα with ὀνόματα. Ackrill[10] maintains that surely the sentence in 259e5–6 must not be taken to imply that every statement asserts or is about a relation between Forms (or even "things described by means of Forms"). According to him, Plato's conclusion that there are connections between Forms, but not between every pair of Forms, rests upon the simple fact that some sentences are meaningful and some are not. This fact presupposes the existence on the one hand of concept-friendships or -compatibilities and on the other, of concept-enmities or -incompatibilities. So, in his interpretation, human discourse is possible only because the meanings of general words or the concepts that come out of these words are re-

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[10] Ackrill 1971: 202–205. Hamlyn (1955: 293–295) reaches a different conclusion following a different line of reasoning. He relates the problem of the communion of Forms with the "exact logical geography" of the conceptual world which can be discovered by the techniques of logical division. According to this interpretation, Plato seems to think of the sensible world as possessing an infinite variety, and there is every ground for thinking that he thought of the conceptual superstructure as being imposed upon this infinite sensible variety. Hamlyn points out that according to Plato, the method of logical division goes on in each case to a definite, but finite, extent. He then shows that this view implies that although Forms must have an application to the sensible world, they are only finitely divisible, and hence never capable of accounting for all the variety of the sensible world. Hamlyn maintains that in logical terms this means that *every* significant statement must be concerned with Forms alone and, indeed, serves to point out some connection between Forms. Furthermore, he notes: "In this way it would be true that the doctrine of the communion of Forms was meant to be an answer to the question as to how any statement at all is possible. Nevertheless, it would be true also that no significant statement could account for all the infinite variety of the world of sense; no sensible thing could be spoken of except as an instance of a Form." (*ibid.* 294) Hamlyn's general conclusion is that for Plato, whether we make statements like "Man is good" or statements like "Socrates is good", the doctrine of the communion of Forms is presupposed, because the proper name "Socrates" is only an abbreviation for, or a disguised version of, a collection of names of Forms. He adds that in Plato's view, without the communion of Forms there would be statements of identity only, and this would have the risk of accepting the paradoxes propounded on the one hand by Antisthenes, and on the other, by the Eleatics and Megarians.

lated in definite ways. Bluck[11] claims that Ackrill's interpretation seems unsatisfactory for several reasons. One of them is that it involves taking the εἰδῶν συμπλοκὴν to refer simply to the complicated structure of the world of the Forms, i.e. the "web" or "interwoven complex" that exists, and not, as one might expect, to the ways in which *we* weave Forms together when we talk. He points out that when the verb συμπλέκειν is used later (262d) in connection with words, it is the statement (λό-γος) that we make that is said to do the weaving, when it combines a verb with the name. So in his interpretation, it seems best to take the Visitor's remark at 259e to mean that in any statement we make, *we* are in fact weaving Forms together, either correctly or incorrectly, and that only so is discourse possible.[12] I also wish to stress those aspects of Peck's criticism of Ackrill and Bluck that I find completely justified.[13] Peck[14] disagrees with Ackrill's suggestion that Plato is speaking here just about the result of the compatibility or incompatibility between concepts and claims that Plato's concern is with the result of the weav-

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[11] Bluck 1957: 182.

[12] Also Peck (1952: 54–55) regarding the meaning of συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν seems to give priority to predication and the way *we* allow beings to be associated together with their proper terms of reference. On the contrary, Rosen (1983: 229–230) dissociates predication from συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν by arguing that the former is only a grammatical combination and not a συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν. He points out that whereas Plato shows that "discourse is for us one of the kinds of beings" (260a5–6), he never hints at the possibility that "being" is one of the kinds of discourse. He also adds that in the passage from 249 to 261 Plato never shifts from the primacy of Forms over language; in his opinion, those who assume that the Visitor is discussing predication are led to obliterate the form *being* by assimilating it into the syntactic functions of identity and predication.

[13] Peck (1962: 46–47) also makes a criticism of Cornford and Ross. He notes — correctly in my opinion — that Cornford was wrong in supposing that the sentence in 259e5–6 was intended by Plato as a description of the content of all *logoi*. He further criticizes Ross for simply accusing Plato that he has chosen the wrong examples to illustrate his thesis that every statement is a weaving together of Forms. Moravcsik (1960: 129) claims that the sentence in 259e5–6 proves that Plato believes in two things: a) that the changing dynamic combination of words, yielding meaningful discourse, is based on the static interwovenness of the Forms; for discourse is changing, man-made. b) that one of the essential tasks of meaningful discourse is to convey information by ordering the elements of reality, which are identifiable and describable.

[14] Peck 1962: 48.

ing *together* of Forms with *each other*. He also aptly criticizes Bluck when the latter states that *we* can weave Forms together when we talk. Peck[15] notes that this is absurd and believes that Bluck tacitly assumes that what we weave together is the *names* of Forms or even the names of things and individuals which stand for Forms; so, according to this interpretation, it is our weaving of the names of Forms which makes discourse possible.

I agree that Plato, by using the term συμπλοκὴ here instead of κοινωνία, paves the way for the transition to the discussion of *logos*. However, I do not believe that εἰδῶν in 259e5–6 means just "parts of speech", as Hackforth does. Since according to 262d2–6, λόγος itself means "weaving", because it accomplishes something by weaving verbs with names, to use Forms in 259e5–6 with the meaning "parts of speech", i.e. names and verbs, would have an implausible implication. Given that *logos* is a weaving, to say that συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν in 259e5–6 means the weaving together of parts of speech would result in the following tautology, which becomes evident if we make a replacement within the sentence: "*logos* (i.e. the weaving together of Forms or the weaving together of parts of speech) is what makes *logos* possible for us". Nor do I believe, as Ackrill does, that what Plato means by the sentence in 259e5–6, is the interweaving of concepts. That would imply two things, both unacceptable in my opinion. Firstly, that what we conceive of as Forms are concepts and, correspondingly, that what we do when we speak is the interweaving of concepts. Secondly, that the semiotic triangle of Aristotle determined by the relations between things, concepts and names is valid also in Plato. I will show later in this paper that this is not the case in Plato. Also, in my opinion, the sentence in this passage does not refer to the way *we* weave the Forms, as Bluck claims, because the emphasis is on the way the Forms are woven *by nature*. We just conceive of and understand (or misunderstand) by our *dianoia* the way in which the Forms are interwoven and what *we* weave together

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[15] Peck 1962: 49–50. As Peck points out, that would have the implication that the sentence in 259e5–6 means that whatever is done is done by us, and no combination of Forms themselves is involved.

in our speech are indications about *ousia* (περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν δηλώματα, 261e5). So, Forms here in 259e5–6 mean literally Forms, i.e. *ousiai*, and the word συμπλοκὴ prepares for the discussion of *logos* and is chosen so as to adjust the terminology to its context, but it originally means simply communion or commingling of Forms in the sense of "weaving with one another". I completely agree with Shields when he states:

> Plato's suggestion is that neither language nor thought — *logos* in gen-
> eral — creates these forms of superordination or subordination but
> must instead adhere to them. Because they are given as conditions for
> the possibility of *logos*, and because their being given is rooted in the
> interweaving of Forms, all *logos* come to be for us because of an inter-
> weaving of Forms with one another.[16]

So, Plato believes that *logos* comes about because of the interweaving of Forms with one another.[17] Another plausible interpretation is that since *logos* is acknowledged as one kind among *those that are* (τῶν ὄντων ἕν τι γενῶν εἶναι, 260a5–6), and given that συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν in 259e5–6 means the weaving together of *ousia* with all other *ousiai*, *eidē* or Forms, συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν also includes the weaving together of *ousia*

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[16] Shields 2013: 225. Shields (*ibid.* 226) notes that it was natural, almost unavoidable, to understand Plato initially just as Cornford has done, imagining him to be maintaining that Forms are meanings, with the result that woven meanings constitute the statements we make, aloud in speech and silently in thought. But he stresses that from this natural understanding, two mistakes emerge. Firstly, we should not suppose, with the simple semantic theory, that Forms are meanings. Secondly, less obviously but also more importantly, we do not go about weaving Forms together ourselves, as if by an act of semantic stitching. According to Shields, this approach would imply that without our efforts, Forms would fail to bear their antecedently given necessary relations; but Plato makes sure to give every indication that he regards the interweaving of Forms as given to us rather than as implemented or effected by us.

[17] Graeser (1977b: 369) notes that no matter what possible line of interpretation of the sentence in 259e5–6 one chooses to favour, all that results is a theory concerning the existence of ideas as a necessary but not sufficient condition of meaningful discourse. According to his interpretation, Plato thinks it is solely in virtue of the fact that there *are* ideas which stand for the kind of things that we actually mean when using expressions for predicates that one can become engaged in meaningful discourse.

with *logos*.[18] In this way, the level of *logos* is tightly bound with the level of *onta* or *ousiai*. But there is also another way to trace the bonds between *logos* and *onta*. The ontological level of *onta* or *ousiai* is also bound with the level of *pragmata* and *praxeis*, because *pragmata* and *praxeis* are kinds of beings (εἴδη τῶν ὄντων).[19] Correspondingly, the ἁρμογὴ or συναρμογὴ πραγμάτων is reduced to the συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν, as it is implied in 262d8–e1.[20] According to a certain Platonic approach to *logos*, the latter is bound with the level of *onta* also through the level of *praxis*, since it is considered as a kind of *praxis*, as we will explain below.

2. Logos *as* sumplokē *or* koinōnia tōn peri tēn ousian dēlōmatōn

In 260a1–b2, there is a completely clear statement about the interweaving of the ontological with the logical level with regard to *logos*. The fight against those people who like to separate everything from everything else has taken place at a good moment (ἐν καιρῷ, 260a1),[21] for two reasons. Firstly, speech is one kind among *those that are*. Speech would be taken away if we admitted that there is no blending of anything with anything else. Secondly, if we were deprived of speech (*logos*), we would be deprived of philosophy — to mention the most important thing. So, the interweaving of Forms exists for the sake of speech

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[18] Cf. Peck 1962: 57–58. Also, Silverman (2002: 202) notes that one sense in which *logos* mixes with Being is that language, and its parts, are *onta* of a certain sort.

[19] See *Cratylus* 386e1 f., 387d1 f.

[20] Derbolav (1972: 174-175) stresses that by the phrase τὰ πράγματα τὰ μὲν ἀλλήλοις ἥρμοττεν (262d8–9) one must not understand an arrangement of empirical relationships. According to him, it is evident from the previous context that what Plato has in mind also here is the συμπλοκὴ εἰδῶν. On the other hand, Hoekstra and Scheppers (2003: 68–69, and n. 49), referring to Soulez (1991: 138), believe that we must not understand the reference to *pragmata* in 262d8–e1 as a reference to an extra-linguistic reality. I agree with Derbolav because I think it is obvious from the passage itself that *pragmata* are differentiated from τὰ τῆς φωνῆς σημεῖα, namely they are neither a kind of intra-linguistic factor, nor the subject that the speech is about in contradistinction to external things.

[21] In my opinion, this remark means that the philosophical reaction to the theses of those thinkers who claimed that no thing blends with another could not be any further delayed, because the establishment of their views in the common opinion without refutation would have baneful consequences.

and speech exists for the sake of philosophy.²² This means that speech is one of the final causes of the interweaving of Forms, and may be the most important, while philosophy is the final cause of the existence of speech. *Logos* is the aim of an intellectual action, conceiving of the interweaving of Forms. We set out to show that the agent of this action is this special faculty²³ of the soul referred to in 263de, our *dianoia*,²⁴

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²² Notomi (1999: 247) stresses that the previous fight against those who try to separate every Form, one from another (the position represented by the late-learners), is now regarded as having saved statements, and as a result, the possibility of philosophy. The interweaving of Forms is what makes statements possible and securing the possibility of philosophy as dialectical argument is, according to him, the overall project of the middle part of the dialogue.

²³ Corcilius (2015: 30) notes that rather, for Plato, the faculties of the soul are by their very definition causal agents, which means that they act on and are acted upon by things, and this even though they are said not to be materially extended.

²⁴ It is noteworthy that *dianoia* is the term of the faculty that predominates not only in the discussion of false speech, belief and appearing, in the final part of the dialogue (263d ff.), but also in its first part, within the context of the sixth definition of the sophist (227c), where we can find the culmination of the procedure of request for the definition of the sophist. Cornford (1965: 67, 75–77), in his analysis of the distinction between *noēsis* and *dianoia* in the *Republic* vi–vii, argues that *dianoia* generally means "abstract thinking". According to him, as opposed to *noēsis*, *dianoia* has two senses. Firstly, it is one of the two movements of thought, i.e. the downward movement of reasoning in deductive argument. Cornford (*ibid.* 73) stresses that in the *Republic*, the deductive reasoning characteristic of mathematical procedure is one of the meanings of *dianoia* which, in contradistinction to *noēsis*, is a continuous process. According to his interpretation of 510b–d, the mind "journeys" along a path of discourse which the reasoner "traverses" from beginning to end. In the *Republic*, although *dianoia* is considered as abstract reasoning which the mathematicians use in order to practise their arts (511c7–8), it is acknowledged that it is a state of mind placed between δόξα (belief) and νοῦς, so it falls short of ἐπιστήμη (scientific knowledge, 511d2–5, 533b6–e2). Cornford traces the second sense of *dianoia* considered as opposed to *noesis* in the *Meno*, with reference to the postulate "by reflection on the reason" (αἰτίας λογισμῷ, 97b–98b). There *dianoia* is the uncertain state of mind of one whose so-called "knowledge" consists only of isolated chains of reasoning depending on an assumption either not demonstrated or not seen to be indemonstrable. Ebert (1974: 189) correctly points out that in the *Theaetetus* (189e–190b) and the *Sophist* (263e–264b), *dianoia* means "thought". And what is more, *dianoia* means internal dialogue of the soul with itself. This dialogue, whether it has the form of a conversation of the soul with itself or the form of an intersubjective conversation, is extremely important for the practice of Dialectic (cf.

which grasps, mentally elaborates and understands the interweaving of Forms that exists by nature.[25] This interweaving is reflected on the

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Glasmeyer 2003: 76). The erotetic and apocritic form is the form both of dianoetic and dialectical reasoning (cf. Nikulin 2010: 5).

[25] The κοινωνία that exists by nature is threefold. On the one hand, as Heidegger (2003: 331) points out, there is κοινωνία τῶν ὄντων by means of the δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν καὶ τοῦ πάσχειν; the latter has been taken as a sufficient criterion for the definition of beings. This is the first kind of κοινωνία. The Visitor states: "I'm saying that a thing really is if it has any capacity at all, either by nature to do something to something else or to have even the smallest thing done to it by even the most trivial thing, even if it happens once. I'll take it as a definition that *those which are* (τὰ ὄντα) amount to nothing other than *capacity* (δύναμις)" (247d8–e4). Κοινωνεῖν in itself lies in the determination of οὐσία as δύναμις. The Visitor states: "[Κοινωνεῖν] is what happens when two things come together, and by some capacity one does something to the other or has something done to it" (248b5–6). On the other hand, there is a second kind of κοινωνία, namely the κοινωνία τῶν γενῶν or εἰδῶν that is agreed by the interlocutors in 254b7–c1: "some γένη will associate with each other and some won't, some will to a small extent and others will associate a great deal, and still others are all-pervading — nothing prevents them from being associated with every one of them..." (cf. 252e1–253a1, 253b8–c3). Immediately after this statement, there is the proposal not to undertake to investigate any possible εἴδη, but to choose instead some of the most important (τῶν μεγίστων λεγομένων ἄττα, 254c1–4). Heidegger (2003: 369–370) aptly remarks that the ontological concept of the δύναμις κοινωνίας is manifested everywhere, i.e. regarding any ontological level, as the ground of the discussion. I agree with his suggestion that it is a matter of a certain selection, and indeed not an arbitrary one, but an extraction out of what is proper to every being as a being, since the structures and results that are to be exposed have a universal ontological significance. The δύναμις εἰς τὸ ποιεῖν εἴτ' εἰς τὸ παθεῖν (247d8–e3) is transformed into the δύναμις κοινωνίας ἀλλήλων (254c4–5), with regard to the macro-ontological level of the five μέγιστα γένη which broadly mirrors the κοινωνίαν of the Forms classified under the five *summa genera* (see Mouzala 2007: 46–47). It is worth noting that within the Platonic tradition, Damascius characterizes δύναμιν as the first among all relationships (*Pr.* 1.95.23–24 Ruelle). Liebrucks (1949: 158) understands that there is an expansion of the κοινωνία of μέγιστα γένη into the human world. He notes that in the *Sophist*, in contradistinction to the *Phaedo*, the sensible world is no more the shadow of the non-sensible world and the former is not subordinated to the latter, but the newly reached *genera* extend across all reality which in the latter dialogue was divided into two worlds. According to Liebrucks' approach, the relationality of the *summa genera* is an explanatory model of the construction and the structure of this world in which we live. He maintains that the world of the five *genera* is not at all different from the world of the Real found within the net of human interrelations. Klein (1992: 89–91) offers another interpretation of κοινωνία τῶν

level of *logos*. It is worth mentioning that at this point we can trace a strong relation between the *Sophist* and the *Cratylus*. In the former, we see that *logos* is acknowledged as one kind among *those that are* (τῶν ὄντων ἕν τι γενῶν εἶναι, 260a5–6). In the latter and in passage 387b–e, we can see that speaking (λέγειν) is construed as a kind of action (πρᾶξις),[26] an action concerned with things spoken, namely a linguistic action; and actions are acknowledged as a kind among *those that are*, since they are not merely relative to us, but possess a separate nature of their own.[27] So, speaking (λόγος) considered as action (πρᾶξις) has an indisputable existence, it is an absolute being (ὄν).

In order to accomplish their dialectical task from now on, i.e. to show that falsity is present in both speech and belief, or, in other words, that *that which is not* blends with belief and speech, the two interlocutors in the *Sophist* are about to discover step by step how speech and belief come into existence, how they are generated. The starting point of this scrutiny is *names*. In the *Cratylus* (385cd), a name is characterized as the smallest part of speech and since a name is spoken of as a part of the true or false speech, this discussion ends up admitting the possibility of existence of a true or false name, a view at odds with the position articulated in the *Sophist*, that truth and falsity are found only in complete statements, i.e. in the interweaving of names and verbs

εἰδῶν (communion of the Forms) existing by nature. He brings to the fore the arithmetic aspect of the hierarchical structure of the world of the Forms. According to him, only the ἀριθμός structure of the realm of Ideas with its special κοινόν character is able to guarantee the essential traits of the community of εἴδη demanded by Dialectic. Especially the eidetic number, in Klein's interpretation, indicates the mode of being of the νοητόν (intelligible) as such, since it defines the εἶδος ontologically as a being which has multiple relations to other εἴδη in accordance with their particular nature and which is nevertheless in itself altogether indivisible. Finally, a third kind of κοινωνία is the κοινωνία considered as the interweaving of Forms, as συμπλοκή τῶν εἰδῶν, which is the web or the interwoven complex of the Forms that ensures the existence of *logos*, since it is reflected on the level of *logos* through the intervention of our *dianoia* (259e5–6). Fronterotta (2013: 205) notes that the *logos* depends on the συμπλοκή of the ideal Forms, as it reproduces it. In my view, a secondary kind of συμπλοκή, dependent on *logos* considered as weaving, is the συμπλοκή between names and verbs.

[26] Cf. *Euthydemus* 284b–d. See also Mouzala 2011a: 59–60.

[27] I follow the translation by Fowler (1926).

(262a–264c).[28] In the latter dialogue (261d1–7), it is agreed that just as some Forms blend with each other and others do not, and likewise for letters, so too some names associate with each other and others do not. The investigation in the *Sophist* also begins from the smallest parts of speech. Names that indicate something when you say them one after another fit together, and names that don't signify anything when you put them in a row don't fit. So, the basic criterion for the communion of names is the production of meaning.[29] We can assume that the production of meaning or the meaning itself is the final cause of this interweaving of names and simultaneously the criterion which can ensure that they fit together.

The Visitor uses two participles in 261e1–2: δηλοῦντα (that indicate) and σημαίνοντα (that signify). In my opinion, both are used with the same meaning and this is reinforced by the fact that their grammatical objects are relatives (πρός τι), since they are contraries: τι-μηδέν (something-nothing).[30] In 261e–262a, the Visitor proceeds to the division of all words into two categories; there are two ways to use your voice to indicate something about being: the one kind is called *names*,[31]

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[28] Cf. Mouzala 2011a: 57.

[29] Cf. Hoekstra, Scheppers 2003: 64.

[30] Contrariety is one kind of relativity (πρός τι) according to Aristotle (see *Metaph.* 1056b34–1057a1).

[31] Crivelli (2012: 223) correctly notes that the noun ὄνομα has a narrow and a broad use and that on its broad use, whereby it might be rendered by "word", it denotes all vocal indicators, including those that signify actions and those that signify objects. In its narrow sense, ὄνομα means *the name* by which a person or thing is called, while in its broad sense ὄνομα is used like λέξις (word), expression, esp. of technical terms; generally, a saying, speech; see *LSJ* s.v. Vlastos (1973: 238) notes that all through the archaic and classical periods, the ὄνομα was expected to perform two radically different linguistic functions: first, that of the proper name (which is the original and primary use of ὄνομα), and secondly, that of the common name, i.e. that of the qualifying predicate or descriptive expression. Graeser (1977b: 363) points out that "all through the archaic and classical periods, words in general, referring expressions and proper names as well as qualifying predicates and descriptive expressions were all thought of as 'names' (ὀνόματα) and thus considered to get their meaning accordingly". Cf. Hamlyn 1955: 295; Kraus 1987: 44, 1990: 263.

and the other is called *verbs*.[32] A verb is the sort of indication that is applied to an action, and a name is the kind of spoken sign that is applied to things that perform the actions. In this passage, Plato uses four significant terms: the word τῇ φωνῇ (voice), which syntactically denotes the medium or the organ, the word δήλωμα or δηλώματα (indications), the word οὐσία (being) and finally, the word σημεῖον (sign). In my opinion, the word δηλώματα here does not have the same meaning as the participle δηλοῦντα, which we encounter in the previous sentence of the same passage (261e); this is due not only to the fact that the former is a substantive and the latter a participle. The word δήλωμα has the suffix or ending -μα, which in Greek denotes the result of some working, and here rather means some *ergon*, i.e. the result of the actualized manifestation of οὐσία of each thing, whereas the participle δηλοῦντα means simply that names denote the meaning which they bear.[33] I use the term *ergon* because in the Platonic terminology it means the result of some activity which is endowed with the character and the quality of the good and beneficial.[34] Regarding the phrases τῇ φωνῇ (voice) and

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[32] The verb component specifies what we mean to say about the subject, cf. Silverman 2002: 203. It is this part of speech which introduces the temporal dimension of a qualifying predicate or an action performed by a subject. It is the factor which demonstrates that real sentences are meaningful units of words that can concern not only the present, but also the past and the future, see 262d2–3; cf. Arist. *Int.* 16b6–10. It can be used, i.e. be considered, as a predicate, see *LSJ* s.v. ῥῆμα; Demos 1964: 599. Even the copula is a predicate when it stands alone or with an adverb, see Gildersleeve 1900: 31. Demos (*ibid.*) stresses that verbs, no less than nouns, indicate realities and thus are names (see *Cratylus* 386e, 431b). I agree with Hoekstra and Scheppers (2003: 65, n. 39) that in 262d2–3 there is no antithesis between ὄντων on the one hand and γιγνομένων, γεγονότων, μελλόντων on the other, as the repetition of the disjunctive ἤ shows. I also find interesting Seligman's interpretation, who suggests that here Plato tries to anticipate a possible objection regarding the fact that the temporal dimension is a necessary feature of a meaningful statement, since it is a factor which among other things determines whether this statement is true or false about its subject, cf. Seligman 1974: 100.

[33] Crivelli (2012: 229) notes that a name constructed with the suffix -μα can indicate either the *result* of the activity expressed by the verb or the *means* which enables the carrying out of this activity. I opt for the first possibility with regard to 261e4–6, because if we chose the second, that would imply that Plato uses two different expressions for the means or the organ in the same passage. That would be redundant.

[34] See for example *Charmides* 163bc, *Euthyphro* 13d–14a.

σημεῖον τῆς φωνῆς (spoken sign), I believe that they are used to denote the organ or the medium.[35]

From passage 262d3–4, we can infer that indicating (δηλοῦν) is something more than naming (ὀνομάζειν). In addition, saying (λέγειν) is something more than just naming.[36] The word δηλώματα highlights the indicative or deictic[37] character of speech which has ontological

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[35] However, it is worth considering why Plato reserves the term δήλωμα within the description of ῥῆμα (262a3), whereas within the description of ὄνομα (262a6–7), he uses the phrase σημεῖον τῆς φωνῆς. It may be that δήλωμα has a double use: one that has ontological implications when the meaning is "bring to the fore, manifest, reveal" with reference to some οὐσία; the other is that it may correspond to the epinoetic and instrumental character of σημεῖον. So, in 262a3, it could be the second case. Heidegger (2003: 408) maintains that σημεῖον is terminologically interchangeable with δηλοῦν.

[36] The difference between ὀνομάζειν (naming) and λέγειν (saying) in the sense of περαίνειν (accomplishing) is crucial for understanding what *logos* is in the *Sophist*, but it is not a novelty with regard to the *Cratylus*, as Hoekstra and Scheppers (2003: 65) wrongly believe. On the contrary, I think there are at least two instances of examples which foreshadow this view in the *Cratylus*. In 425a2–3, there is the description of *logos* as something "great and beautiful and whole", a unit of language consisting of both names and verbs, while in 431bc, *logoi* are determined as the combination (σύνθεσις) of names and verbs (see Ademollo 2011: 293–296). Crivelli (2012: 228–229) infers that the name is what mainly contributes to the speaker's performing the speech act of naming whereas the verb is what mainly contributes to the speaker's performing the speech act of saying; the intimate connection of the verb with saying is also suggested by its name, ῥῆμα; cf. Demos 1964: 599. Frede (1992: 413) also connects the verb (ῥῆμα) with saying, and furthermore seems to acknowledge that it has a more decisive function and contribution to the generation of *logos*, since he notes that only by adding a verb can we be said to say (λέγειν) something (see 262d4–5). On the other hand, Gaskin (2008: 204) notes that Plato perhaps saw more clearly than numerous other philosophers who have wished to give the verb or the verb-phrase a privileged status in constituting the unity of the sentence. Gaskin, by referring to passage 262, notes that unlike the other philosophers, Plato does not give a differential account of the contributions of the various kinds of subsentential component to sentential unity. He adds that "Plato was aware that the sentence has a special unity, lacked by its components", as is obvious from what is said in 262d3–4; cf. Silverman 2002: 203. I completely agree with both Gaskin and Silverman that in Plato, when names and verbs are woven together in a statement the result is something more than a mere listing of names and verbs, or subjects and properties. It is a new linguistic and logical entity which is bestowed with its own special unity.

[37] See Oehler 1962: 22, Liatsi 2008: 87.

implications for both Plato and Aristotle.[38] The use of the phrase τῇ φωνῇ περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν δηλωμάτων (indications about οὐσία through the voice) shows that these words, although they also have a material or a physiological aspect since they are uttered through the voice, stand for the things and they prove, confirm and verify the very being and essence of things.[39] Socrates' stereotype question "do you call something X?" usually anticipates the request for the definition of the relative notion, i.e. the request for an explanation or account of its essence.[40] In the *Seventh Letter*,[41] name and definition are determined as the two stages which precede knowledge of a thing but they are not evaluated in the same way as δηλώματα and λόγος in the *Sophist*. In the latter dialogue, while names and verbs are merely δηλώματα (indications), *logos* is a kind of being which in 262d2–6 is described as a weaving (πλέγμα); *logos* does not just name but accomplishes something (τι περαίνει) by weaving verbs with names. This accomplishment must not be taken as a limit[42] in the sense of a barrier, but rather as an openness to the redeeming formation of a meaningless, i.e. indeterminate, material into something fixed and integrate, a certain meaning. Also, this accomplishment must not be taken as restricted only to the level of speech, although *prima facie* it is primarily connected with

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[38] Aristotle uses the deictic term τόδε τι in order to denote his primary substance, the particular and concrete thing.

[39] On the contrary, Hoekstra and Scheppers (2003: 66) do not read any special meaning in this expression. They believe that at the beginning of this passage (261d1–7), the term ὀνόματα (names) was used in the sense of the elements of speech, generally. But after the opposition or *diairesis* between ὄνομα and ῥῆμα, the term ὄνομα is given a more specified and precise meaning, while the term ὀνόματα in its general approach has been replaced by the expression τῇ φωνῇ περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν δηλωμάτων. I agree with Heidegger (2003: 408) that words have a genuine δύναμιν κοινωνίας as δηλώματα περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν, as "revealing", i.e. revealing beings, "as showing something in the field of presence".

[40] Kraus 1990: 271.

[41] *Ep.* VII 342bc.

[42] Crivelli (2012: 228, n. 15) refers to those scholars who interpret τι περαίνει as "limiting something". According to this view, when a speaker utters a primary sentence he limits both the object signified by the name, by specifying what action it is performing, and the action signified by the verb, by specifying which object is performing it.

speech. Τι περαίνει also connotes the liberation and opening of *dianoia* so as to produce each time something new, valuable and beneficial, namely to generate meaningful units of language on which thought is mirrored. Moreover, it implies the release of its unlimited capacity to weave names and verbs so as to construct speech analogous to reasoning. I believe ὁρίσασα in the *Theaetetus* (190a2) is an obvious parallel with περαίνει τι in 262d2–6 of the *Sophist*. In *Tht.* 206d, *logos* is defined as something which reveals one's own *dianoia*, and in *Sph.* 262d2–6, *logos* implicitly περαίνει τι also as a revealer of *dianoia*.[43]

3. *The Aristotelian semiotic triangle*

It is always worth comparing Plato's analysis of *logos* in the *Sophist* with Aristotle's exposition of the same subject in his *De Interpretatione*. According to Aristotle (*Int.* 16a3–8):

> words spoken are symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul; written words are the signs of words spoken. As writing, so also is speech not the same for all races of men. But the mental affections themselves, of which these words are primarily signs, are the same for the whole of mankind, as are also the objects of which those affections are representations or likenesses, images, copies.[44]

Within this frame of reasoning, the spoken words, i.e. the vocal symbols or signs, are not related directly to the things but to the soul's affections of which these are signs, while the soul's or the mental affections in their turn are likenesses or images or copies of the things. Ammonius,[45] in his Commentary on *De Interpretatione*, organizes the philosopher's

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[43] Heidegger (2003: 412) notes that the criterion for the Being of words in the unity of discourse is their disclosive character. He states: "Δηλοῦν itself is now, within λόγος, insofar as λόγος is a συμπλοκὴ of δηλώματα, not the *result* of their composition, but, on the contrary, the κοινωνία of ὄνομα and ῥῆμα is possible at all only because λέγειν in itself is a δηλοῦν." As far as I can exploit this interpretation, *logos* is already a revealing receptacle which becomes a πλέγμα (weaving), by actualizing the possibility of συμπλοκὴ between names and verbs. This actualization is a περαίνειν τι.

[44] I follow the translation by Cooke (1938).

[45] Ammon. *In Int.* 18.23–19.3. I follow the translation by Blank (2014).

teaching and notes that he takes four items here as being useful for the present investigation: things and thoughts, as well as vocal sounds and letters. He explains that the things are first among these, thoughts are second, vocal sounds third, and letters last. Thoughts have as their goal the knowledge (κατάληψις) of things, and they are truly thoughts when they are, so to speak, in harmony with the things themselves; for they are images in the soul of things. Vocal sounds are enunciative of thoughts and therefore are given to us by nature so as to indicate through them the concepts of our soul, so that we can share with one another and be part of the same society, man being a social animal. Hence, those who do not use the same vocal sounds also do not share a state with one another, as they do not know one another's thoughts. The goal of letters is to preserve the memory of vocal sounds. He concludes that according to Aristotle, of these four items two are by nature (φύσει) and two by imposition (θέσει): things and thoughts are by nature, vocal sounds and letters by imposition. Ammonius explains the difference between likeness and symbol as follows:

> he [Aristotle] calls thoughts 'likenesses' (ὁμοιώματα) of things, while he does not want to call vocal sounds 'likenesses' of thoughts, but rather 'symbols' (σύμβολα) and 'signs' (σημεῖα), and similarly letters he calls 'symbols' and 'signs' of vocal sounds. Likeness differs from symbol in that it wants to image (ἀπεικονίζεσθαι) the very nature of a thing as far as possible and it is not in our power to change it, while a symbol or a sign (the Philosopher calls it both) is entirely up to us (ἐφ' ἡμῖν), given that it arises from our invention (ἐπίνοια) alone.[46]

We can note that in the former case, the mental affections are representations or likenesses of the things, which means that they reserve a causal relationship with the things, while in the latter, when vocal sounds are used as signs or symbols, they are the results of a conscious convention made by humans. However, the convention is not the same for all mankind, because the signs or symbols do not depend on the things but on the (collective) user. Consequently, vocal sounds become

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[46] Ammon. *In Int.* 19.32–20.8. Greek text cf. Busse 1897.

symbols or signs only when someone uses them as such, so they are dependent on the user; whereas thoughts or concepts as likenesses, due to their causal relationship with the things, have a stability which ensures the postulate of the intersubjective character of the psychic experiences and further the communication between all people who share them.[47]

At this point, I wish to exploit some of the remarks of Oehler[48] which I find important, regarding the above Aristotelian passage of *De interpretatione*. In my references to these remarks, I will use the terminology used by Ammonius in his exegesis of Aristotle. According to Oehler[49], the introduction of thoughts as likenesses of things will make us aware of the need to deal with the subjective or psychic aspect of an assertoric statement or judgement, because under the term παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς one must understand not only the isolated representations of things within the soul but also the connections and separations between them, i.e. λόγος ἀποφαντικός (assertoric statement). The written words, τὰ γραφόμενα or γράμματα, undertake the specific task of making the symbolic character of speech conspicuous. Oehler[50] stresses that while thought is a likeness (ὁμοίωμα), and what is more, likeness of the real, i.e. of πράγματα, speech is not a natural instrument of thought but always a symbol of it. This means that the relation between being and thinking is structured in a different way than the relation between thinking and speaking. Although the likeness-character of thought is contrary to the symbol-character of speech, Oehler be-

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[47] Kraus 1990: 260. Apart from Heidegger, in all my references to German scholars the translations are my own. Regarding the time-surpassing power of speech, associated with the view that it represents a stabilization of consciousness bound with a speaking community and a collective thought including trustworthy, intersubjective and conveyable information, see Schmidt 1969: 10.

[48] Oehler (1962: 21) notes that it is decisive for understanding the character of the Aristotelian tetradic scheme — things, thoughts (mental or psychic affections or impressions), spoken words and written words — to notice the parallelism between: a) things and the real, b) thought and the ideal, c) speech and the sense-perceptible.

[49] Oehler 1962: 21. Cf. Kraus 1990: 260. We will see later in this paper how the Sophists have also been occupied with the psychic aspect of *logos*, but from a completely different perspective.

[50] Oehler 1962: 21–22.

lieves that from this point of view, speech considered as a living process can be construed as the transformation of likenesses or copies to symbols. Through this transformation, words — to the extent that they are symbols of thoughts which in their turn are likenesses of things — can equally be considered as symbols of things. He emphasizes that the deep meaning of this Aristotelian equation lies within the relation between being and speech introduced by it. This relation between πράγματα or ὄντα and λόγος is not unmediated, but is established and becomes real through the medium of thought (νοήματα) or, generally, through the medium of the soul. Through this analysis, Oehler[51] also successfully demonstrates and explains the deictic character of speech. Being (ὄν, ὄντα), which affects the soul, manifests and reveals its presence through the words — names and verbs —, which indicate all that is about it[52]. The words do not have their meaning by nature (φύσει)[53] but primarily are used by thought as symbols of the things represented within νοήματα or ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθήματα, so they stand for the things and not *per se*, and are connected with the things through the intervention of human thought. Furthermore, in both Plato and Aristotle, διάνοια and διανοεῖσθαι play a primordial role in the logic and the psychology of assertoric statement because dianoetic thought has the very structure of λόγος ἀποφαντικός since it occurs by the perpetual consecution of affirmations and denials.[54]

Oehler[55] notes that in Aristotle's theory in *De interpretatione*, the parallelism between being, thinking and speaking leads to the formation of a clearly circumscribed and delimited scheme, which constitutes

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[51] Oehler 1962: 22.

[52] I believe Oehler's explanation of the deictic character of speech fits perfectly with the emphasis that I chose to place on the special role of the constituents of *logos*, i.e. names and verbs, considered as δηλώματα περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν.

[53] Ammonius (*In Int.* 19.9–19) remarks that since things and thought are the same among all peoples, while vocal sounds and letters are not the same among all peoples, for Aristotle things and thoughts are by nature (φύσει), but vocal sounds and letters are by imposition (θέσει), not by nature. Cf. Stephanus, *In Int.* 1.14–17, 1.24–2.1. Greek text cf. Hayduck 1885.

[54] Cf. Oehler 1962: 28–29.

[55] Oehler 1962: 27.

a Triad (Τριάς). Within the frame of this Triad, spoken words are symbols of thoughts and thoughts are likenesses of beings; however, the determination of these relationships is not restricted only to the formal description of this parallelism. According to Oehler, it also aims to formulate a meaning-theory within which the relationship between εἶναι (being) and *logos* is construed as an approximation of *logos* to εἶναι, to the extent that *logos* always searches for and uses a symbol indisputably representative of thought.[56] Of course, this effort sometimes fails. Kraus[57] notes that Aristotle's semiotic model on the one hand gains a distinctly pragmatic character through the connection of the semiotic function with the user; but on the other hand, it has serious ontological implications since through the established scheme of parallelism between Being, Thought and Speech, one can understand that thoughts follow things and vocal sounds follow thoughts. So, one can realize that Aristotle proposes a triadic model, which according to Schmidt and Kraus can be illustrated by the diagram of a triangle. Both Schmidt and Kraus sketch such a triangle with reference to Aristotle's theory of language.[58] Indeed, since Aristotle distinguishes written from spoken words and binds the former with the latter by introducing a second symbolic relation, this time the written words being symbols of the spoken, the diagram of the Aristotelian semiotic triangle is integrated and complete only if it is duplicated with the combination of two triangles placed one next to the other. The first illustrates the relations between things, affections of the soul or thoughts, and spoken words, while the second illustrates the relations between things, spoken words, and written words.[59]

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[56] Schmidt (1969: 12) carries out a careful analysis of Aristotle's text. One must draw attention to the fact that words as symbols are not connected with the respective particular things as if they were their names, but only with the παθήματα caused to the man's soul by the things. So, words describe particular παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς or νοήματα. Consequently, sentences describe connections of παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς or νοήματα. It is noteworthy that παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς are referred to simply as νοήματα by Ammonius; cf. Steph. *In Int.* 1.13–14.

[57] Kraus 1990: 260–261.

[58] Schmidt 1969: 13, Kraus 1990: 261.

[59] Lieb 1981: 148, Oehler 2006: 253–254, Kraus 1990: 261.

The crucial question that emerges from the comparative examination of Plato and Aristotle is whether in Plato we can also trace the idea that *logos* is related to reality through νοήματα, i.e. thoughts or concepts or mental grasps of reality.[60] This question becomes extremely important all the more so because not only in the *Sophist* (263e3–264b1), but also in the *Theaetetus* (189e–190b) and the *Philebus* (38b–e), Plato equates διάνοια (thought) with *logos*. In the *Sophist*, the Visitor stresses that these are the same except that what we call *dianoia* is διά-λογος (dialogue) that occurs without the voice, inside the soul in conversation with itself, while *logos* is called the stream of sound which, originating from the soul, goes through the mouth. The internal dialogue contains affirmation and denial which occurs as silent thought inside the soul and this is called δόξα (belief). In the *Theaetetus*, within the procedure of defining διανοεῖσθαι (thinking), it is explained that the soul, when it thinks, is merely conversing with itself, asking itself questions and answering, affirming and denying. Δόξα (belief) is the arrival at a decision and the conclusion of thinking, when the soul is no longer in doubt. Δοξάζειν in the *Theaetetus* is also defined as λέγειν and δόξα as

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[60] Kapp (1965: 38), by referring to Prantl (1855: 1.691; 1867: 3.206; 3.Index s.v. *conceptus*), notes that in Latin commentaries the words "concept" or "conception" (or "Begriff" in German) trace their history back to the first chapter of Aristotle's *De interpretatione*; initially, their meaning was "an idea or thought about a thing which, caused by the thing, has been formed within the soul and was described by a word". Kapp adds that there is no equivalent word in Greek and that primarily it has not a connection with the definition, although later historians of philosophy were oriented towards a certain use of it, in which it is understood as a correlative of definition. Helmig (2012: 14) cites several ancient Greek words that can stand for a concept. Among these, he also mentions the word νόημα, which is referred to by Ammonius and Stephanus in their exegesis of Aristotle's relevant passage in *De interpretatione*. Helmig (2012: 14, n. 9; 49) refers to "thought" as the meaning of νόημα in *Prm.* 132bc, in the sense of a "thought-process", and he states that usually the word refers rather to an episode of thought (thought process) and not to a concept. Proclus in his commentary on Plato's *Parmenides* interprets νόημα in 132bc as "the actual thought-process which thinks the Form" (αὐτὴν τὴν νοοῦσαν νόησιν τὸ εἶδος), see Procl. *In Prm.* 892.9–15 (transl. by Morrow and Dillon 1987; Greek text cf. Steel et al. 2007–2009). I believe it is obvious that Ammonius and Stephanus do use the word here with the meaning of a concept, of something which is a stable reception of the thing (πρᾶγμα) into the human mind.

logos which has been held not with someone else, not yet aloud, but in silence with oneself.[61] *Logos* also has a physiological aspect, since it is determined as the stream of sound from the soul that goes through the mouth. So, there emerges another relevant question. What is the relation between the two versions of *logos*, mental and silent speech on the one hand, and vocal speech on the other?

4. *Other approaches to the relationship between* logos *and reality*

As regards the first question, it will be useful to refer to two different approaches to the relation between language and reality that precede Plato's view, both representing Sophistic circles. Whereas during the period of the primitive thought the thing and its name were believed to have a magic unity,[62] within the frame of the archaic thought, each thing was tightly bound with its name and the relation between name and the thing named was considered natural, unmediated and independent of the human subject. At this stage, which from the perspective of the history of philosophy of language can be considered preliminary to the triadic semiotic model previously described, the predominant view was the naive idea that there was a direct monactine (*einstrahlig*) relation between names and things, without need for the interference or mediation of a νόημα.[63] Correspondingly, one can trace at that time a rectilinear and monactine semiotic model. This naive isomorphism between language and reality was being disputed as philosophical thought developed. The philosophical view that reality is entirely different from what we perceive and what we are used to believing it is, held in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., led to the emergence of serious disputations about the ability of language to describe reality and finally to the notion that language is to a certain extent deceptive.[64]

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[61] I mostly follow the translation by Fowler (1921).

[62] Moukanos 1985: 250–251; Kraus 1990: 263, 1996: 18.

[63] Kraus 1990: 263, 1996: 18.

[64] Graeser (1977b: 362) stresses that this notion was expressed by both conventionalists and non-conventionalists. Lebedev (2009: 360, 362), focusing on the metaphysical monists (like Parmenides and Heraclitus) who considered the phenomenal world

According to Kraus, Gorgias the Sophist in the third part of his treatise *On the Nonexistent* or *On Nature*, was the first to distinguish between the phonetic or vocal and the meaning level[65] of language and to de-

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of the plurality as an illusionary product of the deceptive sense-perception, notes that the multitude of names was blamed for deceptiveness due to the fragmentation of reality implied by it. Heinimann (1972: 50) stresses that according to the Eleatic School, the source of the error is not naming *per se* but blind trust of mortal humans in sense-perception; they were interested in language only to the degree that it is connected with δόξα (belief) which is opposed to ἀλήθεια (truth). On the other hand, Heraclitus lays the emphasis on the idea that it is not language as such that is deceptive but rather its use (see Graeser 1977b: 362). I will pick up two points from what Graeser (1977b: 365–366) states about Heraclitus. Firstly, that by fr. 123 ("Nature likes to hide"), he probably suggested that what speech reports appears, in a way, to be states of contradictory affairs. Secondly, that for Heraclitus the facts of nature are liable to rational account provided we understand that what words "mean" is not necessarily what they "name". According to Graeser's explanation of this second crucial point, Heraclitus attacked the ordinary man's assumption that it is by the act of attaching a name to a thing that he somehow exercises a conceptual grasp on the respective object. So, in his interpretation, Heraclitus doubts the ordinary man's awareness of the fact that names in general are only incomplete symbols; they are only capable of depicting some features or aspects of the object referred to. For a theory of "natural language" in Heraclitus, in the sense of "natural names" which are not the ordinary names but the recombined or the "reunited" pairs of opposites, see Lebedev 2009: 362. Kraus (1990: 264, 1996: 18) notes that the traditional semiotic model has been attacked from two directions at that time: on the one hand, from the considerably growing natural philosophy and on the other, from the equally fast evolving art of Rhetoric. Philosophers of Nature like Empedocles (fr. B 8 and B 9) and Anaxagoras (fr. B 17) made criticisms of the ordinary language for its deficiency in describing reality and its tendency to read only the superficial level of the natural facts. They further attempted to establish a scientifically grounded terminology. Democritus (fr. B 26) also argued about the conventional and arbitrary character of language; see Derbolav 1972: 33. With reference to Rhetoric, but also to the eristic branch of Dialectic, the confidence in the veridical value of the content of speech was undermined for two reasons: a) the growth of Rhetoric, in which someone deliberately chooses and uses the words or names and their combinations for the purpose of persuading the audience, reinforced the conviction that the relation between names and things is flexible; b) also, eristic Dialectic, in which someone arbitrarily and ambiguously uses the words or names and their combinations for the purpose of defeating a verbal opponent, deepened the impression that one can lead to misunderstandings and fallacies by modifying and manipulating the relation between names and things.

[65] Mourelatos (1987: 136) claims that Gorgias in the third part of his treatise attacks

scribe the specific relation between language and reality through the notion of a sign.[66] Gorgias disputes the Parmenidean doctrine about the close relation between being (εἶναι, ἐόν), thinking (νοεῖν) and speaking (λέγειν, φράζειν, φατίζειν, φράζεσθαι), by stressing the fundamental heterogeneity between language and reality.[67] Furthermore, he radically destroys the alleged natural or ontological relation between the thing and its name when he asserts that that by which we reveal is *logos*, but *logos* is not substances and existing things. We do not reveal existing things to our neighbors, but *logos*, which is something other than substances. Therefore, just as the visible things would not become audible, and vice versa, similarly, when external reality is involved, it would not become our *logos*, and not being *logos*, it would not have been revealed to another. *Logos* therefore does not manifest substances, just as they do not manifest the nature of each other.[68] One cannot speak

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two conceptions of the nature of linguistic meaning, viz., that meaning is reference, and that meaning is mental image or idea.

[66] Kraus 1990: 267. For an insightful reconstruction of Gorgias' argumentation, one has to pay equal attention to both versions of his text, the one preserved by Sextus Empiricus (*Adversus mathematicos* 7.65–87) and the other by the Anonymous author of *De Melisso Xenophane Gorgia* 979a11–980b21 (*MXG*); cf. Mullach 1845. It is also necessary to evaluate the contribution of each version on its own and to diagnose any hidden constructive purpose of the arguments; see Caston 2002: 207–208. In my references to the third part of the text preserved by Sextus, in general outline, I follow the translation by Kennedy (2001). Newiger (1973: 152–154), by referring to *MXG* 980a19–b8, notes that initially in the argument the emphasis is on the gap between sight and hearing; the object of one sensation cannot coincide with that of any other. He notes that at the beginning, *logos* is considered by Gorgias as the object of hearing, which is a considerable devaluation in comparison with the Parmenidean conception of *logos*, according to which λόγος, and specifically πιστὸς λόγος (B 8.50), is related in an inseparable manner with the respective being and its noetic correlative. But then, in the evolution of the argumentation, *logos* is not any more the object of sense-perception. It becomes some sign (σημεῖον) which differs from the thing of which it is a sign.

[67] Newiger 1973: 150, Kraus 1990: 266. Newiger (*ibid.* 151) points out that the verbs φράζεσθαι and φράζειν used by Parmenides (B 6.2; B 2.6, 8) have the meaning "display myself", "display", "manifest", and he further notes that Gorgias uses expressions such as δηλοῦν, δῆλον γίγνεσθαι (*MXG* 980a19 f., 21, b18), μηνύεσθαι, παραστατικός ἐστιν, μηνυτικὸν γίνεται (S.E. *M.* 7.83, 85, 86), etc. with a similar meaning.

[68] Wilson (1893: 38) notes: "Gorgias does not contend that it is impossible to form a

nor think of the perceptible things; one can only see the visible or hear the audible things, etc. According to an important line of interpretation, if one can neither speak of colors and sounds nor think of them, one can infer that *logos* is associated only with things considered in the mind (τὰ φρονούμενα, S.E. *M.* 7.77–81) and that *logos* is always attached to thought.[69] Between the external existing things and the content of thought remains a gap, and it is assumed that these things can have an access to thought only through sense-perception, since this gap can be overcome, at least partially, only through sense-perception.[70] *Logos*, ac-

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notion of colour or imagine (διανοεῖσθαι) it at all, because it can only be seen and not imagined. But, as is clear from the preceding context, he meant simply that one man could not get a notion of what colour was from another through the medium of speech alone." What one man can convey to the other is not the sense-perceptible thing itself but only a name or a description of it. But the idea of a thing cannot be communicated by its name or even a description because even if someone achieves knowledge of something and attempts to communicate it, the question is how another person who simply hears will understand and experience the same knowledge. This would lead either to the multiplication of the unique sense-perceptible object or to the unification of different subjects of sense-perception. See Newiger 1973: 155–156. Mansfeld (1988: 264) assumes that Gorgias' argument dealing with the differences among persons must have been pleasing to a person of Pyrrhonist leanings.

[69] Kraus 1990: 267; cf. Newiger 1973: 154–155. The implicit idea is that *logos* is or can be the object of pure thought. So, *logos* is more than an object of sense-perception, it is also the object of thought. Moreover, it is also that which corresponds to διανοεῖσθαι. Kerferd (1984: 221) assumes that the gulf between sense experience and thought is a consequence of the gulf between sense experiences and words, and that this can be explained in one way only; it is because words represent thoughts.

[70] Newiger (1973: 175–177) points out that we can recognize in Gorgias the same gap between sense-perception and thought that is acknowledged in the Eleatic philosophy, although he does not use a fixed terminology. However, one can assume that sense-perception, according to Gorgias, is a presupposition for the formation of a notion or a mental image (*Vorstellung*) and its communication. Someone can have a grasp of something in his mind only if he has first achieved access to it through the medium of sense-perception. Newiger states that in Gorgias' argumentation we can trace an approach which foreshadows Locke's dictum: "*nihil est in intellectu, quod non fuerit in sensu*". *Logos* is assigned to διανοεῖσθαι and is the vehicle of thought. But in their turn, ἐννοεῖν and διανοεῖσθαι must not be understood as thinking without concrete content. The content of thought must be sense-perceptible things, namely things which have come into (= have been grasped by) thought originating from sense-perception.

cording to Gorgias, arises from external things impinging upon us, that is, from perceptible things. So, he asserts that *logos* is not evocative of the external, but rather that the external becomes the revealer of *logos*.[71] The consequence of Gorgias' approach to *logos* is that any criterion for the truth of a verbal expression vanishes, so *logos* proves inappropriate for the communication of knowledge.[72] According to this semiotic model, there is neither an unmediated nor a reliable mediated relation between *logos* and things. Also, between things and thought there is only an indirect relation through the medium of sense-perception.[73] Only between *logos* and thought can one assume a reliable relation.

The opposite of this theory put forward by Gorgias is traced in the rest of the Sophistic as well as Antisthenean thought. The way in which the relation between names and things was understood by these circles had its roots in Eleatic philosophy and more especially in the reflection of Parmenides on the unbreakable bond between speaking and being. Within this framework of the Sophistic and Antisthenean thought, the relation between speech and thing must be understood to be as direct and unmediated as the relation between sense-perception and its object.[74] The thing (τὸ πρᾶγμα) is construed as the direct object of the verb

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[71] It is noteworthy that in other works by Gorgias we can find a reverse relation between *logos* and extra-linguistic substances, as it is for instance human soul, i.e. the soul of the hearer. Segal (1962: 121), analyzing Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen*, stresses that *logos* in this work is almost an independent external power which forces the hearer to do its will. He explains that the *logos* works through ἀνάγκη and is itself an active force impinging on the ψυχή from without.

[72] Kraus (1990: 269) explains that the cognitive disempowerment of *logos* released the inherent capacities of Rhetoric to exercise the art of psychic impact, by inventing rhetoric devices including ἀπάτη (deception).

[73] Kraus 1990: 268–269. Kerferd (1981: 324–325) traces six gulfs illustrated within Gorgias' argumentation: a) between what is perceived by one sense and what is perceived by another sense; b) between the λόγος and the πρᾶγμα; c) between the λόγος and the sense-impression; d) between sense-impressions and the corresponding thoughts (a distinction which, according to Kerferd, might seem to pre-figure Plato's distinction between δόξα and ἐπιστήμη); e) between one man's sense-impressions and those of another man; and f) between one man's thoughts and another man's thoughts.

[74] Baumgarten 1998: 46.

λέγειν (speaking).[75] A name is considered to constitute a designation or accurate expression of the thing named. The verbal construction λέγειν τὸ πρᾶγμα was considered equivalent to the construction λέγειν τὰ ὄντα or λέγειν τὰ ἀληθῆ.[76] Moreover, on the grounds of the acknowledged semantic equivalence of the expressions λέγειν, λέγειν τι, λέγειν τὰ ὄντα, λέγειν τὰ ἀληθῆ (speaking, speaking something, speaking things that are, speaking things that are true), both the possibility of denial or contradiction and the possibility of assertoric statement are rejected.[77] A verbal expression, even if it is assertoric, is meaningful only when it is conceived of as naming. The truth of a verbal figure does not consist in its agreement with the thing, but must be understood as a revelation, as a manifestation and discrete presence of the thing spoken of.[78]

5. *The dual meaning of* logos *in Plato: the role of* dianoia

Both lines of reasoning influenced Plato. While for Gorgias the possibility of true and false statements has disappeared and *logos* is reduced to exchangeable opinions,[79] for Plato true *logos* reflects beings

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[75] Baumgarten 1998: 46. Graeser (1977a: 147–148, 1977b: 363) stresses that according to the Parmenidean theory, one can speak of νοεῖν and λέγειν only with reference to objective reality (*objective Wirklichkeit*). Λέγειν and νοεῖν are characterized by Graeser as "*Erfolgsverben*", which means that each is targeted in a very restricted way at the thing which is its correspondent object, and that what can be spoken of or considered in the mind, i.e. the object of λέγειν and νοεῖν, is only the thing which *is*. Popper (1998: 205, n. 8) explains that all verbs relative to λέγειν (like εἴρειν, φράζειν, φάναι) are used by Parmenides with the transitive sense of speaking of, or about, something; reporting something; recounting something; or pointing to, pointing out, referring to, something, and thus of making something known. So, since we have to speak of something, we cannot speak of nothing, because nothingness is unspeakable and unthinkable. See also *Euthydemus* 284ab.

[76] Graeser (1977b: 363) emphasizes that within Parmenidean thought, even statements were regarded as meaningful only if there was something to be named. He also underlines (1977a: 147) that words and sentences basically were equally considered as operating in the human world as names of real complexes (*wirklicher Komplexe*).

[77] Graeser 1977b: 363, Baumgarten 1998: 46.

[78] Baumgarten 1998: 47, Mouzala 2011a: 70. See also Tugendhat 1958: 7.

[79] Kraus 1990: 269.

in an unmediated way and it says *those that are*, as they are, about them (263b4–5). For Gorgias, *logos* is associated only with things considered in the mind (φρονούμενα), which according to his view are dependent on sense-perception, with the result that any relationship between *logos* and things is removed.[80] Mourelatos stresses that Gorgias did not only maintain the inability of *logos* to communicate reality to another person, but he also argued that even for the solitary individual in meditative monologue *logos* cannot furnish, constitute, or represent the external reality.[81] He adds that if Gorgias' argument about the categorial distinctions of perception is taken seriously, it must apply not only when I use words to convey reality to another but equally when I use words to conjure up a reality that is not immediately present to me. For example, problems of perceptual sameness are raised in intrasubjective as well as intersubjective situations (*MXG* 980b14–17). The result of this difficulty described by Mourelatos is that "neither a public nor a private language is possible" because "even the solitary individual *logos* cannot represent the real thing". Consequently, "even for the solitary individual in communion with himself, language is either otiose or impotent".[82] For Plato, *logos* is directly associated with the Forms on which the sensible things depend through μέθεξις. Forms are directly associated with names under the specifically Platonic ontological condition of homonymy; particulars are called by the same name as their Form and they exist only by participation in it.[83] The prime designate or referent of each name is a Form while the perceptible things constitute

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[80] Mourelatos (1987: 138, 150, 163) points out that, according to Sextus Empiricus, Gorgias' doctrine is that there is absolutely no affinity between words and things. There is no way for things to be transformed into our *logos*.

[81] Mourelatos (1987: 138).

[82] Mourelatos (1987: 150). He stresses that a serious implication of Gorgias' point is that "I no more share a language with my past self than I do with another subject".

[83] See *Phd.* 78e2, 102b2; *R.* 596a5–7; *Prm.* 130e5; *Sph.* 240a4–5. Cf. Mouzala 2011a: 74. Aristotle emphasizes this feature in his presentation of the theory of Forms in *Metaph.* 987b7–10. In this way, Plato reverses the problem posed by Antisthenes, i.e. the need to give an account of how we call the same thing by several names. He shows that through participation (μέθεξις) and homonymy we can give an account of how we call many things by the same name. Cf. Kraus 1990: 273.

the realm of secondary or derivative designation and reference.[84] Form is the one and unique being which deserves to bear the name, since only it has true being;[85] while the meaning of the name refers to the one being from which the many sensible things eponymously derive their names. According to what is determined as the relation between names and Dialectic in the *Cratylus*, each name is "an instrument instructive and discriminatory of the essence" (388bc), and within the frame of the Platonic Ontology of the *Sophist*, names are indications (δηλώματα) of οὐσίαι (261e4–6), of the Forms.[86] While for Parmenides language is deceptive to the extent that it may be regarded as express-

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[84] See Allen 1965: 45–46. Cf. Graeser 1977b: 367.

[85] Clegg (1973: 27–30) stresses that the actual bearer of a word is an intelligible Form. He explains that all that language can describe accurately is a Form, because empirical things strive to merit the descriptions we apply to them, but they always fall short of total success.

[86] Graeser (1975: 221) notes that the conception of the necessarily transitive verbs such as λέγειν and νοεῖν and δοξάξειν as *Erfolgsverben* (cf. n. 75), means that thought oriented towards naming (we must remember that any statement is meaningful only if it is equal to naming; cf. n. 76) either achieves its object or misses it. This in its turn implies that relative as well as absolute negation is *ex hypothesi* impossible; what is not cannot be named. Graeser (1977b: 368–369) assumes that the Ideas are considered as normative meanings and as the "true meanings" of expressions for predicates. He underlines that in the *Parmenides* (135c) Plato suggests that anyone denying the existence of Ideas does away with both the objects of thought to which we direct our thought and the possibility of meaningful discourse. It is precisely their existence that language and thought depend on. Graeser (1977b: 369–370) believes that Plato's Ideas may be described as hybrids between what Frege called *Sinn* (Sense) and *Bedeutung* (Reference) respectively. He claims that "sticking with Frege's notion of *Sinn* may prove to be worthwhile since it is likely to get us rather near to what Plato is aiming at in the *Cratylus* when he considers the possibility that words do not merely *name* but also *mean* in the sense that they convey the mode of presentation of the object referred to (393d3–4, 422d1–3, 423e7–9)"; cf. Graeser 1975: 223–225. We must also remember that the meaning of a name may be an intellectual possession of the many and that between the thing, which is the object of reference (*Bedeutung*), and the subjective apprehension (*Vorstellung*) there lies the meaning (*Sinn*). See Frege 1969: 40–65. Cf. Mouzala 2012: 78. Kraus (1990: 272) stresses that through the Platonic theory of recollection (ἀνάμνησις), one can see that the intersubjective identity of the Ideas is preserved, so that the linguistic communication can be established upon reliable collective psychic images (*Vorstellungen*).

ing a certain view of reality which is fundamentally misleading, for Plato speech is acknowledged as having a real-world reference operation and a true relationship with the ontological sphere of reality.[87] Also, while for Gorgias *logos* cannot have an unmediated relationship with the sense-perceptible things and generally cannot refer to Being or to reality but only to the φρονούμενα (things considered in the mind) which are dependent on sense-perception, Plato restores the broken relationship between *logos* and real beings and reintroduces a reliable criterion of truth in the domain of *logos*. As Kraus[88] notes, for Plato the real being does not belong to the sphere of the sense-perceptible things, but to the ontological sphere of Ideas, so he replaces within the model of Gorgias the φρονούμενα (things considered in the mind) which are dependent on sense-perception with the Ideas or Forms. In this way, as we can infer from Kraus' analysis, he constructs a functional triadic semiotic model through which he construes the relationship between *logos* and reality, by establishing the following crucial innovations: 1) the words refer primordially not to the sense-perceptible things but to the Ideas; 2) the Platonic theory of recollection ensures the intersubjective identity of the Ideas and guarantees that linguistic communication can be grounded on collective reliable notions; 3) the gulf between things and thoughts described by Gorgias is replaced by a new stable relation, i.e. the relation between things and Ideas. In addition, since the sense-perceptible things depend ontologically on the Ideas by participation (μέθεξις) in them, one can realize that the semiotic chain of relationships is integrated by Plato within the frame of a semiotic triangle constituted of the names, the Ideas, and the sense-perceptible things.

Another aspect of the Platonic conception of the relation between *logos* and reality is that for Plato, speaking and thinking are equally ranked and both are capable of error and truth.[89] In the *Theaetetus*

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[87] Cf. Glasmeyer 2003: 76.

[88] Kraus 1990: 272.

[89] Chiesa (1992: 18) notes that according to Plato, thought is a *logos* since it is the silent dialogue of the thinking soul with itself. He then focuses on *Sph.* 263e3–5 in order to highlight that although the Platonic thesis is a relative identity between *logos* considered as language and *logos* considered as thought, in fact there are two comple-

(189e–190a),⁹⁰ Plato equates on the one hand διανοεῖσθαι (thinking) with *logos* and on the other δόξα (opinion) with *logos* which has been held in silence with oneself. In the *Sophist* (263e–264b), *dianoia* and *logos* are considered to be the same, except that what we call διάνοια is διά-λογος that occurs without the voice, inside the soul in conversation with itself, whereas what we call λόγος is the stream of sound from the soul that goes through the mouth. Furthermore, δόξα (belief) is the conclusion of thinking (διανοίας ἀποτελεύτησις) when affirmation or denial occurs as silent thought within the soul. In the *Philebus* (38e–39b), it is said that when someone repeats aloud to his companion what he had said to himself, in this way that which we call an opinion (δόξα) now becomes a statement (λόγος).

Chiesa⁹¹ aptly indicates at least two questions that are not clearly answered within the Platonic text: 1) which are the constituent elements of thought, i.e. of the silent dialogue of the soul with itself? 2) what is the relationship between the mental and the vocal speech, given that *logos* has a dual meaning? A third derivative but crucial question which emerges from what has been previously asked is whether Forms can be the unmediated content of *logos* in Plato. In my opinion,

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mentary aspects of this position: firstly, the affirmation of the identity between language and thought regarding what could be called the profound structure. Secondly, the restriction of this position as formulated within the sentence in 263e3–5 ("except that what we call thought is speech that occurs without the voice…"), which shows the difference between language and thought regarding the superficial structure. Chiesa adds that identity and difference thus combine to support the idea that thought and speech are basically the same thing, namely *logos*. Specifically, in the etymological sense of the term, thought and speech constitute a tautology.

⁹⁰ *Tht.* 189e–190a: "Soc. Excellent. And do you define thought as I do? Theaet. How do you define it? Soc. As the talk which the soul has with itself about any subjects which it considers. You must not suppose that I know this that I am declaring to you. But the soul, as the image presents itself to me, when it thinks, is merely conversing with itself, asking itself questions and answering, affirming and denying. When it has arrived at a decision, whether slowly or with a sudden bound, and is at last agreed, and is not in doubt, we call that its opinion; and so I define forming opinion as talking and opinion as talk which has been held, not with someone else, nor yet aloud, but in silence with oneself" (transl. by Fowler 1921).

⁹¹ Chiesa 1992: 19–20.

the relationship between the Forms and *logos* in Plato cannot be explained through the Aristotelian semiotic triangle as it is reformulated by Ammonius (things-thoughts-spoken words). According to Ammonius' exegesis, thoughts (νοήματα) are images of things in the soul.[92] It is remarkable that in Plato the relation between νοῦς or its activity, νόησις, and their object must be understood to be as direct and unmediated as the relation between sense-perception and its object.[93] The Forms are mentally grasped as units through pure νοεῖν and can be expressed verbally only by their name. As Oehler notes, this pure apprehension of the Forms through the intellectual action of νόησις (intellection), is always true without the possibility of error. This is the exceptional Platonic modus of acquiring the Forms, which *a priori* excludes any possibility of falsity.[94] In addition to this, for Plato the Forms are the direct objects of λέγειν (speaking), exactly as for Antisthenes and the Sophists, sensible things are the direct objects of λέγειν. However, the Forms cannot be the unmediated content of *logos*, considered either as thought or as vocalized speech, for the following reasons. First of all, as it is clearly shown in 259e, *logos* considered as πλέγμα and συμπλοκή or κοινωνία τῶν περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν δηλωμάτων is due to the weaving together of Forms. *Logos* owes its generation to the mutual combination of Forms, i.e. to the ἀλλήλων τῶν εἰδῶν συμπλοκή. This interweaving which is reflected in *logos* is the condition of the

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[92] See again Ammon. *In Int.* 18.28–30.

[93] Oehler (1962: 41–42) describes the stable parallel and partial identification between seeing and thinking considered as mental vision. The most representative example of this relation is the Platonic expression ὄμμα τῆς ψυχῆς, see *R.* 518cd, 527de; *Smp.* 212a; *Phdr.* 247c. For the view that "Forms are knowable without mediation, save perhaps that provided by a conceptual analysis of formal relationships", see also Sayre 1970: 86–87. For the fact that intellectual knowledge was regarded by the Platonists as being ultimately reducible to the monad, on the grounds that it is constituted "according to an indivisible unity" (καθ᾽ ἕνωσιν ἀμέριστον), see Simplicius, *In De an.* 29.2–9; Greek text cf. Hayduck 1882.

[94] Oehler (1962: 121, 125) calls this position "noological singularism" (*noologisch Singularismus*) or knowledge-theoretical monism (*erkenntnistheoretischen Singularismus*). This position assumes that in relation to the Forms, there only obtains either absolute knowledge or absolute ignorance. Cf. Mouzala 2011b: 225–226.

possibility of *logos* considered either as thought or as speech.[95] Within the Platonic examples "Theaetetus sits" – "Theaetetus flies" (263a), one must not seek to find a one to one correspondence between the parts of the structure "subject-verb" and the Forms which are presupposed.[96] The crucial points for our understanding of *logos* are the communion of Forms as a presupposition of it, the communion of words as a reflection of the communion of Forms,[97] the product of the linguistic action, which is an integrate meaning, and the impact of this action, which is the accomplishment of communication. Secondly, the Forms cannot be the unmediated constituent elements of thought, because as it is clearly shown in the dialogue *Parmenides* (132b–d), they must not be construed as thoughts (νοήματα).[98] Thirdly, the capacity of the soul which predominates in the operation of *logos* is *dianoia* with its special manifestations. One of the most important tasks of *dianoia* is to recognize the interrelations between the Forms.

Through the investigation of the dual meaning of *logos*, i.e. of the relationship between *dianoia* and *logos*, we can finally discover a route towards the Platonic thought. Plato solves the problem of predication posed by Antisthenes, i.e. the need to give an account of how we call the same thing by several names,[99] by introducing into the ontological level the communion of Forms which is reflected on the level of *logos*. *Logos* itself is a communion, a weaving together (πλέγμα) of verbs and

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[95] Cf. Chiesa 1992: 20.

[96] Cf. Chiesa 1992: 20. Kraus (1996: 28) states that the definition of *logos* in the *Sophist* presupposes on the one hand that it must be *logos* of τινός (of somebody or something), and on the other that it must have a veridical value which is derived from its relation with the communion of Forms. For a comparative examination between *Cratylus* and the *Sophist* on the matter of statement and its possible readings, see Barney 2001: 176 ff. (esp. 182 ff.).

[97] Cf. Fronterotta 2013: 207–208 and n. 2.

[98] See Oehler 1962: 109–112; Chiesa 1992: 20.

[99] Apart from the debate with Antisthenes, the Heraclitean notion that each thing has many names probably also played a fundamental role in Plato's decision to concern himself with the problem of predication and its solution in the *Sophist*; see Graeser 1977b: 366.

names.[100] Since in the *Sophist* a being is determined by its capacity to do something or have something done to it, we can assume that *logos* is reckoned among *those that are* because of its relation with οὐσίαι and thought. *Dianoia* plays a central role in interpreting the relationship between language and reality in this dialogue. Whereas νόησις is directly unified with its simple, i.e. immaterial objects (νοητά), *dianoia* is the capacity of the soul which accomplishes transitions and discovers the connections between the Forms; *dianoia*, which is defined as silent speech that occurs inside the soul in conversation with itself about any subjects which it considers, realizes the relations or the interweaving of Forms.[101] This is the subject it considers when it proceeds with affirmations and denials and reaches a limit where it produces an opinion which has assertoric structure.[102] So, according to Kraus, the soul through *dianoia* is the natural place for the generation of speech, and thus speech must be considered as a specifically human phenomenon.[103]

Since *dianoia* and vocal speech in the *Sophist* are supposed to be homologous or counterparts, there is the dilemma of whether *dianoia* (or thought) is internalized *logos* or whether *logos* is externalized *dianoia*.[104] In *Tht.* 206d, the first meaning of *logos* is referred to as "making one's own thought clear through speech by means of verbs and nouns, imaging the opinion in the stream that flows through the lips, as in a mirror (κάτοπτρον) or water" (transl. by Fowler). We have previously emphasized that according to Aristotle, language is not a natural instrument of thought, and this thesis has the implication that vocal speech

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[100] Fattal (2009: 71) notes that even if the word σύνταξις is not present in Plato's text, the terms that denote the combination, such as μέθεξις, πλέγμα, συμφωνία, κοινωνία, μεῖξις, συμπλοκή, all refer to this reality which the Greek grammarians, for example Apollonius Dyscolus, will later call "Syntax".

[101] Kraus (1990: 277), focusing on the complicated web of the relations between the Forms and their images in the *Cratylus*, describes in details how the combinations and the connections between the Ideas can be traced within the soul and must belong not to the noetic, but to the dianoetic part of it.

[102] Cf. Chiesa 1992: 21.

[103] Kraus 1990: 277.

[104] Cf. Chiesa 1992: 21.

is not an image but always a symbol of thought.[105] In Plato, we can recognize that vocal speech is the expression of an assertion, of a judgement, and that its vocal dimension attributes to it the character of an image which is sense-perceptible.[106] This image, if we use Ammonius' conceptual distinctions,[107] is neither likeness (ὁμοίωμα) nor symbol or sign, nor an artistic image, but a natural image, such as shadows and what usually appears in water or mirrors, or in other words an unmediated reflection of thought. Furthermore, *logos* itself is a thread which binds the soul with Dialectic. Honest philosophical dialogue, i.e. Dialectic, directly reflects honest conversation of the soul with itself, i.e. *dianoia*, which is in search of the truth. As the vocal speech is a mirror to *dianoia*, so is Dialectic a means which clearly reflects the thinking procedures of *dianoia*. *Logos* in Plato is both theory and praxis, i.e. *dianoia* or thought and at the same time linguistic action, since λέγειν is considered as an action. This linguistic action is tightly bound with philosophical action, i.e. Dialectic. *Logos* is also a psycho-physical process, since when considered as a stream of sound that goes through the mouth, it is the expression and external manifestation of the internal dialogue of the soul with itself, i.e. the revelation of thought.

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[105] Cf. Liatsi 2008: 86–87.

[106] Cf. Chiesa 1992: 21.

[107] Ammon. *In Int.* 34.20–30 (also see again 20.1–8). Ammonius explains that "by nature" (φύσει) is said in two ways by those who count names as by nature. According to his view, Cratylus the Heraclitean said that names resemble the natural but not the artistic images of visible things, for example, shadows and what usually appears in water or mirrors. The terms referred to here by Ammonius are taken from Proclus' third sense of "by nature" that he attributes to Cratylus the Heraclitean in his *Commentary* on the homonymous dialogue. Proclus presents four senses of "by nature" and makes a further distinction between "shadows and images in mirrors" and "artistic images which resemble their models". See Procl. *In Cra.* 7.18–22; cf. Pasquali 1908. See also Blank 2014: 149, n. 159 and 161.

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