SPLITTING CONCEPTS:
STEPS OF REFLECTION

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ABSTRACT. The article analyzes a number of stages of the formation of a generic and non-specific vocabulary in the period from the 9–8th to the 5–4the centuries BCE in Ancient Greece. Cosmogonies of the period of ordering mythological representations in Egyptian, Phoenician and Greek cultures are taken as a source material. The article considers the interaction of basic metaphors that allow this ordering to be carried out-metaphors of genealogical (birth and change of generations) and metaphors of artisan-demiurge. The formation of the legislative space is investigated, yet namely this space allows to outline the first reflective steps in relation to mythological thinking. These steps are initially carried out within the limits of traditional mythological images. The most important stage of the movement towards general words in the process of the emergence of artificial concepts in the early philosophical systems – "apeiron", "ontos", "logos", "physis", which begin to be ordered through interaction with each other. In parallel with the personified mythological concepts the abstract concepts are gradually lining up and organizing systematically. From the beginning they allow to integrate mythological ideas and present them in the abstract form. In the next phase, a fundamental role is played by the activity of sophists, whose attention is focused on the game with the general concepts, yet the content of these concepts starts to lose the reference to the outside world. At the same time, the language is discovered as an independent system. This is the content of the third stage of reflective activity. The attempt of Socrates to escape from sophistic relativism and return the contents to the general concepts leads to the overturning of the relations of names and reality, when it turns out that the general concepts are enclosed in the soul, and they are preset the understanding of the world. Plato and Aristotle implement this setting and transform this work with concepts into a separate sphere of activity, creating dialectics and logic that underlie the methodology of reasoning and research in different spheres of intellectual activity.

KEYWORDS: mythological cosmogony, genealogical metaphor, metaphor of a craftsman, general concepts, "apeiron" (apeiron), "being" (on), "nature" (physis), "logos", "destiny" (moira), "law" (themis, dike), Parmenides, Heraclitus, Sophists, Plato, Aristotle.

The whole history of epistemology is the history of the evolution of clear,
individual, rational thought, out of the haze of collective
and sometimes contradictory representations.
Jane Ellen Harrison

One of the standard features of modern national languages is that they provide speakers with the opportunity to move freely through the stages of generalization, building arbitrarily detailed conceptual chains from single concepts to categories of the most general content. At the same time, it is known that if we turn to languages that have not passed the civilizational path of forming generic concepts, they do not provide native speakers with this opportunity. Only a few languages in the history of humanity have passed this way on their own, while most languages have acquired this opportunity in the process of interaction with the pioneers. Abstract concepts, whose meanings were devoid of visual associations, had to appear. During this process of generalization these new concepts had to form their own hierarchically-organized kingdom. The purpose of this article is to analyze this intellectual path.

For the starting point we will take Egyptian, Phoenician and similar to them Greek texts which relate to spiritual life of man and the structure of the universe.

Thus, the inhabitants of the Old Kingdom (the third Millennium BC) directly, literally represent mental life as a bodily one, as physical:

> "Everything visible and invisible, including man, was represented as being entirely real, material. The spiritual life of man, as well as otherworldly beings, was represented by the activity of the carnal guts ("womb"), primarily of the heart. The mental content appeared to be absolutely inseparable from the thinking organs that the absorption of hearts and insides in the otherworld was in the eyes of the ancient Egyptian sorcerer equivalent to the acquisition of the spells, kept inside" (Perepelkin 2000, 166).

In addition, there is no idea of the impassable boundary between gods and human beings, because the gods do not have absolute characteristics, like, for example, immortality, which appeared at some point:

> "The old Kingdom identified its gods with nature. Therefore, every reasoning about them was at the same time the reasoning about nature, and every reasoning about it was the reasoning of them. The most widespread doctrine of these mental constructions was developed in the lower city of the sun Ana (Onet, the Heliopolis of the Greeks). According to this doctrine, the universe was a chain of creation of some natural phenomena by others. In the midst of the primeval waters of Nauna (Nun) the supreme Atama (Atom) ascended on the hill, whose name could be interpreted as 'everything'. Atama (Atom) from himself produced the pair Shau (Show) and Tfini

(Tfaene), air and moisture. From them the second couple Gib (Keb) and Ni (Nae) was born, earth and heaven" (Perepelkin 2000, 168–169).

Apparently, by that time the more developed Memphis cosmogony was preserved, albeit it reached us in a much more recent scroll from the time of the 25th dynasty:

"The great Ptah represented the heart and tongue of the nine, Haru (Hor) and Dhauti (Thowt), which together were appearing (transforming) as Atama (Atom). Heart planned, language ordered the conceived. With this we again encounter the literally represented metaphor of the organism: the Nine (apparently without Atama, Atom, as he was the heart and the tongue) served as the teeth and lips of the world mouth, which voiced the names of everything. At the same time a different view of Ptah was presented, according to which he, being identical with the metropolitan god of the earth (Tun), raised the trees and stones on himself. In the end, Ptah turned out to be the original substance – primeval water and soil and at the same time the world reason (because the heart seemed to the Egyptians as a carrier of consciousness) and expression of will (world language)" (Perepelkin 2000, 169–170).

It is obvious that this idea is based upon the analogy with man and his activity: the gods combine different qualities, not representing the pure personification of the qualities of the ideal. At the same time, the idea of "the expression of the world," is characteristic for many cultures, including the Hebrew, goes beyond both metaphors: the metaphor of organism and the genealogical metaphor (metaphor of a family consisting of several generations). With some probability this can be explained by the social position of the creators of these texts – the priests. They deal with the orders of the gods, the orders which they hear from gods and convey to the subordinates. Yet the words of orders, embodied in specific activities, turns into reality. If we exclude from this activity the quite insignificant mediator, the people, who are performing the orders, and leave only the gods and the result of the action, then the complete representation of the crucial creative role of the word is formed, and hence we are really close to the image of the speaking out the world. The intersection of the genealogical metaphor with the metaphor of the organism is supplemented by the metaphor of creation-naming.

It is necessary to notice the fact that in the process of the regularizing of the priestly experience in Egypt the lists of concepts that are similar to our encyclopedias have been appearing. The purpose of these compiling was to list all things. One of the most famous texts of this type is the "encyclopedia" of Amen-em-ope, which belongs to the beginning of the second millennium BC and is called "This begins a textbook that makes clever and teaches ignoramus in order to know all existing things, created by Ptah and written ... by Thoth, the sky with its star system, the earth and what inside it, erupted by mountains, irrigated by waters, all

what is illuminated by the sun, and all what is given to be grown on the earth, invented by the scribe of the divine books of the "house of life" Amen-em-ope, son of Amen-em-ope, who says:.."(Perepelkin). In fact, it turns out that the list of words written by Thoth, denoting the world created by Ptah, are intermediaries between the world and man. (However, the realization of this mediating role of words comes in a certain cultural situation much later, and so far they are considered either physically merged with things, or initially inherent to a person, as sight or hearing). In order for words to be understood as an autonomous kingdom, it was necessary for them to lose their physical analogies. In other words, the abstract vocabulary had to emerge.

We can find the first signs of appearance of corresponding vocabulary in the texts of ancient Greek philosophers when the word creation starts. Therefore, it makes sense to refer to this material, but given the fact that Thales, being a resident of the Greek polis, probably was a Phoenician by his ethnic origin (as well as, apparently, his direct follower Anaximander), it makes sense to turn to the Phoenician mythology and to appreciate what impact it could make on the views of the Milesians.

The most detailed information on Phoenician mythology came to us from a single author, known under the name Sanchuniathon. In our disposal we have three slightly different versions of the origin of the world. M.L. West compares them with each other and also with the extant cosmogonies of the Greek authors, and highlights ten points of similarity (presented here in slightly simplified form): 1) the primeval watery abyss, 2) primeval darkness, 3) the role of the wind-vortex, which creates circular motion, 4) absence of limits, 5) personified time, 6) procreation by time, 7) appearance of bright Aither, 8) the production of an egg, 9) personified Desire, Eros, 10) the role of the Demiurge, who creates our world, opening the egg into two halves – heaven and earth (West 1994, 304). In these images it is easy to see similarities with the Orphic cosmogonies, one (though apparently a parody) version of which leads the Aristophanes in his comedy "The Birds 685 ff." (tr. E. O'Neill; all classical texts are normally quoted according to the Perseus Database: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu):

> At the beginning there was only Chaos, Night, dark Erebus, and deep Tartarus. Earth, the air and heaven had no existence. Firstly, black-winged Night laid a germless egg in the bosom of the infinite deeps of Erebus, and from this, after the revolution of long ages, sprang the graceful Eros with his glittering golden wings, swift as the whirlwinds of the tempest. He mated in deep Tartarus with dark Chaos, winged like himself, and thus hatched forth our race, which was the first to see the light. That of the Immortals did not exist until Eros had brought together all the ingredients of the world, and from their marriage Heaven, Ocean, Earth and the imperishable race of blessed gods sprang into being.

In this text Chaos, Night, Darkness, Eros, etc. are personified, and their images are constructed in the image of living beings, therefore in this respect they are well within the mythological picture of the world. The order here is made by the way of the action, i.e. chronology – first was Chaos and Night ... then Eros ... then the gods. The entire chronology, as already mentioned, is based on the metaphor of genealogy – successive creation of some creatures by others.

If we turn to Greek sources it is easy to find some similarities with the previous images as well. From the Spartan poet Alcman, who lived in the second half of the 7th century BC, in the fragments of the commentary to Spartan partheniae (girls choir) in Oxyrinchus papyrus No. 2390 (the 2nd half of the 2nd century BC) the following text came to us:

> "For when matter began to be arranged there came into being a kind of way [or passage, *poros*], as it were a beginning [or origin, *archē*]. So Alcman says that the matter of all things was disturbed and unmade; then someone [masculine] came into being who was arranging everything, then a way [*poros*] came into being, and when the way had passed by, a limit [or goal, *tekmor*] followed on. And the way is like a beginning [or origin], whereas the limit is like an end [or limit, *telos*]. When Thetis had come into being these became beginning and end of all things, and the totality of things has a similar nature to that of the bronze material, Thetis to that of the craftsman, and the way and the limit to that of the beginning and the end..." (Kirk–Raven–Schofield 1983, 47–48).

In this text noteworthy is, first, the emergence of the general concept of matter (originally, in Greek, *hyle*), but the concept of the abstract matter in philosophy has been introduced, apparently, only by Aristotle, i.e. three centuries after Alcman, and the text has come down through additional five centuries. Thus, what exactly began to be ordered and processed is not quite clear. It looks like Alcman means some substance, hidden in the darkness and therefore indistinguishable, but, obviously, not an abstract concept, just a hint of something primeval. Secondly, Alcman likens Thetis with the craftsman, which means the usage of the metaphor of artisan. Perhaps, the image of the craftsman-blacksmith links the emergence of Alcman's smelting copper as the unifying principle, the nature of everything. It can be assumed that in the framework of the transition to a new metaphor, the condition appears for the change from the image of birth, implying a chain of living beings, to the emergence of impersonal concepts such as matter-copper, i.e. the matter with which an artisan works. Namely, the unfolded logic of this metaphor suggests the possible beginning of the movement towards impersonation as such.[1] Yet the full transition to this metaphor is not yet

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[1] Although the image of the god-craftsman can be found much earlier, for example, in Egyptian mythology (the divine craftsman Hushor-Ptah, who divides the primeval egg in

happening in Alcman's cosmogony, because Thetis is till both the demiurge and the first appeared to be a deity, which becomes the cause of birth of all, but definitely not the nominal name (West 1963, 155). Parmenides, who wrote a century and a half later than Alcman, in the second part of his poem, which is devoted to retelling common opinions, perhaps, refers to the same goddess Thetis (fr. 12 DK, tr. K. Freeman):

> For the narrower rings were filled with unmixed Fire, and those next to them with Night, but between (these) rushes the portion of Flame. And in the centre of these is the goddess who guides everything; for throughout she rules over cruel Birth and Mating, sending the female to mate with the male, and conversely again the male with the female.

Based on the analysis of the texts of Homer and his later commentators from the school of New Stoics N. Yasumura (2001, 13) concludes that Thetis at the deep level "has always been the goddess of significant potential opportunities. In this sense, the intuition of later commentators was quite correct when they understood her as the organizer of all things."

We may recall Pherecydes with his first element – Time, Musaeus with Tartarus and Night, Linus with his abstract Whole, etc. Thus, in the process of ordering mythology the search for first principles is going. In more rational options it comes to be identified with the elements or numbers. It is important to note that this process is inconsistent – from myth to logos, but it goes in parallel: myth accompanies logos and logos is accompanying myth. If we go back to Alcman's cosmology, it is easy to notice that we are not dealing with the original text, but with the descriptive: its cosmology is represented by a language that allows us to convey it in abstract terms, such as matter (*hyle*), beginning (*arche*), goal (*telos*), et al.

In order to get into this intellectual space it was necessary at some stage to pull away, to escape, to depart from mythological discourse, in order to rise above tradition, which was dissolved in mythology. This opportunity came together with the necessity to establish legislation, when during the transition from monarchies to democracies tradition was powerless – customary law could not regulate changing social relations. At this stage the concept of measure becomes the center of the intellectual space opposing tradition, existing outside of it. The concept of measure is added by the concepts of order, law, and justice. The idea of a fair measure not only formed the basis of legislative practice, but also defined one of the most important directions of the development of ancient thought – the search for proportionality in everything. Philosophy borrows from previous reli-

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two pieces and from them makes the heavens and the earth (see West 1994, 303), but it is not deployed in a coherent metaphor, as is the case with philosophers.

gious thought the idea of god and soul, but in addition "...philosophy inherits from religion the governing conception of a certain order of Nature variously regarded as a dominion of Destiny, of Justice, or of Law" (Cornford 1912, 5). At that time when it was necessary to establish new laws for the democratically governed city-states, the concepts of *themis* and *dike* relating to the circle of meanings associated with the order of nature and society and justice are developed, understood and clarified. At the same time the concepts of *moira, nemesis, nomos*, etc. are refined.

In Homer's poems Themis performs two functions: 1) she convenes and dissolves the people's assembly and 2) she presides over the symposiums of the Olympian gods.[2] J.E. Harrison in her study on Themis, concludes that Themis became the embodiment of social conventions (*themistes*), which Greeks identified with civilization. And so, Cyclops, even though they worship gods, do not have customs and agreements developed by common consent. Consequently, they do not have the agora, and so Homer suggests that they have no Themis, that they *athemistes* (Harrison 1912, 484). Themis – the wife of Zeus, who bore him the Horaes (goddesses of the seasons plus Dike – goddess of justice) and Moiras (three goddesses of destiny). Dike, as the daughter of Themis, differs from her mother, first, by a more lively character, and, secondly, by the fact that she, along with her sisters-seasons ensures justice in the first place in nature, not in society. If the first, Themis, "is specialized to man, to social consciousness, the other is the way of the whole world, of the universe of all live things. The word *dike* has in it more life-blood, more of living and doing; the word *themis* contains more vitality, more life and action; the word *themis* has more of permission to do" (Harrison 1912, 516). Dike symbolizes a natural order, and Themis – public order.

The divine powers associated with order and destiny are understood individually as principles of morality. That is why cosmos appears to be a living being subject to moral principles. The birth of scientific (in the modern sense) consciousness can be seen as the exit beyond the moral categories by their recognition and transition to the terminology of legislation. Erinyes and Moiras are responsible for the moral world order. At the same time initially *moira*, as Cornford showed, is the distribution of the world into spheres of influence: each god has his own area, and no one can attempt to take it, as well as he should not cross the border and enter someone else's territory. Morality consists in the fact that the violation of the border is punishable as a moral crime.[3] The essential point of the transition to the philosophical discourse is the fact that philosophy inherits the pre-established order created by mythological thinking. Cornford writes: "...We have

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[2] See already in Homer (*Odysseus*, 2, 68–69. *Iliad*, 15, 87–89).

[3] In Russian there is a very exact match – "*dolya*" in both meanings – the fate and the part.

found a departmental order of the world established in religious representation long before it is affirmed by philosophy. Further, in religion and philosophy alike, this disposition is both primary and moral" (1912, 19). This heritage is clearly recognized by later thinkers, in particular, by Plato and Aristotle. Thus, Protagoras in the eponymous dialogue by Plato answering the question of whether it is possible to learn virtues, offers to answer through myth or through reasoning. Thus their intellectual equivalence is demonstrated (Plat. *Prot.* 320c). So is Aristotle.[4] Fran O'Rourke emphasizes the significance of myth for Aristotle. Aristotle says that the lover of myth (*philomythos*) is in a sense a lover of wisdom (*philosophos*). O'Rourke states that

> "...the *philomythos* relies greatly upon the poet, the 'maker' of myth, who through allegory, symbol and metaphor, shapes a meaning from the welter of human happenings by weaving them into a pattern and narrative of wider cosmic order. ... the juxtaposition and comparison of philosophy and poetry allow us to make this assimilation. Elsewhere Aristotle declares: 'Sophia is the knowledge of many wonderful things'"(2016, 31).

Moreover, if we notice how many of the mythological images and themes are found in philosophical works, it becomes evident that Aristotle's and other philosopher's attitude towards myth is quite respectful.

Thus, the intellectual movement, which then grows into "philosophy" in a modern sense, inevitably appears:

Firstly, in the context of reflection upon mythology (and in this process it moves in the same way as the ordering of myth by theologians);

Secondly, as the attempts to formulate rules of conduct that must be individually understood and assimilated, and not just repeated according to some given pattern (as in a traditional society);

Thirdly, it is aimed at creating a new approach to the world on the basis of which a just society governed by law can be created in conditions of political uncertainty;

Fourthly, given the measure of ancient cosmos – the space that is quite foreseeable and comparable to Earth – we must admit that the idea of the relationship between the movement of celestial bodies and earthly life is much more natural than in our time when the Earth is only a small planet rotating around a

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[4] "It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophize; wondering in the first place at obvious perplexities, and then by gradual progression raising questions about the greater matters too, e.g. about the changes of the moon and of the sun, about the stars and about the origin of the universe. Now he who wonders and is perplexed feels that he is ignorant (thus the myth-lover is in a sense a philosopher, since myths are composed of wonders)..." (Aristot. *Met.* 1.982b).

completely mediocre star in the tail of one of the billions of galaxies containing billions of stars each. (The Greeks believed that the diameter of the flat Earth is about 5,000 kilometers, which means that the celestial bodies had to be closer to the surface of the Earth than 2.5 thousand kilometers, because the height of the celestial dome could not be more than half the Earth's diameter. I. e., the Moon, the Sun, planets and stars were even closer to the Earth [Couprie 2011, 11]);

Fifthly, in addition, the inherited from the mythology image of living cosmos, organized by the supernatural, yet by personified forces, greatly simplified the transfer of the laws established by the gods to social relations within city-state. Thus, sages and philosophers were primarily interested not in the role of the elements in the organization of space, but the principles of this organization. In this case, the numbers of Pythagoras, first and foremost in their mythological images, like the Egyptian figures Nine and Eight, are easily thought on a par with water or fire;

Sixthly, we must bear in mind the procedural nature of the ancient picture of the universe. This is indicated not only by cosmogonic pictures (in which people are living in a certain period of the space process – in one of the 'metallic' centuries), but also the etymology of the word *physis* "nature" (from the verb *phyo* – "to give birth, to arise...", which provides two meanings – "arising" and "defining". In this case the relationship of nature and power - *physis* and *dynamis* acquires a great importance) points to the process, to the running formation, not to the completed structure, but to the specific process, which defines the appearance of a certain entity (see Akhutin 1988, 111–115). We use this meaning when we talk, for example, about the "nature" of a person. Cornford in his analysis of the concept of *physis* concludes that the first philosophers, using the word, did not mean a separate element, but "an element endowed with supernatural life and powers, *a substance which is also Soul and God. It is very living stuff out of which daemons, Gods, and souls had slowly gathered shape. It is the same continuum of homogeneous matter, charged with vital force, which had been the vehicle of magical sympathy, that now is put forward explicitly, with the confident tone of an obvious statement, as the substance of all things and the source of their growth"* (Cornford 1912, 123). Accordingly, any reasoning about the structure of the universe implied temporal dimension. And only much later, with the already developed understanding of the logos as opposed to myth, in the framework of the Socratic schools synchronic and diachronic planes of existence starts to differ (Hoffman 2003, 46–47).

Keeping in mind these observations, let us turn to Thales's teaching, from whom not a single fragment has reached us, but just reports. The main statements of his cosmogony (according to Aristotle) are: water is the beginning of all, everything is animated, everything is full of daemons. Obviously, all these state-

ments can be considered as lying within the limits of mythology. It is plausible to consider that the main points of similarity with the Phoenician mythology are: the primeval water abyss and, probably, an image of the vortex twisting the primeval waters and causing the process of separation of elements (*stoikheia*). Yet there is also a significant difference, which is expressed by the fact that Thales' approach does not imply a repetition of the old genealogy or the creation of a new one, but is namely a description, a retelling the mythological images from the position of the external observer, i.e. he is soaring beyond, which means a reflection. Thales has changed the point of view by rising beyond the specific images and watching the known cosmogonies from different space. This change of position ultimately proved to be a breakthrough to a quite new vision of the world. What allowed him to take this step? It seems that the answer lies in the difference which we can notice between sages and philosophers. The sages are concerned, first of all, with ethical relations. They turn to a particular person and recommend him/her rules of conduct, thus they remain within the limits of particular community. Thales is moving to the community from different space, from cosmos, from elements to man. Morality is considered from the side of law, and this makes it possible to reach the reflective level of consideration. The legal aspect is clearly represented by Anaximander when he says that things "…pay penalty and retribution to each other for their injustice in accordance with the ordering of time " (fr. 1 DK; tr. Curd 1996, 17). "Injustice" (in the Greek *adikias*) means "not right", "not fair", since the crime was committed: the border is been crossed and the capture of other subject's thing.

A much more detailed concept of the new understanding of the world can be found in Anaximander. First, he uses the term *apeiron* – the boundless – the term, by which Darkness is characterized in Orphic mythology. Anaximander has substantiated the corresponding adjective, creating a new term, and this term is impersonal, unlike Night, Darkness or Eros. The word *apeiron* designates the decisive step towards the formation of the reflective intellectual space. It is an artificial word, invented in order to denote something generic yet at the same time deprived of the possibility to be personified. Apeiron "… is eternal and in constant motion. This is the *arche* of all things. Anaximander evidently avoided specific terms such as wind, darkness, Chaos, but there remains a formal similarity to the initial state in Sanchuniathon, where these things were *apeira* and for long ages had no *peras*" (West 1994, 306). Secondly, Anaximander speaks of time as of divine agent, which eliminates the imbalances created by individual participants in the world process (see below). Thirdly, he observes the parting from eternity by the forces of heat and cold as the beginning of the formation of our world. M. West believes that this is the way Anaximander expresses the mythological image

of the egg by generic concepts. The egg split in a way that light and hot parts went upwards, while heavy and cold parts occurred to be in the center. Fourthly, Anaximander believed that the Earth was originally completely covered by water, which was gradually evaporating, and only the seas left which we can see. Fifthly, he believed that the sun's heat created winds, clouds and rain. Sixthly, all living things arose from water (West 1994, 305–307).

Thus, Anaximander demythologizes the Phoenician myth. Of course, there is no complete coincidence with the mythological version, but some important features have been preserved. First and foremost, the idea of the *infinite*, *boundless* from which the four elements appear due to the action of the opposing forces, and from them all visible objects came into reality. The idea of three levels of reality is represented: the boundless – elements (*stoiheia*) – specific things.[5] This is a serious generalization of previous mythological ideas. And later for a long time the certain details of the mythological images can be found in the so-called "natural histories" – the narratives about the origin of the world (or the infinite number of worlds, as with atomists) and life. At the same time, apeiron is still very closely connected with mythological tradition. The analysis of this concept, based on the surviving evidence gives us two very different meanings:

1) it is the one from which all things came, and into which they all ultimately return, and

2) it embraces all things and rules over them.

The first meaning is quite reminiscent of the mythological images of the progenitors that produce all things, but afterwards are not affecting them. In this apeiron differs from the original mythological cosmogonies, because all things will eventually return into it. At the same time apeiron assumes the function of managing the universe, which is performed by those later gods who seized power in the newly created world. On the basis of these mapping functions H.B. Gottshalk (1965, 50) makes a very interesting conclusion that Anaximander not just simply translating the old myths into general concepts, but in fact gives a philosophical generalization of several mythological concepts. Thus, the Anaximander displays a mythological representation in a new intellectual space.

This is how the generic and nominal concepts such as *arche*, *being*, *cosmos*, *apeiron*, *boundless*, *logos*, etc. appear. They are still very unstable, ambiguous, and multivalued, yet being specially invented for the expression of new ideas they bear the enormous energy lifting thought above itself. It is suffice to recollect Parmenides, who as a sorcerer speaks of his great discovery – that there is Being as such (tr. Curd 1996, 59):

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[5] With reference to Otto Gilbert, the same three-dimensional Anaximander's scheme is represented by Cornford (1912, 9).

...Just one story of a route
is still left: that it is. On this [route] there are signs
very many, that what-is is ungenerated and imperishable,
a whole of a single kind, unshaken, and complete.
Nor was it ever, nor will it be, since it is now, all together
one, holding together: For what birth will you seek out for it?
How and from what did it grow? From what-is-not I will allow
you neither to say nor to think: For it is not to be said or thought
that it is not.

It is opened and expressed by an invented artificial word (by the substantiated verb) the concept of the most general order – "being" (*ontos*). Everything else which exists – both physical and spiritual – constitutes its parts. In the process of development of the conceptual apparatus the "being" starts to interact with the "boundless". Parmenides, speaking of being says that

"...Mighty Necessity (*Ananke*) holds it in bonds of a limit which holds it in on all sides. For this reason it is right for what-is to be not incomplete; for it is not lacking; otherwise, what-is would be in want of everything." (tr. Curd 1996, 60).

Perhaps, the difference in interpretations of being in Parmenides and Melissus is due to the difference between infinite and unlimited. In any case, ancient thinkers begin to explore the nature of being in artificial terms – "boundless", "infinite", "nothing", etc., finding themselves, through the use of such words-concepts being beyond mythology. And it is no coincidence that Parmenides presents the first part of his poem as a key to the views of the mortals, and he directly expresses this saying:

"I declare to you all the ordering as it appears, so that no mortal judgment (*doksas*) may ever overtake you." (tr. Curd 1996, 61).

In the same way we can interpret the exultation of Heraclitus, who has found that there is thought over the thought, and is trying to convey this discovery with the word "*logos*":

"Although this account (*logos*) holds forever, men ever fail to comprehend, both before hearing it and once they have heard. Although all things come to pass in accordance with this account, men are like the untried when they try such words and works as I set forth, distinguishing each according to its nature and telling how it is. But other men are oblivious of what they do awake, just as they are forgetful of what they do asleep." (Kahn 2001, 29).

The Greek word *logos* is here translated as "Account" (translation by S.N. Muravyov - "Verb" [2012, 156] translation by Kathleen Freeman – "Law", translation by R. Waterfield – "Principle" [2000, 37], translation by A. Lebedev – "Word"

[1989, 189]).[6] It is logical to assume that Heraclitus proceeded from the belief that words are inherently associated with things. These words are the names shared by all, labeling things according to their nature – *physis*. In the corresponding dialogue of Plato, Cratylus, a disciple of Heraclitus, defends this position. At the beginning of the dialogue *Cratylus* his opponent Hermogenes says to Socrates:

> "Cratylus, whom you see here, Socrates, says that everything has a right name of its own, which comes by nature, and that a name is not whatever people call a thing by agreement, just a piece of their own voice applied to the thing, but that there is a kind of inherent correctness in names, which is the same for all men, both Greeks and barbarians." (Plat. *Crat.* 383a–b).

This statement is surprising because it equates all languages, which is an absolute exception for that time, since the common place was the belief that the real language is only the native language of the speaker.

Heraclitus says that people are living like in a dream. This is the reminiscent of Prometheus saying about early humans in the tragedy of Aeschylus the *Prometheus bound*:

> "... First of all, though they had eyes to see, they saw to no avail; they had ears, but they did not understand; but, just as shapes in dreams, throughout their length of days, without purpose they wrought all things in confusion..." (Aesch. *PB* 436).

Heraclitus, apparently, meant that people have not risen to the level of reflection, because this is only possible with the help of general concepts, of which the most general is the *Logos* (word, law, mind). Logos is equal to speech and reason. Heraclitus discovered that logos is revealed in the divine law, from which everything is originated:

> "Speaking with understanding they must hold fast to what is shared by all, as a city holds to its law, and even more firmly. For all human laws are nourished by a divine one. It prevails as it will and suffices for all and is more than enough." (Kahn 2001, 43).

Wisdom provides the unity of the universe, because "it is wise, listening not to me but to the report, to agree that all things are one." (Kahn 2001, 45).

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[6] Kahn (2001, 98) emphasizes that the complexity of the interpretation of this passage is that Heraclitus emphasizes the objectivity of his understanding of the essence of the matter. For Heraclitus, his opinion is, at the same time, a reflection of the objective state of affairs: "Thus the logos here cannot be just 'what Heraclitus says', not merely the words he utters or even the meaning of what he has to say, if meaning is understood subjectively as what the speaker has in mind or his intentions in speaking. The logos can be his 'meaning' only in the objective sense: the structure which his words intend or point at, which is the structure of the world itself (and not the intensional structure of his thought about the world)."

It is the original root meaning of the word *logos* which allows to know "all as one". This word seemingly came from the word *legein*, meaning "to collect". The word *logos* for one time appears in Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey" and refers, by assumption of D. Hoffmann, "speech" in the meaning of the "collection of words". In Hesiod the word *logos* occurs with a frequency of 3.09 per 10,000 words, in Herodotus – 24.6, in Aeschylus – 28.92 and in Isocrates – of 45.79 (Hoffman 2003, 30). The idea of collecting, gathering remains one of the overtones of the meaning of the word *logos* and associates it with the *ontos* of Parmenides. M. Heidegger in his analysis of the history of being indicates that "…the existence of things is gathering (*legesthai, logos*) into the extremes of its own destiny" (1991; I use a Russian translation by T. Vasilieva). Following Heidegger, Hoffman argues that according to Parmenides and Heraclitus "… In logos human being gathers itself out of the world. In logos human being gathers itself into conflict with the world. In this conflict the human comes to know itself as a being in a world of beings." (2003, 42). Being, on the one hand, forms a connection with the boundless-*apeiron*, and on the other – with *logos*.

Heraclitus ascends at this level of generalization by reflecting on epic poetry, which represents the mythological level of consciousness. "It has been claimed quite plausibly … that the early Ionic use of prose was itself a polemical device used to distance an innovative and anti-epical manner of thinking from earlier ideas and genres (Poster 2006, 3). This specific intellectual space arises together with a certain genre – the development of prose. Charles Kahn writes about good prose of Heraclitus: "As we can see from other early samples, Greek prose was at first employed primarily for the publication of Ionian *historiē* for presenting the results of systematic 'inquiry' or 'research' on a variety of subjects from astronomy to biology, including historical research in connection with the description of lands and peoples (as in the travel book of Hecataeus, a Milesian contemporary of Heraclitus)." (Kahn 2001, 96). Such works started with the reference to *logos* in the meaning of "stories of others", or the statement of his *logos* –"presentation of the outcome of his own research." If we turn to the image of Dike it can be noted that "Dikē for Heraclitus stands with *logos, theos*, and other words as an embodiment of his view of the unified opposition of all things, a concept which was perhaps suggested by Anaximander and can be easily derived from the traditional use of *dikē* to refer both to the two opposed 'pleas' of the litigants and to the unity implied in "settlement, court, trial, and legal process." (Gagarin 1974, 195).

It should be noted that the transition to the level of reflection does not mean a categorical break with the previous tradition. Heraclitus himself is still in full use of rhetorical devices, formulating his position in both terms – literal as well as allegorical. It looks like that he is probably starting the so-called "linguistic turn"

of the ancient thought, because he believes that criticism of the epic tradition might allow to clarify the meanings of individual words and expressed concepts. However he does not come to a purely logical view of the world, because he is still combining in one word both allegorical and literal meanings. C. Poster (2006, 16) demonstrates that this game is fundamental for Heraclitus. Heraclitus is still at the level of the poetic, organically expressing imagery thinking, presented in aphorisms. He does not go to the level of pure concepts, and this is also confirmed by L. Ayer (undated): "The wisdom of the aphorisms inheres in this materiality, one that disappears as soon as the message is sought above what will henceforward appear only as a medium. Wisdom – a different *sophon* than the one we associate with philosophy – reveals itself as what, precisely, cannot be translated out of Heraclitus's language. If Heraclitus appears obscure this is because the wisdom his writing bears cannot grant itself to the measure of illumination." In other words, in order to make a step from the first philosophers to Plato and Aristotle it was necessary to pass through poetry, that is, through a state when "things spoke in a more primordial, concretized language", to a language which "transformed itself in order to speak in turn." Language loses its attachment to the physical world, and thus builds a certain hierarchy: there is universal wisdom embodied in the law and in the logos; they, in turn, are embodied in things, and the things exist only when they are participating in the universality. Different levels of physical reality correspond to different levels of semantic reality, but only because the physical reality is now seen through the linguistic reality.

It can be assumed Empedocles present his views at the same level of reflection, although he belongs to the next generation of philosophers. Empedocles, like Heraclitus, speaks of the limitations of knowledge, that the human abilities do not allow them to understand more than just a little bit of the Whole, and that knowledge requires a position of reflection – detachment from everything: "People see a tiny part of life during their time… but everyone boasts that he discovered the whole. These things are not in this way to be seen or heard by men or grasped with the mind. But you, since you have turned aside to this place, will learn; mortal cunning has reached no further." (Curd 1996, 80). Also, Empedocles, like Heraclitus, proudly welcomes the discovery of the law of necessity under which the alternate the merger and separation of the elements is never-ending: "For it had not entirely completed its blameless retreat from them to the furthest limits of the circle, but some of its limbs remained, while others had departed. But however far it kept running out ahead, there followed in pursuit the gentle immortal onset of blameless Love. And immediately things grew to be mortal that formerly had learned to be immortal, and things previously unmixed (grew to be) mixed, interchanging their paths." (Curd 1996, 95). Stating this Empedocles

considers the four elements, and the active principles – Love and Hate – to be the gods, and in some cases he uses the names of the gods rather than element names as such. Sometimes he enumerates them in the same context: "Hear first the four roots of all things: shining Zeus and life-bringing Hera and Aidoneus and Nestis, who with her tears gives moisture to the source of mortals" (Curd 1996, 81). Pseudo-Plutarch also mentions this mixture of elements and gods in Empedocles (tr. W. Goodwin):

> "Empedocles the Agrigentine, the son of Meton, affirms that there are four elements, fire, air, earth, and water, and two powers which bear the greatest command in nature, concord and discord, of which one is the union, the other the division of beings. Thus he sings,
> Mark the four roots of all created things:—
> Bright shining Jove, Juno that giveth life,
> Pluto beneath the earth, and Nestis who
> Doth with her tears supply the mortal fount.
> By Jupiter he means fire and aether, by Juno that gives life he means the air, by Pluto the earth, by Nestis and the fountain of all mortals (as it were) seed and water."

These texts demonstrate that ideas about gods begin to be reduced to the elements and functions, which in its turn means the growing gap between mythology and rational approach. This paves the way for an allegorical method of analyzing the text, which is born to justify Homer and Hesiod, who were criticized by the Archilochus, Xenophanes and others for the wrong images of the gods. The view of the gods as the personification of the elements translates personal relationships into impersonal. The salacious for gods dispute between brothers Zeus and Poseidon turns into natural the opposition between fire and water.

It is also noteworthy that the elder contemporary of Heraclitus, Theagenes of Rhegium, is described by Porphyry exactly in the same mode. If Thales and other Milesians translate personalized images into physical ones (not using the names of the gods, but the names of the elements: "air" instead of "Zeus", "water" instead of "Ocean"), Theagenes, on the contrary, replaces names of the elements names by the names of gods: "Their [the elements'] "battles" he [Homer] sets forth, calling the fire "Apollo", "Helios" and "Hephaestus", the water – "Poseidon" and "Scamandros", the moon – "Artemis", the air – "Hero", etc. Similarly, he sometimes gives the names of the gods to the states of spirit: the reason (*phronesis*) he names "Athens", the folly – "Ares", the lust – "Aphrodite", the speech – "Hermes" and assigns these names to them" (Lebedev 1989, 90). Given that the source of this information, Porphyry, is separated from Theagenes by more than seven centuries, it is possible to assume that at that stage of reflection that is characteristic of Heraclitus and his contemporaries, the interchange of the names of elements and the

names of gods were quite frequent. Yet this stage of is quite particular in the history of the intellectual development. Porphyry attributed to Theagenes the discovery of the allegorical method of interpretation, which most likely was developed in Alexandria no earlier than in the third century BC. "Hence, one might hypothesize that the logos introduced by the first philosophers received invaluable assistance from thinkers such as Theagenes: Homer was adjusted to the recent cosmological theories and, thereby, the philosophical account of the universe was supported by the authority of the poet. Naturally, Theagenes' rationalism must not be overrated. The thinker himself did not present a rational account of the world that could be compared to the work of Thales and his successors" (Domaradzki 2001, 220).

Empedocles is also similar to Heraclitus in the way of expression of ideas: he does not try to present his discoveries in simple manner to the common people, but, on the contrary, he complicates his text, emphasizing his superiority over mortal people. The specificity of poetics of Empedocles is noted by Cornford who in this respect is citing a study by Professor Margoliouth (Cornford 1912, 225). Aristotle in the "Nicomachean Ethics" says that it is possible to express judgments determined by knowledge, but it is not mean to possess knowledge:

> "The reference is to persons of weak will uttering sound moral maxims almost at the very moment of yielding to temptation. Persons in the states mentioned repeat propositions of geometry and verses of Empedocles; students who have just begun a subject reel off its formulae, though they do not yet know their meaning, for knowledge has to become part of the tissue of the mind, and this takes time." (Aristot. *Nic. Eth.* 1147a).

The perception of such esoteric compositions occurs by memorizing them without understanding, yet "...when the whole text had thus got into the mind, one part of it would throw light upon another, and so the hidden meaning would gradually come out. If Empedocles' writings were of this character, we should beware of charging him with inconsistency, and rather look out for cross-references, characteristic of this method of writing" (Cornford 1912, 225). In other words, the text should be fully remembered and sensed, and only then will it gradually begin to pronounce itself in the soul.

Thus, Anaximander, Parmenides, Heraclitus, Empedocles and other thinkers are ascending beyond mythological thought to the level of reflection upon it, representing the myth by external description. On this way they change their position in relation to the myth and from the participants move to the position of observers. This allows them to come up with generalizations. At the same time they understand that the usual ways of expression are not able to express a new understanding, and they begin to use artificial words (or change the meanings of the already known words). New concepts begin to form a new intellectual space,

where these concepts are interacting with each other. However, the gap with the previous intellectual tradition has not yet occurred.

The next stage of reflection is intimately connected with the attention to the utterance itself to the language as such, without the obligatory exit to the physical reality (which included the mythological reality, woven into the natural world).

A contemporary of Empedocles Zeno of Elea lays sophistic tradition, which, in turn, becomes a reflection upon the entire preceding philosophical tradition. It should be noted that access to the new levels of reflection does not exclude a restructuring of the relation to the previous levels. They are also included in the new mental space – the poet-theologians and Milesians, Heraclitus and Empedocles...

The sophists found that it was possible to approve or deny any statement, and this art is very useful at judicial debates. This was understood already by politicians and poets. "For, although it is still primarily a legal term for the regulation of economic behavior, both Solon and Theognis recognize and emphasize the political importance of *dikē*. The well-being of the *polis* depends upon its citizens' being *dikaioi*, and the question, how can one be *dikaios*, became a central concern of the fifth-century sophists." (Gagarin 1974, 197). Here we also deal with the establishing of laws, which was fundamentally important for the first sages and for those whom we call the first philosophers.

Discovering relativism with the same exultation, with which dogmatic philosophers have discovered their generalizations about the main features of the universe, the sophists have focused their attention on the way of expressing thoughts, on the language itself, and have begun to develop rhetoric. If previously the attention of thinkers was directed to the subject as such, and the way of the expression – be it an epic verse, or prose speech, or aphorisms – was secondary and chosen according to the task to convey the truth, the sophists began to engage into linguistic issues. They were the first ones to discover grammatical categories. Thus, Protagoras

> "...was the first to exact a fee of a hundred minae and the first to distinguish the tenses of verbs, to emphasize the importance of seizing the right moment, to institute contests in debating, and to teach rival pleaders the tricks of their trade. Furthermore, in his dialectic he neglected the meaning in favour of verbal quibbling, and he was the father of the whole tribe of eristical disputants now so much in evidence." He also "...was the first to mark off the parts of discourse into four, namely, wish, question, answer, command; (others divide into seven parts, narration, question, answer, command, rehearsal, wish, summoning) these he called the basic forms of speech." (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 9.8).

If Heraclitus started the "linguistic turn" those were Protagoras and his followers who arranged this turn. According to this text, the eristic as an argument for an argument's sake becomes popular. Plato's Socrates says in "Phaedrus":

> "And shall we leave Gorgias and Tisias undisturbed, who saw that probabilities are more to be esteemed than truths, who make small things seem great and great things small by the power of their words, and new things old and old things the reverse, and who invented conciseness of speech and measureless length on all subjects? And once when Prodicus heard these inventions, he laughed, and said that he alone had discovered the art of proper speech, that discourses should be neither long nor short, but of reasonable length." (Plat. *Phaedrus* 267a-b).

Prodicus himself is known for denying synonymy, believing that each word has its own special meaning, and arguing that people have deified what had been useful for them. Relativism logically entails skepticism and criticism of the traditional picture of the world. Here the sophists, in contrast to the earlier philosophers, are in direct conflict with tradition.

Due to the fact that the sophists are looking for 'correct speech', Cratylus in the eponymous Plato's dialogue called God "a perfect sophist" (Plat. *Cratylus*, 403e). After all, God created the most correct names, unquestionably expressing the essence of the named. Plato, criticizing the sophists for ignoring the truth, at the same time is aware of their importance for finding the right way of expression. Namely with this the well-known confusion in words occurs, when "sophistry" (*sophisteia*) and "philosophy" (*philosophia*) are mixed: "... Sophist was a name that had a very general meaning, and the word "philosophy" was used in the meaning of some love for the beautiful and mental occupations, and (meant) not the current method (not what is now called philosophy), but (the word "philosophy" was designating) education in general" (Makovelskiy 1940, 4). Sophists and orators (often in one person) improved the language to such an extent that the subsequent tradition in the schools of Plato and Aristotle was quite able to reach the level of dialectics and logic, when it became possible to move freely from one level of generalization to another in any direction.

Reaching the level of purely conceptual and purely logical work with words - this is the task that has been perfectly performed in the ancient world by the sophists, who has reaching the next level of reflection. If Milesians and Eleatics were able to conceptually come beyond the poetic language of the epic, Heraclitus and Empedocles were criticizing the prose of Milesians, the sophists were able to afford a reflection upon the entire preceding tradition in the form of the dialogue with it.

The discovery and intentional use of the hierarchy of the concepts in order to construct appropriate structures means that there is a conscious gap between these

conceptual structures and immediate experience. New and new levels of abstraction are built over this experience, and they in principle do not have a sense of reality. This is a key point: in nature there are only single things that surround us; abstractions cannot be sensed of principle. There are things that we can point to, but there is no "nature" as such either in the meaning of "the world as a whole" or in the meaning of the "essence" (as in the expression "the nature of a man").

However, freeing concepts from binding them to contexts in which they have an unambiguous reference, sophists do not form conceptual systems, which, in fact, is not part of their task. They are leaving the construction of abstract systems to Socratic schools and, above all, of course, to Plato and Aristotle.

Socrates is taking a decisive step here, beginning to discuss abstractions on their own and demonstrating their pre-existence towards perceptive experience. He does not build systems, but, unlike the sophists, returns to the abstract terms their rootedness in reality, albeit subjective yet identical for all subjects, but not relativistic.

Plato, despite the austere criticism of the sophists (or, rather, due to it), has borrowed much from them. This refers, in particular, to the problem of establishing the right law widely discussed by the sophists. M. Gagarin notes that, based on the works of the sophists,

"Plato gave the newer noun *dikaiosyne* a central importance in his moral system, without, however, forgetting the original political value of *dikē*; for, when in the *Republic* he maintains that *dikaiosyne* in the soul can only be realized if there is *dikaiosyne* in the *polis*, Plato continues the archaic emphasis on *dikē* as a system of economic and political law and order." (1974, 197).

Plato clearly realized that single thing is unknowable, but being a representative of the species it is resolved into plurality and loses its essence as an individual. Only in this contemplation of a single idea, which is unique and special, the idea of a single thing makes sense. T. Vasilyeva expresses this idea quite clearly:

"The thing ... in its single indivisible integrity and in its unique distinctiveness, is unrecognizable, it can have only a name, but not a logos. Even the name it might have only of its own, the one and inimitable. When we provide thing with a nominal name, we have already attached the one to the plurality... It turns out, that a single thing is in itself somehow multiple, since it can act as a unit in so many different sets, and its multiplicity is unlimited... Plato takes an individual thing into account only insofar as it perfectly belongs to its species, roughly speaking, identical to it." (2008, 142–143).

And so, the accurate work with the concepts is, in fact, the work of the philosopher. A Stranger in the "Sophist" says the following:

"Now since we have agreed that the classes or genera also commingle with one another, or do not commingle, in the same way, must not he possess some science and

proceed by the processes of reason who is to show correctly which of the classes harmonize with which, and which reject one another, and also if he is to show whether there are some elements extending through all and holding them together so that they can mingle, and again, when they separate, whether there are other universal causes of separation? ... what name shall we give to this science? Or, by Zeus, have we unwittingly stumbled upon the science that belongs to free men and perhaps found the philosopher while we were looking for the sophist?" (Plat. *Soph*. 253b-c).

A similar study of the concepts and their divisions and tribal relations Plato calls "dialectics". Thus, the separation with the empirical reality is complete, and only the hierarchically organized realm of ideas turns out to be the supreme reality. This separation is so deafening that it must be somehow smoothed, for which Plato refers to a poetic way of expressing thought, while Aristotle works with concepts without worrying about their dry abstractness (though as we saw earlier he accepts the high value of poetic imagination in relation to the representation of mythological reality).

As it is suggested by T. Vasilyeva, Plato turns to poetry in order to promote their ideas, because close disciples of Plato, which accustomed to use the most abstract categories, has not needed the imagery and mythological ways of their representation, it has been significant for the link with tradition. She writes:

"...The transition from specific ideas to the more and more distracted concepts is a natural way of thinking, and here the philosopher is deciding the task assigned to him by society and by life itself, and in this case the conversion of abstract categories (which are turning many into few are facilitating the work of the mind, but, at the same time, are making it more difficult, for in excessively universal genera the small yet sometimes essential species are lost) into some poetic samples which are able to maintain more alive and natural relationship between the specific and the abstract, in the work of philosopher is the higher level than the creation of a professional school." (Vasilyeva 2008, 145).

The quarrel between philosophy and poetry, about which Plato is talking about in the famous passage from the "Republic" [Plat. Rep. 10.607b] can be easily explained in view of the distinction which Plato makes between a sophist and a philosopher: either a game that gives pleasure or understanding.

In any case, Plato speaks about ancient teachings directly using the abstract terminology:

"...the ancients, who were better than we and lived nearer the gods, handed down the tradition that all the things which are ever said to exist are sprung from one and many and have inherent in them the finite and the infinite." (Plat. *Phileb*. 16c).

Here the ancient's views are presented with the most abstract concepts of one, many, finite, and infinite, which the former definitely were not able to use.

Aristotle is easily and freely operating with different levels of reality, constructing them in order. Considering three speculative doctrines – the doctrine of nature (physics), the doctrine of mathematics, and the doctrine of the divine, he is dividing them in the following way:

> "It is obvious, then, from these considerations, that physics is a form of speculative science. And mathematics is also speculative; but it is not clear at present whether its objects are immutable and separable from matter; it is clear, however, that some branches of mathematics study their objects qua immutable and qua separable from matter. Obviously it is the province of a speculative science to discover whether a thing is eternal and immutable and separable from matter; not, however, of physics (since physics deals with mutable objects) nor of mathematics, but of a science prior to both. ... The speculative sciences, then, are to be preferred to the other sciences, and "theology" to the other speculative sciences." (Aristot. *Met*. 6.1026a).

But this division is obviously going on and on. Thus, speaking of mathematics, Aristotle observes:

> "One might indeed raise the question whether the primary philosophy is universal or deals with some one genus or entity; because even the mathematical sciences differ in this respect—geometry and astronomy deal with a particular kind of entity, whereas universal mathematics applies to all kinds alike." (Aristot. *Met*. 6.1026a).

Then Aristotle talks about the first philosophy, which is designed to explore the essence of the Being itself. If we compare this understanding with the Parmenides' approach to the Being, it is easy to see the fundamental difference: Aristotle already clearly distinguishes the object of research from the description of this object. Moreover, he distinguishes between the description of the object depending on the position of the subject – what aspect of things is under scrutiny at the moment. Furthermore, he notes that it is necessary to analyze only the aspect, that is of interest to us, apart from anything else, which is not essential at the moment, otherwise we descend into sophistry.

On the basis of his approach, Aristotle constructs the well-defined research methodology which is appropriate for any science. Accordingly, for instance, he starts his "Physics" not with the concept of movements, but with the description of the correct methodological approach. The first chapter starts with the definition of true knowledge (*to epistasthai* – from *he episteme* – science):

> "When the objects of an inquiry, in any department, have principles, conditions, or elements, it is through acquaintance with these that knowledge, that is to say scientific knowledge, is attained. For we do not think that we know a thing until we are acquainted with its primary conditions or first principles, and have carried our analysis as far as its simplest elements. Plainly therefore in the science of Nature, as in other

branches of study, our first task will be to try to determine what relates to its principles." (Aristot. *Phys*. 1.184a).

Aristotle states further that we need to move from generic to specific. Of course, speaking of physics, we assume that it is inductive science (however, given the specialization of theoreticians and empiricists, it is quite problematic to determine physics as purely inductive science), but if we apply the Aristotle's approach not to the acquisition of knowledge, but to its conceptualization, design and presentation, it is absolutely understandable and relevant.

To sum up: due to the introduction of general concepts into the lexical structure, the language step by step allows to construct a genus-species relationship between any things and gradually breaks away from the sensory specifics of earlier languages.

To some extent it looks the same as with Newton's famous prism experiment. There, white light decomposes into individual colors of the rainbow, and, in the case of language, we find in refined philosophical discourse several levels of reflection, indistinguishable in mighty mythological images.

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