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# ***Λόγος* as relation: considerations between Heidegger and Aristotle**

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*A Betty,  
perché il tempo non scalfisce il ricordo del tuo sorriso  
e le parole non bastano per colmare la mancanza.*

*A Chicago,  
alla sua luce e ai suoi colori.*

*A Matte,  
coraggioso custode del mio coraggio.*

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## Introduction

“οὐκ ἐμοῦ, ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου  
ἀκούσαντας ὁμολογεῖν σοφόν  
ἔστιν ἐν πάντα εἶναι”

Heraclitus

“Nature and art are too sublime to aim at purposes, nor need them; for  
relationships are everywhere present, and relationships are life.”

J. W. Goethe

One of the most important concepts in ancient Greek philosophy is ‘λόγος’, usually translated as “reason.” However, its etymology, which derives from the verb λέγειν, refers to a semantic area concerning relation. But what type of relation is involved in such term? Is it possible to interpret λόγος ontologically? And what would the implications of such an interpretation be for metaphysics?

The reflection on λόγος is wide, various and characterized by multiple approaches, but rarely focused on this crucial relational aspect, both from an ontological and metaphysical point of view.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, what is absent is a discussion regarding new possible perspectives by stressing what entails from an account that considers the main role of relation in interpreting λόγος. What changes in considering logic from this point of view? What about man as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, if we recognize the roots of λόγος deep in a relational dynamic? These questions, as well as philosophy’s increasing interest in both relation and λόγος, reveal the reason I have decided to dedicate my study to this topic.

After an introductory section dedicated to the etymological consideration of all the semantic connotations involved in this term, I will address my attention to the ontological argument, wherein Martin Heidegger’s work will be pivotal. In particular, those writings concerning

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<sup>1</sup> It will be explained further in which sense these terms are interpreted in this context.

the concept at issue in which, in my opinion, it is possible to trace passages in order to strengthen the idea behind this proposal. Heidegger dedicated many efforts to the comprehension of this ancient word, as is evident from the multiple instances in which it is discussed within his publications. Among these, I will identify two different approaches in his ontological account: one found in the courses on Aristotle and in *Being and Time*, and the other found in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* and, for example, his lectures on the Heraclitus fragments. Indeed, at this later stage of his philosophical engagement, Heidegger seems to address his interest towards the fundamental ontological question from another perspective, in which his concern on *λόγος* finds an important development not only for its relation to language or, at least, not only in comparison to human language.

I will begin by showing that Heidegger's concerns about *λόγος* and logic are evident from his earliest writings, where, moving within a phenomenological framework, he confronts on this topic with some philosophical positions contemporary to him. Then, I will present Heidegger's early interest in hermeneutics as well as its connection with facticity, where his reading of Aristotle represents an important moment. In this sense, the two concepts of relation and *λόγος* are shown to be part of a phenomenological understanding of *Dasein*, in opposition to a presupposed transcendental 'I'. Later, we will see Heidegger's definition of *λόγος* in *Being and Time*, where he underlines the apophantic role of language. Relation and *λόγος* are here interpreted with particular reference to the world of *Dasein*. In the same period, a critique of logic takes place in 1929 lecture, *What is Metaphysics?:* on this occasion, Heidegger critically engages with an interpretation of logic attentive only to beings without considering Nothing [*das Nichts*], i.e., that which allows things to be. The last chapters of this first part are dedicated to Heidegger's understanding of the ontological connotation of *λόγος*, particularly as influenced by the pre-Socratics. Beginning with a confrontation with Sheehan's reading of *Kehre*, I will point out the

relational aspect of Being represented by *λόγος*, which, in this moment, is thought by Heidegger as the very language of Being itself. Therefore, the emphasis is no longer on *Dasein's* language, or, in other words, on *Dasein's* ability to indicate something as something in its world. Rather, it is now Being that presents itself as *λόγος*, i.e., as relation. Throughout this analysis, the Aristotelian definition of man as *ζῷον λόγον ἔχον*, frequently repeated by Heidegger, will represent a significant guideline in order to highlight the change occurred in his thought.

For the Heideggerian materials, the philosophers and translators I am considering are John Macquarrie, Edward Robinson, Joan Stambaugh, Richard Rojcewicz, Daniela Vallega-Neu, Walter Brogan and Will Mc Neill.

For what concerns the metaphysical section, I will be in dialogue with Aristotle, the philosopher who firstly proposed a systematic investigation into the expression of *λόγος* itself. In the works collected under the title *Organon*, Aristotle outlines the ways in which the elements gathered from experience might be reported into a *λόγος*, here considered as speech, i.e., a form of expressive articulation. In the *Categories*, Aristotle defines the simple elements of a sentence. Among these predicates, the one to which I will dedicate more attention is *πρός τι*, namely relatives, so as to seize the differences between them and that kind of the relation that *λόγος* is. Moreover, *On Interpretation* will be the second “logical” treatise to be considered, since it represents Aristotle’s discussion on the possibility of gathering the predicates in a more complex way, that is to say, in sentences. In addition, it is useful to recall that the Greek title of this essay is *Περί ἑρμηνείας*, the text on *ἑρμηνεία*, a term we have already encountered in Heidegger’s thought. Other passages from *On the Soul*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, and *Posterior Analytics* will be presented to support the main argument. In this reasoning, some considerations on *λόγος*, *αἴσθησις*, and *νοῦς* will facilitate to deepen the topic even more.

I will begin the second section by posing the question of the definition of ‘metaphysics’, proposing my reading of this term as well as the relation



I see between metaphysics and ontology. Before considering Aristotle's writings on logic, I will present the role of *λόγος* in relation to *αἴσθησις* and *νοῦς* in the context of the description of soul formulated by Aristotle, with some references to ethics as well. As will be evident, these aspects — psychology, ethics, logic — are strictly correlated one to the other and, once again, the definition of man as *ζῷον λόγον ἔχον* becomes an interesting point of conjuncture to see their interactions. Afterwards, following a description concerning the metaphysical connotation of relation, I will introduce the *Categories*, the first text of the Aristotelian *Organon*. This is the first place in the *Corpus Aristotelicum* where the word 'λόγος' appears, but, even more important for my project, here Aristotle proposes considering 'relatives' as one of the categories he illustrates. However, relatives differ from the kind of relation that *λόγος* describes, and we will see in which sense. The category of relatives is also important to better understand Aristotle's concept of *οὐσία*, to the extent that the very definition of *οὐσία* is possible due to the better definition of what is meant by relatives. Later, in a sort of philosophical circle, I will conclude the section considering *λόγος* in Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, underlining the problematic aspects occurring in the passage from *λόγος* as ontological happening to *λόγος* as discourse.

In this case, I rely especially on the research of two Italian philosophers, Claudia Baracchi and Marina Bernardini, and on the exponents of Continental philosophy in the American contemporary scene, among others, with references to the translations of Joe Sachs, John Lloyd Ackrill, and to the lectures of Sean Kirkland and William McNeill. Christopher Shields' and Jonathan Barnes' works on Aristotle will be a reference as well. As I was completing this research and clarifying the ideas I was willing to express, a work by Ömar Aygün *The Middle Included: Logos in Aristotle* and another by Wanda Torres Gregory *Heidegger's Path to Language* were published. These volumes are proof of a contemporary interest in the topic I decided to dedicate myself to and, according to certain aspects, they also reinforce some of the

intuitions I deduced from of my previous readings. I mention here just these two titles as examples of the rich and fruitful discussion around this topic, a discussion in which I try to offer my suggestions while emphasizing the consideration of *λόγος* as relation, an argument not very debated from this point of view within the philosophical context.

My attitude in dealing with both Aristotle and Heidegger won't be a systematic philological or historical comment on their elaborations. Nor will it be an attempt at interpretation from an innovative perspective, but rather a fecund exchange which is inspired by some of their accounts, an attempt to say something different.<sup>2</sup> This is also why I decided to refer to some works instead of others: I directed my attention mostly to those Aristotelian pages where Aristotle addresses *λόγος* as the location where the human experience of the world finds a logical resonance,<sup>3</sup> where what nowadays is called logic seems to begin. On the other hand, I considered the Heideggerian writings where he engages mostly with the ontological discussion of *λόγος*, rather than those where the accent is placed on language in its communicative aspect. Nevertheless, the wide framework of their thought developed in other works was taken into account to the extent possible considering the main purpose of this topic.

The conclusion will give us the opportunity to summarize the main subjects of the project, once again highlight the principal trajectory followed, and pose some further questions.

In the appendix, I propose some reflections pertinent to some possible progresses from the premises discussed here. I will therefore present the comparison between *λόγος* as relation and the concept of “system” as it is conceived by the philosophical framework of Complex Systems Theory, which relies especially on Ludwig von Bertalanffy's work.

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<sup>2</sup> Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, back cover in *L'Architettura dell'Umano: Aristotele e l'Etica come Filosofia Prima*, Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2014: “Frequenting the Ancient (Aristotle, for example) in this way [by approaching the text in its arduous materiality] implicates nurturing the intimacy with what still eludes us. Then diagnosing the end, glimpsing other beginnings, does not mean overcoming, crossing over, neither moving elsewhere. The origin, enigmatic, inspects us” [my translation, reviewed by the author].

<sup>3</sup> Here the adjective “logical” is meant according to the definition of *λόγος* provided in this discussion.

The research proposed here is an attempt, even personal and influenced by my philosophical sensibility, to provide a contribution to the specific topic at issue. There is no presumption to complete the research or to fulfill all the questions that these themes let emerge, but it is intended to present some important aspects while describing *λόγος* as relation.

Most of the following pages were written in Chicago, where during the last two years of my PhD I had the opportunity to spend several months to deepen some crucial themes for my research. Here I would like to thank Laura Formenti, Claudia Baracchi and Ilaria Grazzani, who helped me with the exchange program from the University of Milano — Bicocca, as well as all the faculty and administrative staff from the DePaul University's Department of Philosophy, who kindly welcomed me and my project.

Così pronta alla scomparsa  
ero  
così peso piuma  
e scusarsi a fior di pelle  
con ogni pulviscolo d'aria  
per occupazione indebita,  
così impressa dalla trasparenza  
ero  
da far vetro  
tersissimo  
a mattini smaglianti  
e odore di onda  
tra corpi puntellati.  
Così strettamente inutile  
l'anima  
mia  
da tenerla verdeggiante al fianco  
nel lungo corso dei cosiddetti  
incontri  
senza alcuno scardinamento  
del discorso.  
«E poi? E poi?»  
Poi  
sono sgusciata fuori  
in scorza dura  
pelle di mondo,  
faccio un silenzio  
addosso al male,  
un mantello  
d'insolente bellezza  
terrestre.  
Non posso comandare  
questo flusso  
è opera grande  
di nitida resa  
a corrente maestosa,  
sono parola alla luce  
sono nata.

C. L. Candiani

## **Premise. Λόγος: an etymological reconstruction**

### 0. 1. Introducing λόγος

Λόγος and “logic” are probably two of the most ubiquitous words in philosophy, starting from the beginning with Heraclitus, passing through Aristotle and his commentators, until the Modern period with Bacon, Descartes and Locke, then Kant, Hegel, and more contemporary thinkers, for example with Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Gödel and Tarski — just to name a few. Leaving philosophy aside, its employment is also traceable in other disciplines, such as for example the scientific ones, especially to indicate a correct reasoning. Starting from its appearance in the philosophical scenario, this term has been characterized by the density of meanings it indicates, mostly the human peculiarity to reason and to formulate sentences with the aim of erecting a solid knowledge, so that even the most widespread definition of the human involves this word, since man is considered as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον according to the well known Aristotelian claim.<sup>4</sup>

The principal effort underlying the implicit intention displayed within this chapter is to examine in depth the etymological fecundity of this term. Then, as mentioned in the Introduction, I am going to dedicate some chapters to the ontological undertone of λόγος, especially throughout the research led by Martin Heidegger, while in the third part my object of interest will be at the descriptive level, especially Aristotle’s contribution, since Aristotle is the first thinker to show an accurate intention to organize — and somehow to fix — the passage from the ontological to the meta-level, i.e., the difference between the ontological experience and the stage of a description in which this experience might be material for the human λόγος.

### 0. 2. The multiple meanings of λόγος

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<sup>4</sup> For further implications on this issue, see the dedicated paragraphs in the next chapters devoted to it.

According to the definition of *λόγος* presented in the *Greek-English lexicon*<sup>5</sup> by Liddell and Scott, my main reference for the translation of the Greek words into English, *λόγος* is a verbal noun of *λέγειν* and it refers to ten semantic areas, each one including in its turn multiple shades of significance:<sup>6</sup>

I. computation, reckoning

- account of money handled
- account, reckoning
- measure, tale
- esteem, consideration, value put on a person or a thing

II. relation, correspondence, proportion

- relation
- ratio, proportion (especially in mathematics)
- analogy, rule (in grammar)

III. explanation

- plea, pretext, ground
- plea, case, in law or argument
- statement of a theory, argument
- title of a discourse
- proposition (mostly in logic)
- rule, principle, law
- rule of conduct
- thesis, hypothesis, provisional ground
- reason, ground
- formula
- reason, law exhibited in the world-process
- generative principle in organism

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<sup>5</sup> Liddell, Henry George, Scott, Robert, Jones, Stuart, McKenzie, Roderick (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.

<sup>6</sup> Because of the specific nature and intent of this project, I consider it important to list all the connotations exposed by the editors of this dictionary. As will be clear later, some of the conclusions I intend to present are already conceived within the multiplicity of the semantic connotations revealed by this word, treatable in the following voices.

IV. inward debate of the soul

- thinking, reasoning
- reason as faculty
- creative reason

V. continuous statement, narrative, oration

- fable
- legend
- tale
- story
- speech

VI. verbal expression or utterance

- talk
- expression, phrase
- comment talk, report, tradition
- rumor
- mention, notice, description
- discussion, debate, deliberation
- right of discussion or speech
- dialogue, as a form of philosophical debate
- section, division of a dialogue or treatise

VII. a particular utterance, saying

- divine utterance, oracle
- proverb, maxim, saying
- assertion
- express resolution
- word of command, behest

VIII. thinking spoken of, subject matter

- plot of a narrative or dramatic poem
- subject of a painting
- thing talked of, event

IX. expression, speech

- words

- phrase, complex term
- sentence
- complete statement
- language

#### X. the Word or Wisdom of God.<sup>7</sup>

We can deduce from the multiplicity of meanings above that the word *λόγος* refers to very different domains and addresses many spheres of competence. Hence, while translating it, it is crucial to pay attention both to the context where it appears and to the abundance of its meanings. In the *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A philosophical Lexicon*,<sup>8</sup> Barbara Cassin, describing *λόγος*, asserts:

“The Greek *logos* retains, from the basic meaning «to gather» of the root *λε/ογ-* and as an almost indelible connotation, the semantic feature of being syntagmatic. Of all the well-known semantic variations of *logos* —«conversation,» «speech,» «tale,» «discourse,» «proverb,» «language,» «counting,» «proportion,» «consideration,» «explanation,» «reasoning,» «reason,» «proposition,» «sentence»—there is barely a single one that does not contain the original sense of «putting together»: the constitution or consideration of a series, of a notionally complex set. As «counting» or «proportion,» *logos* is never an isolated «number»; as «tale,» «discourse,» «proverb,» «proposition,» or «sentence,» it is never (or only never marginally) a «word,» and so on.”<sup>9</sup>

Once again Cassin clarifies the articulations of significance of this term, pointing out the fact that all these meanings enclose a sort of *togetherness*, i.e., a relational involvement. She explicitly asserts that mostly all the linguistic occurrences in which *λόγος* is invoked rely on a

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<sup>7</sup> Liddell, Henry George, Scott, Robert, Jones, Stuart, McKenzie, Roderick (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, cit..

<sup>8</sup> Apter, Emily, Lezra, Jacques, Wood, Michael, (trans.) *Barbara Cassin (ed.) Dictionary of the Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibi*, p. 583.



sense of “putting together.” Cassin also explains this relational aspect as a “complex set,” stressing what seems to be a description of an articulated compound. Moreover, the French scholar adds:

“Even if, as we know, the etymology does not control indefinitely and absolutely the meaning that words can take on in the course of their history, it is important to keep in mind that the Greek *logos* is connected to a polemic etymon in which the sememes «to gather» and «to say» are closely related. This has to be the starting point of any reflection on the history of *logos* as a philosophical term.”<sup>10</sup>

In this passage, Cassin addresses a tendency which is frequent especially after Heidegger, that is to say the reference to the research of the etymology of a word in order to understand something more about it or about its area. She also states, and I quite agree with her, that this allusion should not be transformed in a consideration of the term at issue as completely clarified by its derivation. In the origin of a word, especially one taken from a context far away in time and space like the ancient Greek philosophy might be for us, still remains an “unfathomable character” and “it is possible to glimpse in it the unexpressed possibility,”<sup>11</sup> namely “in seed, the assignment of the forthcoming thought.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, resorting to the etymological argument is not a way to search for a specific “controlled” destiny of a term, and of its concept, on the contrary it is an approach aimed to provide “unexpressed possibilities” from it.

Ömer Aygün, analyzing the definition of *λόγος* in his work dedicated to its meaning within the specific context of Aristotle, confirms both its

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, back cover in *L'Architettura dell'Umano: Aristotele e l'Etica come Filosofia Prima*, cit..

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*.

familiarity and ambiguity in Ancient Greek,<sup>13</sup> even more complicated “in the later Stoic, Gnostic, and Christian traditions.”<sup>14</sup> Bonitz, he observes, “reduces this ambiguity to a fourfold distinction [...]: «standard», «ratio», «reason», and «speech».”<sup>15</sup> On the same issue, Claudia Baracchi brings attention to the simultaneity of these meanings and the incomplete translatability of *λόγος*:

“Let this be underlined again: *logos* means, simultaneously, word, language, saying, discourse, story, argument, speech, reason, rationality (*ratio*), and logical structure (in the sense of informing law). Its relation with the verb *legein* illuminates it further, perhaps most embracing meaning as «gathering.» As in the case of other essentially untranslatable terms, such as *nous*, the various semantic facets and nuances of *logos*, its particular its discursive and rational dimensions, should be held in play simultaneously.”<sup>16</sup>

Although this term can be addressed to indicate a variety of things, there is a common root, a shared aspect declined in different fashions. As it might be justifiable from the reasonings just mentioned, following the path traced by the etymology of *λόγος*, it will be possible to understand

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<sup>13</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included: Logos in Aristotle*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2017, p. 5. Cfr. also note 7 referring to this passage, *ibi*, p. 212: “Cassin et al. (2014: 586) give the list of the senses of *logos* in a marginal scholium of a manuscript of the *Technê grammatikê* by Dionysius Thrax (Dionysius Thrax, *Scholia in Dionysii Thracis artem grammaticam*, in *Grammatici Graeci*, vol. 1, fasc. 3 ). Of these twenty-two meanings, the following may be of interest: concern (*phrontis*) and consideration (*logarismos*) [...] justification (*apologia*), *logos* of expenses, conclusion, natural potentiality (*dynamis*), and again, par excellence, God (*kat' eksoknên ho theos*). Heidegger usually reduces these senses to four: «speech», «reason [*Vernunft*]», «foundation [*hypokeimenon*]», and «proportion» (Heidegger, 2008: 50; 1984: 60). His earlier interpretation of *logos* determines its basic underlying meaning as «making manifest» (Heidegger, 1996: 28 - 30 (§7b); 1997: 139 - 41 (§28c); 1985: 84 - 85 (§9aβ)). Inspired by Heidegger and Sallis, Hoffmann gives a similar fourfold distinction: «account», «composition», «speech», and «reason» (Hofmann, 2003: 33, see also Robinson, 2010: 24 - 26; Roberechts, 1993: 336)” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>16</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 8, note 9 [author’s emphasis].

something more about relation and its fundamental role, but also to think the term at issue differently as well as what derives from it.

### 0. 3. Considerations on the etymology of λόγος

Continuing her above-mentioned explanation on λόγος, Baracchi points attention to its etymology:

“Its [λόγος] relation with the verb *legein* illuminates its further, perhaps most embracing meaning as «gathering.»”<sup>17</sup>

Aygün agrees and turns to the work of Pierre Chantraine to address this topic.<sup>18</sup> The French linguist expresses the etymology of λόγος in this way

“Le sense originel est «rassembler, cueillir, choisir»..., d’où «compter, dénombrer»... *legô* signifie parfois «énumérer», etc...«débiter des injures», au moyen «bavander, discourir»... Ainsi est né l’emploi au sense de «raconter, dire, etc.».”<sup>19</sup>

Heidegger seems to agree with Chantraine, saying that

“[*Legein*] means what our similarly sounding *legen* means: to lay down and lay before. In *legen* a «bringing together prevails, the Latin *legere* understood as *lesen*, in the sense of collecting and bringing together. *Legein* properly means the laying-down and laying-before which gathers itself and others.»”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>18</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included: Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 211.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis]; Aygün quotes from Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 45, Grundfragen der Philosophie. Ausgewählte »Probleme« der »Logik«*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1984, p. 60 and Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983, pp. 123 - 179.

Hence, it is commonly recognized that the primary origin of the word *λόγος* has to be traced within the domain of a relational context and such a matrix seems to be the source of the appearance of every entity as well as its communicability among human communities, the identification of one of its proper characteristics. It seems also to refer to structured relations, i.e., relations organized according to a structure which involves the presence of multiple levels.<sup>21</sup> *Λόγος*, at any stage, involves the correlated terms and then goes beyond them, transforming at the same time the elements of the relation. Before dedicating an accurate analysis of these levels, it is crucial to present them properly.

#### 0. 4. Which link among the different semantic connotations of *λόγος*?

*Λόγος* is understood in many ways in Greek thought. In the context of this project's framework determined to elaborate a project around it, it is important to propose a suggestion regarding the organization of the long list of meanings previously presented. Following the definitions proposed in the Liddell, Scott and Jones', as well as reading some passages specifically from Aristotle and Heidegger,<sup>22</sup> I would like to suggest three principal ways of conceiving it. First, *λόγος* is considered in terms of an occurrence or an event, although, insofar as these can repeat themselves, they are not *absolutely* singular. In this case *λόγος* refers to that which unites the multiple appearances of a being, not only in the sense of the human capacity to collect these appearances, but also to denote the very circumstances of that encounter insofar as *λόγος* relates to the inner nature of the being in question.

Second, having the potential to grasp and gather this appearing, *λόγος* indicates that through which we as humans have access to the changing and the persistence of an entity through temporality, namely the faculty to

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<sup>21</sup> See further the passages quoted from Heidegger's *Introduction to Metaphysics*.

<sup>22</sup> Since this issue is going to be properly elaborated later, with references to the Aristotelian and Heideggerian texts, I am not presenting here these passages. Moreover, the intention of this paragraph is to delineate those guidelines inspiring the structure of this elaborate and not to address the issues fully, as this will be done later. This is also the reason why there will be a few notes in the following pages.

collect and recall it. Furthermore, it seems a characteristic of the human to be capable not only of such understanding, i.e., to recognize this dynamic occurring typical of the surrounding world, but also to express it.

Thirdly, recalling this dynamic setting of relations into the human way to communicate, *λόγος* is employed to designate the ability to articulate phrases, sentences and discourses. Through speech, another characteristic of man is demonstrated, which might be seen as a consequence of his being characterized by language: while relating to entities in phrases and sentences, we are able to establish new bonds between them — constraints<sup>23</sup> not previously existing. It is the power of our freedom, which acts into the world and also affects it, to create new aspects of the same reality, although behaving differently in each domain. In this latter meaning, we seem to find a pivotal interaction between world and human, involved in what Heidegger calls Being. The first of these conceptions is a point of comparison with Heidegger, the third is considered with Aristotle, while the second is actually discussed in both sections, due to its position in between the two aspects.

Within the same etymological root and its common element in the different semantic references, a shift is suggested: from an occurring relational dynamic, structured into the proper forms of beings and of their interactions, to the same power of man to impact this dynamic, structuring it according to one's freedom. This freedom is not absolute, but rather always operates in a context which is not neutral but historical.

Given its constitutive importance, it is right to consider *λόγος* a fundamental aspect of what is. However, it is wrong to reduce *λόγος* to reason, and so to conclude that reason itself is that fundamental aspect. According to the etymology of the word *λόγος* and to the common element that remains vital, or even breathes, in all its other meanings, the fundamental feature attested by *λόγος* is relation.

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<sup>23</sup> The word “constraint” is rarely traceable in philosophical writings, since it is part of the legal terminology. However some authors, such as for example Jo-Jo Koo, use it with the same connotation that I mean. There will be space to discuss this point further.

This threefold connotation permeates my research. As mentioned, I choose to converse mostly with two philosophers, Heidegger and Aristotle, since I found their way of engaging this issue close to the main purpose of this project. Heidegger dedicates many efforts to an exegesis of *λόγος*, and furthermore I would say that his dealing with the pre-Socratics and with Aristotle precisely on this point led him to elaborate his so-called 'Turn'. On the other hand, Aristotle, the founder of logic, demonstrates a focus on a systematic study of *λόγος*, especially in its dialogical and syntactical aspects. This does not mean presenting a new study or some innovative criteria in reading the work of both or either these thinkers, nor is this the intention of my project. It shall be a dialogue between some of their outcomes and a consideration of relation as *λόγος* in the ontological and metaphysical context.

**Part I**  
**Λόγος as relation**  
**from an ontological perspective**

## Chapter 1. The first Heideggerian studies on *λόγος*

### 1. 1. Heidegger studying *λόγος*: a brief excursus through some of his works

It is almost impossible to read through a given Heideggerian text without finding at least one reference to the term *λόγος*: the constant dealing with its semantic indication, and its repercussion on the ontological level in Heidegger's thought, is witnessed by this simple fact. Heidegger constantly thinks and rethinks *λόγος*. Hence, looking time after time at the different connotations he indicates is an accurate indicator of his philosophical project, even as this project shifted and changed. Usually, Heidegger statements on logic are considered to be critical, adversarial or polemical towards this discipline. In his 1977 work about Heidegger's engagement with logic, Thomas A. Fay makes the following argument:

“Heidegger has, from the very beginning of his career, written and said much on logic. [...] There is, therefore, a need for a detailed presentation of precisely what Heidegger understands by logic, what role he accords to it, how it figures in his overall thought, what logic he «attacks» (if he does so), and why, in terms of the larger perspectives of his overall thought, he should hold the position that he does.”<sup>24</sup>

Philippe Quesne is of the same opinion, stating that for Heidegger

“Le problème des cours de jeunesse est un problème logique.”<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, Fay pays attention to Heidegger's focus on *λόγος* in his ontological project:

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<sup>24</sup> Fay, Thomas A., *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977, p. vii.

<sup>25</sup> Quesne, Philippe, *Les Recherches Philosophiques du Jeune Heidegger*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003, p. 153.



“It may seem to some that the logic-question is not terribly important to his overall thought, but if it is recalled that for Heidegger the foundation of logic is λόγος, and that λόγος constitutes one of the most fundamental aspects of Being, as well as being the foundation of language, the importance of the logic-question becomes apparent.”<sup>26</sup>

Here Fay remarks that the “logic-question” remains crucial in Heidegger’s thought, even if here logic is conceived differently from how it is today, since the main interest of Heidegger was to investigate not the procedures of logic interpreted as the subject concerning the rules of right reasoning, but as the fundamental possibilities of thinking Being from this perspective, where logic should be understood in the light of a different way of considering λόγος, i.e., the word from which logic derives its name. And this is not only a prerogative of Heidegger’s first writings and topics, but also of the later developments of his thought, for example those related to language. In this sense, Fay adds:

“[...] Heidegger has noted that since 1934 the logic-question has been transformed into the language problematic, and the importance of language to the thought of the late Heidegger could scarcely be overestimated. Therefore when we make notions such as λόγος, logic and language the object of our inquiry, we are dealing with questions which are very close to the heart of Heidegger’s thought.”<sup>27</sup>

Considering Heidegger’s assumptions, and by attesting to the “problematic” relation between Heidegger and the logic contemporary to him, Quesne asks

“Quel est le rapport entre le problème logique que Heidegger soulève dans ses cours de jeunesse, et la logique au sens où nous l’entendons aujourd’hui, à savoir la logique formelle ou l’analyse de la signification des proposition? Ce

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<sup>26</sup> Fay, Thomas A., *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., p. vii.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibi*, pp. vii - viii.

rapport serait polémique: Heidegger n'intitulerait son problème «logique» que pour combattre la logique formelle au nom d'une logique plus fondamentale, mais sans jamais donner de contenu à cette notion de logique plus fondamentale. C'est-à-dire en la dissociant de toute réflexion sur le langage, la signification, la proposition.”<sup>28</sup>

I do not agree with Quesne on this point, finding my position similar to Fay's, according to whom Heidegger not only moves to a reflection on logic attentive to a more fundamental discussion, but also consequently proposing a consideration of language, meaning and propositions, as will be argued further.

On the other hand, Fay also considers that Heidegger's critique of logic “is nothing less than a total transformation of the way of conceiving of the nature of philosophy,”<sup>29</sup> so a research which is investigating this theme is pointing out one of the most crucial aspects of Heidegger's thought.

It would not be possible to examine in detail one by one all the occurrences where Heidegger addresses the topic of logic, however my proposal is firstly to provide synthetically a general account of his interpretation of *λόγος* and then spend more time on some of his most significant passages, especially those particularly interesting for the indication of *λόγος* in its ontological value. This will be especially true for the writings after the 1930s, where his focus is no longer the investigation of Being through *Dasein*, but somehow to go beyond *Dasein* in order to involve the surrounding *Welt*, conceived from a broader perspective and not strictly in relation to *Dasein* itself, in the question of Being. This shift was probably also influenced by his increasing interest in the pre-Socratic

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<sup>28</sup> Quesne, Philippe, *Les Recherches Philosophiques du Jeune Heidegger*, cit., p. 153.

<sup>29</sup> Fay, Thomas A., *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., pp. vii - viii.

thinkers demonstrated by Heidegger.<sup>30</sup> Following Fay's example, the method here undertaken will not be a genetic one,<sup>31</sup> rather, I will pay attention to some issues as they are traceable in Heidegger's works without specifically following their development during his career.

Surely one of the most important paragraphs in which Heidegger displays his idea of *λόγος* is §7 of *Being and Time*:<sup>32</sup> here, while defining the term "phenomenology," he lingers on the two components of this word, namely "phenomenon" and "logos," referring to this latter with the following words:

"Die spätere Bedeutungsgeschichte des Wortes *λόγος* und vor allem die vielfältigen und willkürlichen Interpretationen der nachkommenden Philosophie verdecken ständig die eigentliche Bedeutung von Rede, die offen genug zutage liegt. *Λόγος* wird »übersetzt«, d. h. immer ausgelegt als Vernunft, Urteil, Begriff, Definition, Grund, Verhältnis. Wie soll aber »Rede« sich so modifizieren können, daß *λόγος* all das Aufgezählte bedeutet und zwar innerhalb des wissenschaftlichen Sprachgebrauchs? Auch wenn *λόγος* im Sinne von Aussage verstanden wird, Aus- sage aber als »Urteil«, dann kann mit dieser scheinbar recht- mäßigen Übersetzung die fundamentale Bedeutung doch verfehlt sein, zumal wenn Urteil im Sinne irgendeiner heutigen »Urteilstheorie« begriffen wird. *Λόγος* besagt nicht und jedenfalls nicht primär Urteil, wenn man darunter ein »Verbinden« oder eine »Stellungnahme« (Anerkennen – Verwerfen) versteht.

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<sup>30</sup> Cfr. Volpi, Franco, *Heidegger e Aristotele*, Roma - Bari: Editori Laterza, 2010, p. 121: "[...] the rediscovery of the pre-Socratics, or rather the emergence of reference to pre-Socratic thought as a decisive reference, whose beginning is chronologically suitable at the beginning of the 1930s, and precisely in 1932 titled *The Beginning of Western Philosophy: Anaximander and Parmenides* and therefore in *Introduction to Metaphysics*; and thus the discovery of Nietzsche as a fulfillment of metaphysics and Hölderlin's poetry as the lyrical exercise of the new beginning" [my translation].

<sup>31</sup> Fay, Thomas A., *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, Oxford: Blackwell Publisher Ltd, 1962, pp. 49 - 63, especially 55 - 58; for the German edition see Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1967 pp. 27 -39, above all 32 - 34.

Λόγος als Rede besagt vielmehr soviel wie *δελούν*, offenbar machen das, wovon in der Rede »die Rede« ist,”<sup>33</sup>

translated as

“The real signification of «discourse,» which is obvious enough, gets constantly covered up by later history of the word *λόγος*, and especially by the numerous and arbitrary Interpretations which subsequent philosophy has provided. *Λόγος* gets ‘translated’ (and this means that it is always getting interpreted) as «reason,» «judgement,» «concept,» «definition,» «ground,» or «relationship.» But how can «discourse» be so susceptible of modification that *λόγος* can signify all the things we have listed, and in good scholarly usage? Even if *λόγος* is understood in the sense of «assertion,» but of «assertion» as ‘judgement’, this seemingly legitimate translation may still miss the fundamental signification, especially if «judgement» is conceived in a sense taken over from some contemporary ‘theory of judgement’. *Λόγος* does not mean «judgement,» and it certainly does not mean this primarily — if one understands by «judgement» a way of ‘binding’ something with something else, or the ‘taking of a stand’ (whether by acceptance or by rejection).

*Λόγος* as «discourse» means rather the same as *δελούν*: to make manifest what one is ‘taking about’ in one’s discourse.”<sup>34</sup>

Heidegger underlines here both the multiplicity of meanings of the word in question and also suggests that the translation of it is already a sort of an interpretation. Hence, it is possible to provide different interpretations of the same word. He even addresses those who conceive of *λόγος* as “judgement,” or who demonstrate the will to elaborate a theory of it. He argues instead that *λόγος* as “discourse” is compatible with the intention to let something be seen *as* something, to “make manifest” the reasoning in someone’s discourse. Moreover, in the same

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<sup>33</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 32.

<sup>34</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., pp. 55 - 56.

context, he proceeds to describe what, according to his view, Aristotle means by the function of discourse as *ἀποφαίνεσθαι*, that is to say in its capability to let something be seen by naming it in a discourse, in pointing it out. This structure however, as Heidegger suggests, does not characterize all types of discourse, as the request, for example, which “makes manifest, but in a different way.”<sup>35</sup> What is important to underline for the aim of this research is that above all Heidegger wants to focus the attention on the *relation* between *Dasein* and what it says about its world:

“Und nur *weil* die Funktion des *λόγος* als *ἀπόφανσις* im aufweisenden Sehenlassen von etwas liegt, kann der *λόγος* die Strukturform der *σύνθεσις* haben. Synthesis sagt hier nicht Verbinden und Verknüpfen von Vorstellungen, Hantieren mit psychischen Vorkommnissen, bezüglich welcher Verbindungen dann das »Problem« entstehen soll, wie sie als Inneres mit dem Physischen draußen übereinstimmen. Das *sun* hat hier rein apophantische Bedeutung und besagt: etwas in seinem *Beisammen* mit etwas, etwas *als* etwas sehen lassen,”<sup>36</sup>

which in English is translated

“And only *because* the function of the *λόγος* as *ἀπόφανσις* lies in letting something be seen by pointing it out, can the *λόγος* have the structural form of *σύνθεσις*. Here «synthesis» does not mean a binding and linking together of representations, a manipulation of psychical occurrences where the ‘problem’ arises of how these bindings, as something inside, agree with something physical outside. Here the *sun* has a purely apophantical signification and means letting something be seen in its *togetherness* [*Beisammen*] with something-letting it be seen *as* something.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>36</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 33.

<sup>37</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 56.

Heidegger is here insisting, against the most common positions of his time, on a crucial point: because of the *structural* form of *σύνθεσις* which is constitutive of *λόγος* itself, where the *συν* addresses a *structured relation* (“*togetherness* [*Beisammen*]”), it is then possible to elaborate a discourse in which *λόγος* manifests itself as *ἀπόφανσις*. Consequently, subjective activity is not where the source of *λόγος* as discourse should be found — a subjective activity where the psychological representations, obtained somehow from the external world, are gathered together in a second moment. According to Heidegger, the synthetic element of *λόγος* indicates the co-existence of something that is seen *as* something together with its very manifestation as that something. This aspect, that Heidegger refers to as *togetherness*, in German *Beisammen*, is a recurring topic of his hermeneutics of facticity or, as he explains even more clearly in the same pages of *Being and Time*, of the *Dasein* character of *being-in-the-world*.

In spite of the persistent presence of the topic at issue in his thought even in later works, something changes. What will be different after the 1930s is how the terms involved in this *togetherness* are meant. At first, it seems that what is gathered in the apophatic *λόγος* is *Dasein* together with what is said in discourse, which results ‘as-structured’ given its belonging to the already oriented and meaningful world.<sup>38</sup> Therefore in this sense *λόγος* lets something be indicated in its *phenomenological* role within *Dasein*’s horizon. Whereas in a second moment the focus is no longer on this as-structure but rather on the encounter between the *λόγος* of *Dasein* and the ontological *λόγος*, namely *both* the human being and the other objects of the surrounding reality, since Heidegger now considers this *λόγος*-discourse possible because of an *ontological* relation

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<sup>38</sup> Cfr. Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., pp. 188 - 195, for example p. 189: “The ‘as’ makes up the structure of the explicitness of something that is understood. It constitutes the interpretation”, and Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., pp. 148 - 153, especially p. 149: “Das »Als« macht die Struktur der Ausdrücklichkeit eines Verstandenen aus; es konstituiert die Auslegung.”

lying beneath the two of them, named *Λόγος*.<sup>39</sup> Hence, unlike Heidegger's earlier description from *Being and Time*, in which the synthesis presented in the discourse was possible because of the way in which *Dasein* inhabits the world, in his later writings he seems to stress a structural relation that is ontologically prior to any discourse.

However, it is important to highlight that *Being and Time* is not the first of Heidegger's writings in which he dedicates his attention to *λόγος*: indeed, a couple of years before his *magnum opus* was released, during the winter semester 1925/1926, Heidegger devoted an entire course to logic, and of course to its main problematic subject, namely *λόγος*. The transcript of the course has been published under the title *Logic: The Question of Truth*.<sup>40</sup> In this text he deals with some of the most common accounts of logic of his times, as well as its Aristotelian formulation. In the same course he addresses Kant and Hegel on the same topic. Moreover his dissertation of 1914 is titled *Die Lehre vom Urteil im Psychologismus*, which is subtitled *Ein kritisch-positiver Beitrag zur*

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<sup>39</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 55, Heraklit 1. Der Anfang des abendländischen Denkens 2. Logik. Heraklits Lehre vom Logos*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1979, pp. 305 - 306: "Der *λόγος* als das Sein selbst ist doch offenbar das Tiefe, in das der weitersende *λόγος* der Menschenseele hinaus zeigt. [...] Das Hören des Menschen sammelt sich nicht ohne weiteres eigens auf den *Λόγος* selbst, sondern gewöhnlich zerstreut es sich und bleibt dergestalt verstreut, daß es zumeist nur auf menschliches Reden und menschliche Aussprüche hört", which results as "The *λόγος*, as being itself, is clearly the depth into which the expansive *λόγος* of the human soul points. [...] The hearing of man does not gather himself specifically of the *Λόγος* himself, but usually disperses and remains scattered in such a way that it mostly listens only to human speech and human utterances" [my translation].

<sup>40</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Logic: The Question of Truth*, Bloomington, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010.

*Logik*,<sup>41</sup> and in 1916 Heidegger offered a seminar in Freiburg on the logical writings of Aristotle.<sup>42</sup> We may also observe that the first volume of Heidegger's collective works, *Gesamtausgabe*, contains a 1912 publication for the review *Literarische Rundschau für katholische Deutschland* an article titled "Neuere Forschungen über Logik."<sup>43</sup> Already in this early text, probably influenced by Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, Heidegger shows his opposition towards the outcomes that have led logic to be "a not upgradeable sum of forms and rules of thought not further developable."<sup>44</sup> This thinking is constantly traceable in Heidegger's early work, especially addressed to contemporary commentators<sup>45</sup> and according to whom our thought is essentially guided by logical laws, in

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<sup>41</sup> Fay, Thomas A., "Heidegger and the Formalization of Thought," in *Phenomenology and the Formal Sciences*, T. M. Seebohm, D. Føllesdal and J. N. Mohanty (eds.), Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media B.V., 1991, p. 1: "[here] he saw himself as making modest contributions to the fashionable struggle against psychologism in the name of a transcendently understood of logic"; in the first writings, Aristotle shows an already intense interest not only in logic itself, but also on its foundation, cfr. *ibi*, pp. 2 -3: "Thus he asks:

What is logic? Here we are already confronted with a problem whose solution is reserved to the future.

In both the article and the dissertation of 1914, *The Theory of Judgement in Psychologism*, Heidegger shows both an awareness of current developments in logic as well as competence in this field."

<sup>42</sup> Cfr. *Ibi*, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 1, Frühe Schriften*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1978, pp. 17 - 43.

<sup>44</sup> Babolin, Albino, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Scritti Filosofici 1912 - 1917*, Padova: La Garangola, 1972, p. 147.

<sup>45</sup> Fay, Thomas A., "Heidegger and the Formalization of Thought," cit., p. 3, note 5: "He [Heidegger] shows a very deep appreciation for the work of Frege especially, as well as that of Russell, Whitehead, Meinong, Bolzano and others;" cfr. also *ibi*, p. 5. Even if Heidegger's account of logic is usually described as an open accusation against the state of that science in those years, Fay is animated by the intent to point out that what moves Heidegger's considerations about logic is not an accusation *tout court*, but rather the aim to justify his reflections on it, cfr. *ibi*, p. 7: "[...] first, it is clear that Heidegger from his earliest writings was very much interested in the new developments in logic, and well acquainted with the revolutionary new work that was being done; second, far from being an anti-logician or denigrating the new developments in logic, his early work shows that he attempted to *defend* its legitimate areas of competency against the attempts of psychologism to reduce it to psychical phenomena; and third, he saw that the new developments raised profound questions concerning the foundations of logic, symbolic logic and the relation of mathematics and formalization to logic" [author's emphasis].



which case the aim of the philosophical research would *only* be attentive to the psychological mechanisms<sup>46</sup> occurring within the subject as a consequence of an external stimulation. Heidegger, on the contrary, demonstrated that he had always been aware of the importance of the relational contexts, that is to say, of the simultaneous occurrence of both those aspects that usually were conceived separately. It is precisely this initial relational relevance that will be presented in the following paragraphs.

Quesne, tracing the initial project of Heidegger's philosophy, sees it in association with three principal problems; where *λόγος* seems to cover an essential aspect:

“[...] la gestation [of his philosophical themes] s’accomplit autour de trois problèmes philosophiques fondamentaux: la méthode de la philosophie est fondée sur l’analyse du sens de la question, et cette analyse permet du coup d’opposer la méthode de la philosophie à toute méthode qui se fonderait sur un primat de la proposition prédicative, la philosophie est une connaissance fondée sur le sens de la question et doit pour cela élargir le sens d’objet qu’on trouve chez Husserl — Heidegger à la fin de sa vie souligne qu’il s’est agi pour lui dans ses premières années d’élargir le sens de l’objet husserlien à l’aide d’un sens de l’objet qu’on trouve chez Platon et Aristote, et enfin le sens même de *logos* doit être retravaillé dans une logique inédite, incluant une théorie de la signification.”<sup>47</sup>

In effect, Heidegger continues to elaborate and to develop the topic of logic and of its foundation throughout his career, and he displays some modifications in its formulations as well. For example Fay attests:

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<sup>46</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Logic: The Question of Truth*, cit., pp. 27 - 37.

<sup>47</sup> Quesne, Philippe, *Les Recherches Philosophiques du Jeune Heidegger*, cit., p. 15; the author indicates also the formal indication as core of these three problems, *ibidem*: “Dans ces trois moments, l’«indication formelle» se trouve au centre: la dimension de la question, l’articulation de l’objet, la différence entre signification et sens tournent autour de cette notion aussi énigmatique que la situation des cours eux-mêmes.”

“[...] after 1934 the logic-question has been transformed into the language-question, and that this same language problematic is the central preoccupation of the late Heidegger [...].”<sup>48</sup>

Therefore since the beginning of his philosophical trajectory, Heidegger regards the discussion concerning *λόγος* to be crucial and, further, that the factual life is considered to be the first place such investigation should begin.

### 1. 2. Heidegger’s phenomenological interpretation of Aristotle and the initial formulation of the hermeneutics of facticity: the pivotal role of the relational context

The account presented by Heidegger in the framework of his first two writings where he deals with logic is especially concerned with the specific issue of the foundation of logic itself. As is typical for him while approaching a topic of interest, he points out the necessity of a discussion and elaboration, properly a thought, a reflection, on those original elements that are often presumed without *questioning* them. On this point, Heidegger claims:

“Die Schranke sehe ich in der Anwendung der mathematischen Symbole und Begriffe (vor allem des Funktionsbegriffes), wodurch die Bedeutungen und Bedeutungsverschiebungen der Urteile verdeckt werden. Der tiefere Sinn der Prinzipien bleibt im Dunkeln, das Urteilkalkül z. B. ist ein Rechnen mit Urteilen, die Probleme der Urteilstheorie kennt die Logistik nicht. Die Mathematik und die mathematische Behandlung logischer Probleme gelangen an Grenzen, wo ihre Begriffe und Methoden versagen, das ist genau dort, wo die Bedingungen ihrer Möglichkeit liegen,”<sup>49</sup>

which Fay translates as

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<sup>48</sup> Fay, Thomas A., *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., p. 6.

<sup>49</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 1, Frühe Schriften*, cit., pp. 42 - 43.

“As I see it, the barrier lies in the employment of mathematical symbols and concepts (and especially of the function-concept) through which the meanings and shifts in meaning of the judgement are obscured. The deeper sense of the principles remains in the dark; the propositional calculus for example is a calculating of propositions but symbolic logic does not get to the problem of the theory of judgement. Mathematics and the mathematical treatment of logical problems come to a limit where their concepts and methods break down, and it is precisely there that the conditions of their possibility lie.”<sup>50</sup>

Looking for the constitutive elements of logic, Heidegger shows his intention to return to the *ontological* level,<sup>51</sup> highlighting the *fundamental relation* occurring between a given phenomenon and *Dasein*. In the Winter Semester 1921/1922, during a course on Aristotle, he investigates the concept of “phenomenon,” developing a more and more accurate account of what it means for the human being and the consequent role of logic in this preliminary phenomenological perspective. In the context of this analysis, Heidegger presents a consideration of the ontological movement “after he orients the investigation by establishing how his phenomenological method grants access to the situatedness of factual life.”<sup>52</sup> Here, to clarify the proper features of factual life, he proposes three categories of relationality — inclination, distance, and sequestration. In this moment Heidegger is still strongly influenced by Husserl and it is possible to understand these categories as an attempt to deepen the relation between the situated presence of *Dasein* and its hermeneutical dwelling.

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<sup>50</sup> Fay, Thomas A., “Heidegger and the Formalization of Thought,” cit., p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*: “But it is precisely in the question of the foundation of logic that Heidegger is interested, and thus as his thought develops and the Being-question comes more explicitly to the fore he will seek for a deeper understanding of the proposition, an *ontological* interpretation of the proposition [...] and as his concern with the Being-question deepens the question, «what is logic?» will be transformed into the question, «what is language»” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>52</sup> Aggleton, Derek, “The Disunity of Factual Life: An Ethical Development in Heidegger’s Early Work,” in *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual*, 6, 2016, p. 24.

In Heidegger's words:

“Jede Erfahrung ist in sich selbst ein Begegnis, und zwar Begegnis in und für ein Sorgen. Der Grundcharakter des Gegenstandes ist also immer: er steht und wird getroffen auf dem Weg der Sorge, er wird erfahren in Bedeutsamkeit. Zu interpretieren, was es heißt: Die Welt »ist da«, den Wirklichkeitscharakter der Welt des faktischen Lebens, ist weder so leicht, wie transzendente Erkenntnistheorie sich das vorstellt, noch so selbstverständlich und problemlos, wie der Realismus meint.”<sup>53</sup>

which is translated

“Every experience is in itself an *encounter* and indeed an encounter in and for an act of caring. The basic character of the object is therefore always this: it stands, and is met with, on the path of care; it is experienced as meaningful. To interpret what is meant by saying that the world «is there» (i.e., to interpret the character of the actuality of the world of the factual life) is neither as easy as transcendental theory of knowledge imagines nor so self-evident and unproblematic as realism believes.”<sup>54</sup>

This aspect of hermeneutics will be presented further on in a more detailed way, but for the moment what is important in the context of this project is to underline that since the rise of his questioning on Being, Heidegger pays particular attention to relation as part of the question itself. In this sense, he highlights the pervasive meaning lived within factual life, where not only every experience is an encounter but also a meeting dense with *signification*. There is a clear twofold risk: conceiving

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<sup>53</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 61, Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1985, p. 91.

<sup>54</sup> Rojcewicz, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, Bloomington — Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001, pp. 68 - 69; he adds: “Form this objective, primary sense of content, we can first determine, in any particular case, the character and sense of existence, actuality and reality” [my emphasis].

such an encounter as effortlessly explainable or understanding it as self-evident and so consequently not deserving of an accurate investigation. On the contrary, precisely because of its simple and evident occurrence, it is even more crucial to pay attention to its phenomenological displaying. As a matter of fact, Heidegger claims that the categories at issue “can be understood only insofar as factual life itself is compelled to interpretation.”<sup>55</sup> These categories are, as a result, quite different from Kant’s. On this, Derek Aggleton underlines:

“The exclusive connection to interpretation of factual life is essential because Heidegger does not want us to think of these as logical categories in an epistemological ontology. Kant’s categories of relation are a priori synthetic concepts whereby the understanding makes sense of the manifold of intuitions in its experience. But Heidegger is not focused on the achievement of a substantial or causal understanding of objects, rather only on the basic intentional *relatedness* of a being to its here.”<sup>56</sup>

According to Aggleton reading, Kant elaborates his categories concerning relation as an attempt to describe how the subjective experience might proceed without depending completely on the external world, and only consequently understood and shared or communicated. This is the *a priori* synthetic connotation of the understanding, in which subject and object are separated and what is to be sought comes to be exactly the causal process occurring between them. Heidegger’s interest at this stage is instead to highlight the crucial role of a relation that is intentional and prior to the subject/object distinction. Indeed Aggleton specifies that “Heidegger develops the categories as «interpreta» of life, not as transcendental structures of the understanding.”<sup>57</sup>

Heidegger claims:

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibi*, p. 66.

<sup>56</sup> Aggleton, Derek, “The Disunity of Factual Life: An Ethical Development in Heidegger’s Early Work”, cit., p. 24 [my emphasis].

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*.

“Die Kategorien sind nicht Erfundenes oder eine Gesellschaft von logischen Schemata für sich, »Gitterwerke«, sondern sie sind in ursprünglicher Weise *im Leben selbst am Leben*; am Leben, daran Leben zu »bilden«. Sie haben ihre eigenen Zugangsweise, die aber keine solche ist, die dem Leben selbst fremd wäre, auf dieses von außen her losstieße, sondern die gerade die ausgezeichnete ist, in der das *Leben zu sich selbst kommt*,”<sup>58</sup>

translated as

“The categories are not inventions or a group of logical schemata as such, «lattices»; on the contrary they are *alive in life itself* in an original way: alive in order to «form» life on themselves. They have their own modes of access, which aren't foreign to life itself, as if they pounced down upon life from the outside, but instead are precisely the prominent way in which *life comes to itself*.”<sup>59</sup>

Heidegger states very clearly that, according to his position, life comes to itself in a relational way, that is to say through relational categories: inclination (*Neigung*), distance (*Abstand*), and sequestration (*Abriegelung*) are the ones he presents here. Rather than examining in each of these in detail, I would linger on the third, since Aggleton notices that “through the collapse of meaningful relations, the relationality of life itself becomes painfully visible.”<sup>60</sup> Thus, the same possibility of the disappearing of relations, along with the chance of their non-existence, reveals their fundamental importance and confirms their archetypal position as previously argued.<sup>61</sup> Within the context of the first

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<sup>58</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 61, Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, cit., p. 88.

<sup>59</sup> Rojcewicz, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, cit., p. 66 [author's emphasis].

<sup>60</sup> Aggleton, Derek, “The Disunity of Factical Life: An Ethical Development in Heidegger's Early Work,” cit., p. 27.

<sup>61</sup> Cfr. the previous footnote quoting Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 5.

Heideggerian account of ontology, these statements attest to the influence of both the phenomenology and the historicism he was exposed to, in particular of Husserl and Dilthey, and for the sake of the project here presented they attest to the ontological value of relations.

What is the role of logic and *λόγος* in such a perspective? Aggleton suggests that through these categories, Heidegger interprets “Aristotle’s notions of pathos, doxa and logos, which in turn help to construct the existential characteristics of Dasein in the 1927 publication of *Being and Time*, especially attunement (*Befindlichkeit*), understanding (*Verstehen*), and discourse (*Rede*).”<sup>62</sup> Moreover he also confirms that “the structures of relationality [...] suggest an ontological movement that is more primordial than the ontic movement that predication indicates.”<sup>63</sup> Thomas Sheehan, in his book *Making Sense of Heidegger*, notices how in this period, influenced by Husserl, his “interpretations of Aristotle are always imbued with the phenomenological way of seeing,”<sup>64</sup> whose mainspring is “the ineluctable fact of meaningfulness.”<sup>65</sup> As a consequence, “Heidegger does use the language of Aristotelian ontology [and the term *λόγος* as well], but he uses it with a phenomenological valence.”<sup>66</sup> It could be useful to underline that “Heidegger always philosophizes within a phenomenological view of things *ad hominem* (κατὰ τὸν λόγον) – that is, in correlation with human’s concerns and interests,”<sup>67</sup> even when it comes to *λόγος*, which is examined from an ontological and fundamental point of view but always in a context where the barycenter is *Dasein*. Hence,

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<sup>62</sup> Aggleton, Derek, “The Disunity of Factual Life: An Ethical Development in Heidegger’s Early Work,” cit., p. 41.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibi*, p. 31.

<sup>64</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, *Making Sense of Heidegger: A Paradigm Shift*, London — New York: Rowman&Littlefield International, 2015, p. 13.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*; he adds: “This entails that whatever we encounter is a priori meaningful. In fact, when it comes to useful things in the world of everyday practice, Heidegger holds to the strictly phenomenological position that the «in-itself-ness» of such things is not located somehow «within» those things when taken as separate from human interests.”

relation is important for the ontological question, but from the specific perspective of the intention of the human.<sup>68</sup> Therefore it is possible to affirm that Heidegger is focused on these relational categories for their ontological implications, not only from what is here defined as metaphysical point of view.<sup>69</sup>

### 1. 3. Relation and definition: *ὀρισμός* is a *λόγος*<sup>70</sup>

From these first considerations about Heidegger's early interest toward *λόγος*, it is evident that *λόγος* and relational aspects were one of the main topics he was concerned about since the beginning. Being situated in a relational context is synonymous of being in relation *to* something — a community, a *πόλις*, or surrounding entities. Thus, it implies a fundamental co-existence in that context which, at this stage of Heidegger's thought, regards *Dasein* and its worldly dwelling. During the summer semester of 1924, Heidegger dedicated an entire course to Aristotle and to the basic concepts of Aristotle's philosophy.<sup>71</sup> In this text,

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>69</sup> A brief reminder, since the term metaphysics is used in a very different way than in the Heideggerian sense: metaphysics is understood as a meta-descriptive level, whose interpretative categories are able to provide meaning for the ontological experience. I add "only" because, since Heidegger is presenting this issue from a philosophical perspective, he also considers the intelligibility of these three categories, cfr. Rojcewicz, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, cit., pp. 65 - 66: "In this context the term «category» refers to something which, according to its sense, interprets a phenomenon in a direction of sense, in a determinate way, at the level of principle, and brings the phenomenon to intelligibility as the interpretatum. [...] Category is interpretative and is interpretative (specially of factual life) *only if appropriated in existentiell concern*" [my emphasis]; for the German version see Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 61, Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, cit., pp. 86 - 87: "Wenn gesagt wird in diesem Zusammenhang: »Kategorien«, so heißt das: etwas, was seine Sinn nach ein Phänomen in einer Sinnrichtung in bestimmter Weise, prinzipiell, interpretiert, das Phänomen als Interpretat zum Verstehen bringt. [...] *Kategorie ist interpretierend* und ist nur interpretierend, und war das faktische Leben angeeignet in existenzieller Bekümmernung" [author's emphasis].

<sup>70</sup> This paragraph, opportunely edited for the occasion, was presented at the Continental Philosophy Conference 2018 at the Warwick University.

<sup>71</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009.



Heidegger focuses in particular on the juncture<sup>72</sup> of *Dasein* and entities, on being-there and the role of *λόγος* in its conceptual aspect. In order to proceed in this sense, Heidegger deepens the character of *πάθος* and the character of *Dasein* as *ζῶον λόγον ἔχον*. To begin his reasoning, Heidegger introduces the topic through Kant and in particular through his definition of ‘definition’. Since Heidegger’s initial intention is to think about the concepts of Aristotle’s philosophy, he questions about what it is meant by ‘concept’, especially in its logical sense.<sup>73</sup> Heidegger sees that Kant’s employment of the term ‘definition’ is a matter of method,<sup>74</sup> because definition aims to be “the *means by which the concept undergoes determination*.”<sup>75</sup> As a consequence, there is a certain “*precision of concepts*”<sup>76</sup> conveyed by definition. Heidegger also warns us to bear in mind that “definition is, at the same time, a concept.”<sup>77</sup> Following Kant’s path, Heidegger acknowledges the principal difference between intuition,

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<sup>72</sup> This is an extraordinary example where it is possible to see one of the main facets of Aristotle’s thought and to really realize that “being is said in many ways,” depending on the level or the aspect considered in a certain moment of the philosophical inquiry. Consequently, we may be inspired by the Greek philosopher as even Heidegger shows to be and, somehow, Heidegger also keeps proposing a similar approach to his students and to us. In effect, the reflection about definition, as well as its conceptual aspect and the relation with the political community — where the term ‘political’ is always conceived in its etymological root — could be addressed from different perspective because it concerns the anthropological, the ethical, the political aspects. In this specific course, Heidegger refers to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, because he is interested in understanding the way in which *λόγος* can be used in a community. To do so, *λόγος* will be seen also later in the same course in comparison with something that it is impressed by it but which is also lacking of it, as *πάθος* shows to be.

<sup>73</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 9.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*: “When we consult Kant’s characterization of definition, we are struck by the fact that definition is treated in the chapter entitled «General Doctrine of Method.» Definition is a *methodological* issue, designed to lend precision to knowledge”; Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2002, p. 10: “Sehen wir nun nach, als was Kant die Definition bezeichnet, so findet sich das Auffällige, daß die Definition abgehandelt wird im Kapitel über »Allgemeine Methodenlehre«. Definition ist eine *methodische* Angelegenheit, um Deutlichkeit der Erkenntnis zu gewinnen” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

<sup>77</sup> *Ibidem*.

“a representatio singularis,”<sup>78</sup> and concept, “a representatio per notas communes.”<sup>79</sup> Already here, we see the role played by averageness, the common element, in the consideration of concepts and of knowledge. Averageness, however, can happen and can be recognized in a situation of temporal display and of not isolated setting. Hence, there are already hints to consider concepts as something more than logical abstractions. If “abstraction” is intended as something completely extraneous to *lived* experience, then what it is missed is that experience *is* in a contextualized, that is to say meaningful, *togetherness*. Definition refers to a permanent aspect recognized in a multiplicity of occurrences, to what a thing is despite of changes. Given its reference to an always present aspect, this is why definition is usually interpreted as the determination “of *what* the res in itself is.”<sup>80</sup> In other words, definition shows and sets the boundaries, the delimitation, of the defined entity that it defines. Heidegger claims that

“[...] definitio ist *ορισμός*, *ορισμός* ein *λόγος*, ein »Sichaussprechen« über das Dasein als Sein,”<sup>81</sup>

in English

“ [...] definitio is a *ορισμός*, *ορισμός* is a *λόγος*, a «self-expression» about being-there as being.”<sup>82</sup>

Then Heidegger adds

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibi*, p. 10.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

<sup>81</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 12.

<sup>82</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 11.

“Ὅρισμός ist nicht eine Bestimmung des scharfen Fassens, sondern am Ende erwächst der spezifische Charakter des ὀρισμός daraus, daß das Seiende selbst in seinem Sein bestimmt ist als begrenzt durch das πέρας. Sein heißt Fertigsein,”<sup>83</sup>

translated in English

“Ὅρισμός is not a way of apprehending through sharp determination, but rather the specific character of ὀρισμός ultimately arises from the fact that the being itself is determined in its being as circumscribed by the πέρας. Being means being-completed.”<sup>84</sup>

We see entities separated from us; we experience them in their limits; we interact with them in different circumstances; we deduce their completeness. Therefore, we come to a definition through which those limits are expressed so that the same concept can be employed. Through this consideration, Heidegger highlights the *vital* side of concepts. He says:

“Es kommt nicht auf das Kenntnissnahme, sondern auf das *Verstehen* an. Sie haben selbst die eigentliche Arbeit zu leisten, nicht zu philosophieren, sondern jeweils an Ihren Ort auf die Begrifflichkeit einer Wissenschaft *aufmerksam* zu werden, sie wirklich *in den Griff* zu bringen und sie so zu betreiben, daß der Forschungswollzug der Begrifflichkeit *lebendig* wird. Nicht sämtliche Wissenschaftstheorien studieren, die monatlich erscheinen! Es handelt sich darum, im rechten Vollzug der spezifischen Wissenschaft achtzuhaben, daß Sie *zu den Sachen Ihrer Wissenschaft ein echtes und rechtes ernsthaftes Verhältnis haben*, nicht so, daß Sie aristotelische Begriffe anwenden, sondern daß Sie vielmehr das, was Aristoteles an seiner Stelle und im Umkreis seiner Forschung tat an der Ihren tun, nämlich *die Sache in derselben Ursprünglichkeit und*

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<sup>83</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 12.

<sup>84</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 11.

*Echtheit zu sehen und zu bestimmen. Ich habe lediglich die Aufgabe, Aristoteles die Gelegenheit zu verschaffen, daß er Ihnen die Sache vormacht,*"<sup>85</sup>

in English

"It is not a matter of cognizance but of *understanding*. You have a genuine task to carry out: not of philosophizing but rather of becoming *attentive*, from where you are situated, to the conceptuality of a science to really come *to grips* with it, and to pursue it in such a way that the *research fulfillment* of the conceptuality becomes *vital*. It is not a matter of studying all of the scientific theories that periodically appear! By paying attention to the proper fulfillment of a specific science, you attain *a legitimate, proper and serious relation to the matter of your science*. Not in such a way that you can apply Aristotelian concepts, but rather in doing for your science what Aristotle did in his place and in the context of his research, namely, *to see and to determine the matters with the same originality and legitimacy*. I simply have the task of providing the opportunity for Aristotle to put the matter before you."<sup>86</sup>

The German term '*Wissenschaft*' is translated by the editors of this volume with the English word "science." However, for the sake of an even deeper understanding of this passage, we may also translate the same word with 'discipline'. In fact, the latter term provides an element of rigor and an element of continuous attentive confrontation with "[our] place and the context of [our] research." Moreover, while "science" seems to address to a knowledge exclusively reserved to the academic context, "discipline" reminds all of us that this is a matter concerning each one of us, in the academic work we carry on but not only.<sup>87</sup> Discipline is not a prerogative of a restrict selection of scientific subjects, rather it is the way

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<sup>85</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., pp. 14 - 15 [author's emphasis].

<sup>86</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 12 [author's emphasis].

<sup>87</sup> I would like to gratefully acknowledge Sean Kirkland, who helped me with important suggestions about this specific issue.

to lead our own standing in the continuous research of meaning. Or, in other words, it is an *attitude* we should maintain while doing philosophy. And philosophy is not only what occurs in classrooms or what is told in books. Philosophy is most of all what happens every single time we question ‘why?’, when we are not pleased by a meaning we inherit but when we search for it by ourselves, attracted by dissonances, discrepancies, or beauty. *Wissenschaft* reminds us, on the one hand of those principles traceable in reality — *der Schafft* recalls a certain systematicity, the intention to organize — and, on the other hand, of our proper personal way to stand in our world in order to recognize, see, those principles.<sup>88</sup> Discipline is the necessary disposition to sustain, time after time, again and again, the questioning about what surrounds, it is the disposition for philosophizing, for re-thinking and for being *attuned* with “where [we] are situated.” Said differently, discipline is what allows *Dasein* not to adapt once for all, but to remain watchful to what, time after time, *is*. In this sense, in doing philosophy we are not called to know or to learn Aristotelian concepts so that we can apply them, as philosophy was a sort of mechanical technical action where theory and practice barely speak the same language. What we are called to do is, instead, much more challenging — it is to be aware of the matters in an original and legitimate way. However, even though this is a prerogative for each one of us, this does not happen in solitude. This is especially evident by Heidegger’s choice to rely on Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and this is why the most important claim where man and *λόγος* are paired is in the *Politics*.<sup>89</sup> As Enrico Berti recently stated,<sup>90</sup> one of Heidegger’s merits in (re)thinking *λόγος* is that he does not translate this word with ‘reason’. Enrico Berti refers to another widespread translation, the translation that sees *λόγος* as ‘discourse’. However, given the etymological root of the term we have

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<sup>88</sup> I would like to thank Ludovico Zizzo from DePaul University for the fruitful exchange we had on this topic: the differences in our interpretations helped me to clarify my own.

<sup>89</sup> This point will be addressed again later when engaging with Aristotle’s *Organon*.

<sup>90</sup> Conference “Heidegger e la *Retorica* di Aristotele. Riflessioni sui *Concetti fondamentali della filosofia aristotelica* (1924)”, University of Padova, May 9th 2018.

already discussed, it is possible to see *λόγος* in its relational connotation, not only in its dialogic fashion. In fact, Heidegger claims:

“Was ist nun mit diesem *λόγος*? Er ist die *fundamentale Bestimmung des Seins des Menschen als solchen*. Der Mensch wird von den Griechen gesehen als *ζῶον λόγον ἔχον*, nicht nur philosophisch, sondern im konkreten Leben: »ein Lebendes, das [als Lebendes] die Sprache hat«. Bei dieser Definition darf man nicht an Biologie denken oder an geisteswissenschaftliche Psychologie und dergleichen. Diese Bestimmung liegt vor solchen Unterscheidungen. *Ζωή* ist ein *Seinsbegriff*, »Leben« besagt eine *Weise des Seins*, und zwar *Sein-in-einer-Welt*. Ein Lebendes ist nicht einfach vorhanden, sondern ist in einer Welt, in der Weise, daß es seine Welt hat. Ein Tier ist nicht einfach auf die Straße gestellt und bewegt sich auf der Straße, indem es von irgendeinem Apparat geschoben wird. Es ist in der Welt in der Weise des Sie-Habens. *Das In-der-Welt-sein des Menschen ist im Grunde bestimmt durch das Sprechen*,”<sup>91</sup>

translated as follows

“What is this *λόγος*? It is the *fundamental determination of the being of the human being as such*. The human being is seen by the Greeks as *ζῶον λόγον ἔχον*, not only philosophically but in concrete living: «a living thing that (as living) has language.» This definition should not be thought in biological, psychological, social-scientific, or any such terms. This determination lies before such distinctions. *Ζωή* is a *concept of being*; «life» refers to a *mode of being*, indeed a mode of *being-in-a-world*. A living thing is not simply at hand (*vorhanden*), but is in a world in that it has its world. An animal is not simply moving down the road, pushed along by some mechanism. It is in the world in the sense of having it. *The being-in-the-world of the human being is determined in its ground through speaking*.”<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919-1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 18 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>92</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 14 [author’s emphasis].

Here Heidegger clearly recognizes an essential connection between the relational framework of *Dasein*'s worldly existence and its proper characteristic, i.e., language. Heidegger states that the well-known definition of the human being as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον is not intended by Greek philosophers in a uniquely theoretical manner; that is to say as if it was disconnected from the effective way of living of the human. Instead, he says, it concerns the human being in its concrete way of being. In Heidegger's interpretation, life is not conceived in a "psychological, social-scientific" or similar connotation, because this determination is so fundamental that precedes such distinctions. Having a language, having words, means being-in-a-world. Being-in-a-world, concretely and inevitably, grasps the human in an unavoidable interrelation with the world it dwells in and with all the other beings that are in the same world. At the same time, owning a world is possible for the human being "through speaking." Once again, here it is extremely clear there is an interconnection that involves *Dasein* and its world, and it is also clear that such relation is because of λόγος: λόγος is the essential feature that describes human being and λόγος is also the same feature the human being constantly employs or, said differently, the human being cannot avoid to employ. Λόγος is the way the human being can not but act in the world, creating, and affecting the same world it lives in. At the same time, it is the λόγος of other human beings that made — and makes — the world around *Dasein*. As a consequence, even the conceptual aspects of language, such as for example definitions, owe their origin to λόγος. Heidegger adds:

"[...]wenn Definition ein λόγος ist, diese Sache der Definition ihren Boden hat, sofern λόγος die Grundbestimmung des Seins des Menschen ist. Der λόγος als ορισμός spricht das Seiende in seiner ουσία, in seinem Dasein an. [...]"

Die in den Grundbegriffen gemeinte Begrifflichkeit ist sachgebende Grunderfahrung, kein theoretisches Erfassen der Sache. Das in ihr Erfahrene wird auf etwas angesprochen. Das so Erfahrene und in diese Hinsicht Gestellte

wird expliziert und im ansprechen lebendig. [...] Ὁρισμός: »Begrenzung«, »Ausgrenzung«. Ὁρισμός: λόγος οὐσίας,”<sup>93</sup>

in English

“[...] if definition is a λόγος, the matter of definition has its ground insofar as λόγος is the basic determination of the being of the human being. The λόγος as ορισμός addresses beings in their οὐσία, in their being-there. [...]

The conceptuality meant in the basic concepts is a concretely giving basic experience, not a theoretical grasping of the matter. That which is experience is addressed to something. What is thus experienced and posited in this regard becomes explicit and becomes vital in the address. [...] Ὁρισμός: «circumscription,» «delimitation.» Ὁρισμός: λόγος οὐσίας.”<sup>94</sup>

Through Heidegger’s own words, here it is evident that the self-expression of the human, given that it is ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, is the ground from which a concept finds its proper origin. As we have seen, the mode of being of the human is characterized by language and this means that it has a mode of being-in-the-world. Now Heidegger provides us reasons to claim that “definition” is λόγος οὐσίας. In its experiencing the surrounding world with others, the human being has direct *and* indirect access to entities that it sees, understands, and engages, in their completeness. It is to say that the human being is in a context articulated by a multiplicity of entities, experienced differently, in different time, in different settings. In doing this, through human being’s self-expression, the delimitation of these entities is *said, told, and pointed out to others*. This is to say that direct experience assumes a different fashion, thanks to and because of λόγος. Such a different fashion, “conceptuality,” is not “a theoretical grasping of the matter,” and Heidegger describes it as a

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<sup>93</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., pp. 18 - 19.

<sup>94</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 15 [author’s emphasis].



“concretely giving basic experience” because he wants to make evident or, even better, to bring to light what was covered by the polar opposition inherited by modern philosophy between ‘subject’ and ‘object’. However, experience comes to be somehow ‘fixed’. How? Why? Which is the link between human’s self-expression and fixity? Trying to underline even more the process of such dynamic, Heidegger says that

“Das Ausgesprochene »liegt fest«, ist ein *κείμενον*. Die *κείμενα ὀνόματα* sind eben als *κείμενα*, als »fest gelegte«, anderen verfügbar, sie sind *κοινά*, sie gehören jedem. Ist ein Wort ausgesprochen, so gehört es nicht mehr mir, und so ist die Sprache etwas, was jedem gehört, und zwar so, daß gerade in diesem gemeinsamen Besitz eine Grundmöglichkeit des Lebens selbst lebendig gegeben ist: Es wird oft nur noch gesprochen — das in bloßen Worten Aufgehen, ohne ein ausdrückliches Verhältnis zu den Sachen zu haben, über die geredet wird. Darin liegt eine Verständlichkeit die alle gemeinsam ist. Im Hineinwachsen in eine Sprache wachse hier hinein in eine Verständlichkeit der Welt, der Sprache, die ich von mir aus haben, sofern ich in der Sprache lebe. Es ist eine *Gemeinsame Verständlichkeit* gegeben, die einen eigentümlichen Charakter der *Durchschnittlichkeit* hat, sie hat mehr den Charakter des Den-einzelnen-Gehörens, sie ist abgegriffen, gebraucht, wer braucht. Jedes Ausgesprochene hat die Möglichkeit, verbraucht zu werden, in die *Gemeinsame Verständlichkeit* zu rücken,”<sup>95</sup>

translated as

“The expressed «lies fixed,» is a *κείμενον*. The *κείμενα ὀνόματα*, precisely as *κείμενα*, as «fixed,» are available to others; they are *κοινά*, they belong to each. When a word is expressed, it no longer belongs to me, and thus language is something that belongs to everyone; specifically, in such a way that a fundamental possibility of life itself is vitally given in precisely this common possession. Often the expressed is still only spoken — consumed in mere words without an explicit relationship to the matters spoken about. Therein lies an

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<sup>95</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 20.

intelligibility that is common to all. In growing into a language, I grow into an intelligibility of the world, of language, that I have from out of myself insofar as I live in language. A *common intelligibility* is given, which has a peculiar character of *averageness*. It no longer has the character of belonging to an individual. It is worn out, used, used up. Everything expressed harbors the possibility of being used up, of being shoved into the common intelligibility.”<sup>96</sup>

It it is the same condition of ζῶον λόγον ἔχον as being-in-the-world with others that brings to fixity. This is necessary, unavoidable, for the same existence of a world as a world. The word, λόγος, creates a world. In this sense, λόγος in-forms the world and it is also in-formed by it. In between: the human being *is*. This conceptualization, the fixity Heidegger speaks about, cannot be taken once for all, as if it is always valid independently. If it were the case, philosophy should be no more. If conceptual fixity were valid once for all, thought would not have any task to carry out, any aim to accomplish, any reason for us to dwell in this world. This is our call in life, this is ζῶον λόγον ἔχον: lead ourselves, see the λόγος that surrounds, drive our own λόγος. Always live in a *relational* dynamic. The meaning of human being’s existence has to be found in this space, in the relational openness where it finds itself. Here, in this exact range of possibilities, we can *be*.

“Der Mensch wird bestimmt als ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, ein »Lebewesen« — kein biologischer Begriff in moderner Ausformung. Leben ist ein *wie*, eine *Kategorie des Seins* [...]. Das Sichaussprechen als Sprechen über...ist die *Grundweise des Seins des Lebens*, die d.h. des Seins-in-einer-Welt. [...] Ἔχον ist in der Bestimmung, ζῶον λόγον ἔχον in einem ganz fundamentalen Sinn zu verstehen. Ἐχειν wird in der »Metaphysik« im Buch Δ, Kapitel 23 bestimmt als ἄγειν, eine Sache »betreiben«, in einer Weise sein, nach einem »Antrieb«, der von diesem herkommt. Die Sprache wird gehabt, es wird gesprochen so, daß das Sprechen zum *eigentlichen Seinsantrieb* des Menschen gehört. Leben des Menschen heißt

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<sup>96</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 16 [author’s emphasis].

Sprechen. Das verweist diese vorläufige Klärung des λόγος in einen Seinszusammenhang, der vorläufig als Leben des Menschen bezeichnet ist,”<sup>97</sup>

translated as follows

“The human being is determined as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, a «living being,» though not in accordance with the modern biological concept. Life is a how, a *category of being* [...]. Self-expressing as speaking about...is the basic mode of the being of life, namely, of being-in-a-world. [...] Ἔχον is understood in the determination ζῶον λόγον ἔχον in a fully fundamental sense. Ἐχειν is determined in Book Δ, Chapter 23 of the Metaphysics as ἀγειν, «to conduct» a matter, to be in a way because of a «drive» that originates from this way of being. Language is possessed, is spoken in such a way that speaking belongs to the genuine drive of being of the human being. Living, for the human being, means speaking. Thus this preliminary clarification of λόγος refers to a being-context that is preliminarily described as the life of the human being.”<sup>98</sup>

After an examination of the relational facet of λόγος and its preliminary connection with language, it is time to see how it is related to facticity, since in Heidegger’s thought they are considered inextricably connected, especially in his earlier period. As a consequence, in order to better understand the role of λόγος, it is necessary to clarify what he means by facticity.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe Der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., pp. 20 - 21 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>98</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., pp. 16 - 17 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>99</sup> Many thanks to Khafiz Kerimov from DePaul University, who helped me with the references for this last paragraph, and to Zhen Liang from DePaul University as well, who kindly read and edited these last pages.

## Chapter 2. Ontology, facticity, relation

### 2. 1. Definition of “Faktizität”

The interpretation of λόγος provided so far suggests and reveals another important topic of early Heideggerian philosophy, a topic correlated to phenomenology itself, that is precisely what Heidegger names the “hermeneutic of facticity.” According to the reading proposed by Theodore Kisiel in his essay on this theme,<sup>100</sup> Heidegger takes up the term “Faktizität” from Dilthey<sup>101</sup> who used to employ it to indicate the “*unhintergehbare* life itself,”<sup>102</sup> “the vital original reality given to human beings to live before they come to think about it.”<sup>103</sup> Kisiel underlines that for Dilthey the attention of every philosophical inquiry should be addressed to the factic life, that is to say the transcendental fact of life itself:

“Starting from the ineradicable givenness of factic life, the phenomenologist must now enter into this life in order to understand it from out of itself, in its own terms.”<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Kisiel, Theodore, “Hermeneutics of Facticity” in *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*, B. W. Davis (ed.), Durham: Acumen Publishing Limited, 2010.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibi*, p. 18: “Dilthey’s occasional use of the term is especially influential on Heidegger. In the context of distinguishing between mythical thought and religious experience, the early Dilthey makes the following observation about the world of early humanity:

[T]his context...grounded in religious experience...is likewise conditioned by the way in which reality is given to human beings those days. *Reality is life* and remains life for them; it does not become an intellectual object by way of knowledge. Therefore, it is in all ways *will, facticity, history*, that is, *living original reality*. Because it is there for the whole living human being and has not yet been subjected to any kind of intellectual analysis and abstraction (hence dilution), it is therefore itself life...Life is never exhausted by thought” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>102</sup> *Ibidem*, [author’s emphasis].

<sup>103</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibidem*.

Kisiel suggests that the phenomenological perspective should not only acknowledge the givenness of factic life, but also, in reflecting on it, try to recognize the terms through which life presents itself, without pre-judgments or an already given theoretical framework. Moving from this position, derived from Dilthey, Kisiel continues underlining that

“[t]he young Heidegger thus sharply juxtaposes the historically situated I over against any sort of theoretical I or transcendental ego abstracted in Cartesian fashion from its vital context, thereby denuded of its world, dehistoricized and devitalized.”<sup>105</sup>

If the phenomenological approach is willing to remain as close as possible to how life appears and how the human encounters it, then a transcendental ego, detached from its historical connotations, is no longer useful. The definition of a theoretical ‘I’ immune from its proper horizon, i.e., from the circumstances in which it lives and acts, is not the interest of a phenomenological project. Paying attention to the historical context, as well as to relations as *necessary premises* for the explication of life itself, means seeing the multiple elements involved in their togetherness, therefore considering their interactions, since taking them and isolating one from the other would render the unicity occurring in their encounter impossible to capture. This is to say: the unicity that happens before any sort of theoretical reflection, before any conceptualized appropriation, is when we simply live. The phenomenological interest of the young Heidegger aims towards an investigation of the philosophical — which is *not* the same as rational, scientific or purely theoretical — means used to consider, interpret and provide a meaning of this pre-theoretical or proto-scientific experience.<sup>106</sup> That is why one of Heidegger’s first courses, held during the Summer Semester 1923, is entitled *Ontology: The*

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibi*, p. 19.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibidem*.

*Hermeneutics of Facticity*,<sup>107</sup> wherein he explicitly demonstrates a correlation between ontology, the “doctrine of [B]eing,”<sup>108</sup> and facticity, namely “the character of the Being of «our» «own» *Dasein*.”<sup>109</sup> In order to provide more elements to support his account, Heidegger returns to one of the most common and well known definitions of man, according to which human is ζῷον λόγον ἔχον. Within the account provided in this course, he proposes a brief summary in which he exposes the various ways this phrase has been interpreted, from the initial Greek definition to the more recent account given by Scheler, through Christian theology, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Zwingli and Calvin.<sup>110</sup> Heidegger begins by taking in to consideration the translation of this phrase by the expression *animal rationale*, rational animal, since the term λόγος is usually understood to mean “reason.” However, here he already suggests that such translation “simply covered up the intuition which was the soil out of which this definition of human being originally arose,”<sup>111</sup> because this expression “was indifferently understood simply in terms of the literal sense of the words.”<sup>112</sup> It is also true that in the same context, Heidegger does not lay out the path for a further investigation or definition of λόγος capable of renewing the original ground he references. In the citation from §7 of *Being and Time*, seen above, there is a sense in which he supplies these requirements that would be so fundamental for a delineation of *Dasein* that is willing to differentiate itself from other perspectives based on the description of human as *animal rationale*. There, he considers λόγος different from judgment and suggests that its

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<sup>107</sup> van Buren, John, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, Bloomington - Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibi*, p. 1. For the sake of consistency in the body of the text, I have elected to change the citation and use a capital ‘B’ in this context. In case it happens again, I will continue to note any further modifications.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibi*, p. 5.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibi*, pp. 17 - 21, but also at the end of p. 21 and in pp. 22 - 23.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibi*, p. 23.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibidem*.

role is to manifest and show something as something for *Dasein*. Hence, while in *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity* he simply proposes another way in which the term at issue might be interpreted, in the later work such interpretation is motivated and explained in a more detailed fashion that considers *Dasein*'s ability to reveal something through *lóyos*-discourse, making *Dasein* not a mere *animal rationale* but a *animal communicantes*.

Timothy Stapleton offers a helpful explanation on this subject, highlighting that *Dasein* "captures the unique being of the «I am»"<sup>113</sup> adding that "for Heidegger, what constitutes the very «am» of the «I am» is that Being is an issue for it: is a question and a matter about which it cares. This entity that I am understands this implicitly. More radically, it is this understanding or the same place where this understanding of Being occurs."<sup>114</sup> Stapleton very efficiently points out that, at this stage of Heidegger's thought, *Dasein* is directly implicated with Being and vice versa.

In the first pages of *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, Heidegger employs the following terms to explain the connection involving *Dasein* and its immediate contextualized openness, i.e., its facticity:

"[...] *jeweilig* dieses *Dasein* [...], sofern es *seinsmäßig* in seinem Seinscharakter »*da*« ist. *Seinsmäßig* *dasein* besagt: nicht und nie primär als *Gegenstand* der Anschauung und anschaulicher Bestimmung, der bloßen Kenntnissnahme und Kenntnissgabe von ihm, sondern *Dasein* ist ihm selbst *da* im Wie seines eigensten Seins. Das Wie des Seins öffnet und umgrenzt das jeweils mögliche »*da*«. Sein — transitiv: das faktische Leben sein! Sein selbst nie möglicher *Gegenstand* eines Habens, sofern es auf es selbst, das *Sein*, ankommt,"<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Stapleton, Timothy, "Dasein as Being-in-the-world" in *Martin Heidegger. Key Concepts*, B. W. Davis (ed.), cit., p. 44.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibidem* [author's emphasis].

<sup>115</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 63, Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1988, p. 7.

translated as

“[...] *in each case* «this» Dasein in its being-there *for a while at the particular time* [...] insofar as it is, in the character of its being, «there» *in the manner of be-ing*. Being-there *in the manner of be-ing* means: not, and never, to be there primarily as an *object* of intuition and definition on the basis of intuition, as an *object* of which we merely take cognizance and have knowledge. Rather, Dasein is *there* of itself in the «how» of its ownmost being. The how of its being opens up and circumscribes the respective «there» which is possible for a while at the particular time. Being - transitive: to be factive life! Being is itself never the possible object of a having, since what is at issue in it, what it comes to, is itself: *being*.”<sup>116</sup>

In this passage, Heidegger clearly emphasizes the two points I am stressing in this paragraph: on the one hand he insists on the historical and concrete aspect of *Dasein*, on the other he explains the factual way in which *Dasein* dwells, the place where he extends into in an active way. The Being-there, i.e., the *da* of *Dasein*, is constantly a *how* as well. Being-there is being present in a certain way, living in a meaningful horizon, being intentional towards something. *Dasein* is always in relation, at least with itself and with the immediacy of what surrounds it. Moreover, Heidegger specifies that this same being of *Dasein* discloses to the world, hence, it is *Dasein*'s openness that establishes the context *Dasein* lives in *as a world*. Once again, the relational aspect appears to be crucial in this ontological account, however, the responsibility of such togetherness is recognized by *Dasein*, as explained in the previous chapter.

Therefore, in order to strengthen the hypothesis here proposed I would like once more to point out the words used by Heidegger in the same context:

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<sup>116</sup> van Buren, John, *Martin Heidegger. Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, cit., p. 5 [author's emphasis].



“Dasein als je eigenes bedeutet nicht isolierende Relativierung auf äußerlich gesehene Einzelne und so den Einzelnen (*solus ipse*), sondern »Eigenheit« ist ein Wie des Seins, Anzeige des Weges des möglichen Wachseins. Nicht aber eine regionale Abgrenzung im Sinne einer isolierenden Gegensatzung.

Und *faktisch* heißt sonach etwas, was auf *so* seienden Seinscharakter von ihm selbst her artikuliert ist und dergestalt »ist«,”<sup>117</sup>

translated as

“As that which is in each case our own, «Dasein» does not mean an isolating relativization into individuals who are seen only from the outside and thus the individual (*solus ipse* [my self alone]). «Our own» is rather a how of being, an indication which points to a possible path of being-wakeful. Not a regional demarcation in the sense of an isolating contrast.

Accordingly, «*factual*» means something which is of itself articulated with respect to, on the basis of, and with a view to such a *factual* character of being and «is» in this manner.”<sup>118</sup>

In this way, Heidegger underlines what he means by the term “*Dasein*” and furthermore articulates a better explanation of the reason that he does not employ the more common word “subject” to refer to the human

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<sup>117</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 63, Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)*, cit., p. 7.

<sup>118</sup> van Buren, John, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, cit., p. 5 [author’s emphasis].

being:<sup>119</sup> he is not focusing his efforts on the human itself, but on the entire world that comes to *be* when the openness of the human is establishing and therefore expressing itself. Such being, even if investigated, at this point of his thinking, according to the way of being of *Dasein*,<sup>120</sup> is *not* something completely reducible to the human *considered as an isolated subject*. This is deducible in his definition of *Dasein* as not a mere individual, which is to say by highlighting *Dasein*'s *relational* aspect. *Dasein* indicates not only the human in its personal interiority, but also the fact that man has to essentially transcend itself and to live in this transcendence, in this going over oneself constantly, and relating with something else which is not oneself. This is to say that *Dasein* is essentially *in-der-Welt-sein*, being-in-the-world. This being (or Being)<sup>121</sup> that *Dasein* is is not considered an isolated being closed in on

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<sup>119</sup> Cfr. *ibi*, p. 21: "In choosing a term to designate this region of being and appropriately demarcate it, we have avoided the expression «human Dasein», «human being», and will continue to do so. In all its traditional categorial forms, the concept of man fundamentally obstructs what we are supposed to bring into view as facticity. The question «What is man?» blocks its own view of what it is really after with an object foreign into it (cf. Jaspers).

Having been addressed as man, the beings-which-are-there in this kind of examination have already in advance been placed into definite categorial forms for investigating them, since one carries out the examination with the traditional definition «*animal rationale*» [rational animal] as a guide. Guided by this definition, the description has already prescribed a definite position for looking at these beings and has surrendered to it, failing to appropriate the original motives which led to it. The concept of *animal rationale* was in fact already long ago uprooted from the soil of its original source and thus from the possibility of demonstrating it in a genuine manner" [author's emphasis]; for the German version see Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 63, Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)*, cit., pp. 25 - 26: "Für die titelmäßige Bezeichnung und aneignende Ausgrenzung dieser Seinsregion wurde und wird vermieden der Ausdruck menschliches Dasein, Menschsein. Der Begriff Mensch in jeder der überlieferten kategorialen Prägungen verbaut grundsätzlich das, was als Faktizität in den Blick gebracht werden soll. Die Frage: was der Mensch sei, verstellte sich den Blick für das, was sie eigentlich will, mit einem ihr fremden Gegenstand (vgl. Jaspers).

Das als Mensch angesprochene Daseiende wird für die Untersuchung schon im Vorhinein in bestimmte kategoriale Prägungen gesetzt, sofern man die Betrachtung durchführt am Leitfaden einer überlieferten Definition »*animal rationale*«. Mit dieser Definition als Leitfaden verschreibt sich die Deskription einer bestimmten Blickstellung, ohne dabei Daren ursprüngliche Motive lebendig anzueignen."

<sup>120</sup> And here we might even consider the spelling *DaSein* or reflect on the fact that Heidegger never describes the human as *Da-Seiende*, even though he is clear in marking the difference between *Dasein* and *Sein*.

<sup>121</sup> For a clarification of what stated, see the previous footnote.

itself and related only with itself, but rather a being primordially opened up to experiences. Stapleton remarks:

“Both the unity and structure of the experience (in terms of the «I», the act and the object) are determined by the unity and structural integrity of the phenomenon of being-in-the-world.”<sup>122</sup>

I would like to linger on the words used by Stapleton, for two reasons: firstly, he seems to suggest that experience happens in an ontological relation occurring among three elements (“the I, the act and the object”), so experience is something more than these three elements considered separately, at the same time, experience involves all three elements blending or relating, and so going beyond themselves. Secondly, he underlines the unity and structural integrity of the phenomenon of being-in-the-world. Unity and structural integrity here mean the gathering together of structural relations. Moreover he states that this phenomenological condition of being-in-the-world determines the unity and the structural experience of *Dasein* itself. Later, we will make explicit the reason that these aspects are crucial in the description of *λόγος* as well.

## 2. 2. Facticity and hermeneutics

Another clue to the pivotal role of relation in Heidegger’s early ontology is also found in the employment of the word ‘hermeneutic’: in his first writings, the words ‘facticity’ and ‘hermeneutics’ usually appear coupled, to indicate the undeniable fact of the character of *Dasein*’s being, which cannot be separated from an interpretation, namely an attribution of meaning that happens only within a relational context, where it appears to be something more than the mere sum of factors collected together. As a matter of fact, Heidegger constantly expresses this position in his youth works, while at the same time specifying the strict connection to facticity

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<sup>122</sup> Stapleton, Timothy, “Dasein as Being-in-the-world,” cit., pp. 47 - 48.

as the proper ground of philosophy and hermeneutics as its unavoidable property. In the course on Aristotle he taught during the Winter Semester 1921/1922 he states

“Eine Offenbarung darüber, *was Philosophie ist* uns soll, gibt es nicht. Ist sie »erfunden«? Es ist aufzeigbar, daß es so etwas geben »kann«. Wo, wofür? Für faktisches Leben. Was heißt das? Muß Philosophie sein? Irgendwie ja, wenn Leben, Existenz sein soll. »Soll«? — »es ist« faktisch da.

Es bleibt nur der eine Weg: kalten Blickes und rücksichtslos *nachzusehen*; »nachsehen«: Problem der Interpretation — *in der Philosophie sein!* Die Frage läßt sich nicht doktrinär in methodischer Reinheit, die erträumt ist und nicht den Boden sieht (Faktizität), durchführen; nicht auf Kronzeugen faul berufen, sondern sie radikal verstehen!,”<sup>123</sup>

in English

“There is no such thing as a revelation of what philosophy is and what it is supposed to be. Is it «invented»? Is it demonstrable that there «can» be something of the sort. Where? For what? For factual life. What does that mean? Must there be philosophy? In a sense, yes, if life and existence are supposed to be. «Supposed»? — They are factually there. [...]

There remains only the one way: to examine relentlessly and with a level gaze; to «examine»: problem of interpretation — to be *in philosophy!* The question cannot be pursued in a doctrinaire way and with methodological purity; which

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<sup>123</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 61, Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, cit., p. 39.

is but a dream and does not perceive the ground (facticity); not to appeal lamely to authorities, but to understand them radically!”<sup>124</sup>

In this passage the influence exerted by Husserl’s phenomenology is evident, especially in the constant insistence on avoiding an already established conceptualization of philosophy and of life. Heidegger seems to suggest a sort of continuity between the facticity of life and philosophical examination. However it is also clear that, according to his position, what he names “facticity” is the starting point of his philosophical research — indeed he clearly says “the ground” — but at the same time, being historically involved, this starting point cannot but be hermeneutic. Accordingly, philosophy is not to be considered an abstracted

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<sup>124</sup> Rojcewicz, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle. Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, cit., p. 31; he follows, *ibidem*: “The task is to examine what is actually historical, what this name actually means (what we understand today of the sense of philosophy, i.e., how we comport ourselves in philosophy, is a matter of unclarities, conveniences, unverifiable traditions, and preferences of taste), not in order to take over the historical but to have a clear possibility and a clear opposition, i.e., to acquire the genuine direction of a meditation. The purpose is not to concoct definitions and empty toy with them; on the contrary, it is philosophy itself as such that concerns us.

In philosophy, there is no justification for a vague calling and for work based on dispositions and mere fashions, as long as there is no determination, according to its capacity for decisions (positing of goals), of the motive force that which is never recognized clearly as a definitive tradition (but is instead taken as a priori and clear «in itself», e.g., philosophical tendencies in Husserl’s alloy of British empiricism), i.e., as long as we do not explicitly say that we are simply recapitulating this philosophical ideal;” for the German version see Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 61, Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, cit., pp. 39 - 40: “Es gilt nachzusehen, was Geschichtliches unter diesem Namen da ist (was man heute man davon, vom Sinn der Philosophie versteht, d. h. wie man sich in ihr benimmt, das sind Unklarheiten, Bequemlichkeiten und unkontrollierbare Traditionen und Geschmacksachen), nicht um das zu übernehmen, sondern um eine helle Möglichkeit und einen klaren Widerstand, d. h. die echte Direktionen einer Besinnung zu haben. Nicht so, daß wir Definitionen herauspräparieren und leer aushorchen, sondern die Philosophie selbst als solche uns angeht.

Es besteht zu einer vagen Berufung und dem Arbeiten aus Stimmungen und Moden schlechthin in der Philosophie kein Recht, solange die Motivkraft dessen, was nicht einmal scharf als bestimmte Tradition erkannt ist (sondern gar für a priori, »an sich« klar gehalten wird, z. B. philosophische Tendenzen in der Mischung des englischen Empirismus bei Husserl), nicht auf ihre Spruchfähigkeit (Zielsetzungen) bestimmt ist, bzw. solange man nicht ausdrücklich sagt, daß man nur dieses philosophische Ideal einfach rekapituliert.”

or merely conceptual activity,<sup>125</sup> but something in which we actually live.<sup>126</sup>

Even more clearly, in order to highlight the radical connection between the position of philosophy in such an interpretation and lived experience, he affirms:

“Nichts leistet für solche Besinnung tabellarische und enzyklopädische und typisierende Überschau von Meinungen betreffs Philosophie,”<sup>127</sup>

translated as

“For such a meditation [the philosophical one], a tabular, encyclopedic, and typifying overview of opinions concerning philosophy accomplishes nothing.”<sup>128</sup>

Here it seems Heidegger is willing to delineate a different way of interpreting philosophy by accounting for those problems posed by phenomenology as well as by historicism, without at the same time

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<sup>125</sup> In the first pages of this course Heidegger considers the way in which philosophy is overestimated or underestimated, and especially in the section titled “Underestimation of the Task of Definition” he discusses this bipolar division, cfr. *ibi*, pp. 22 - 28, see especially pp. 22 - 23: “Concrete work indeed signifies: to approach the object in its concrete form. What does «concrete» mean? To clarify the sense we must intentionally free ourselves from the determinations of «formal» logic, where «abstract», *abstractum*, is understood in the quite definite sense of general material logic and in relation to which the sense of *concretum* and «concrete» is established. Instead, we will adhere to the world. The concrete or, more precisely, that which is said to exist «concretely» is that which is condensed and originates out of compression, compaction. Insofar as an object is possessed concretely, the possession is related to the object in such a way that it grasps the determinations of the object fully and in their full jointure and compactions, i.e., properly grasps the (ultimate) structural sense of the full object in the richness that determines what and how it is.”

<sup>126</sup> Here it is not possible to examine further the argument, but it would be extremely interesting to deepen this topic in comparison with Heidegger idea of Ethics. Cfr. for example Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Letter on «Humanism,»* in McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, New York - Cambridge - Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 239 - 276, especially pp. 268 - 271 where he discusses about Heraclitus Fragment 119, ἦθος ἀνθρώπων δαίμων.

<sup>127</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 61, Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, cit., p. 40.

<sup>128</sup> Rojcewicz, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle. Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, cit., p. 31.

overrating or underrating what philosophy is.<sup>129</sup> On the contrary he considers philosophy in its proximity to human existence, neither according to erudition nor rough experience. This is a clear provocation that usually arises in Heidegger's works, a sort of incitement: of course he did not consider his forerunners and their works to be a futile encyclopedic effort, but he wants to direct our attention to the constant necessity to re-pose the question, again and again, without lingering on the safe harbour of an already attained theoretical accomplishment, encouraging the unsure, radical, and unpredictable thought instead. Philippe Quesne, in his book on *le jeune Heidegger*, attests that, for Heidegger, "le sense même de la pensée est d'être recherche, et c'est pourquoi son objet lui est constamment donné quand elle pense, mais lui est donné de manière temporelle, c'est-à-dire au cours même du chemin de la pensée."<sup>130</sup> Quesne indicates with precision the crucial role of philosophical questioning in Heidegger's perspective. A questioning that, being so related to the given historical context, is renewed by lived experience, its contradictions and modifications. Thinking or questioning is being in a never-ending investigation. Thought it cannot but be contextualized.

Quesne, continuing in his explaining of this topic, then specifies:

"C'est pourquoi l'objet de la pensée ne cesse pas d'être articulé parce qu'on le penserait de manière antéprédicative comme «penser quelque chose» au lieu de le penser comme «penser quelque chose au sujet de quelque chose». En effet, l'articulation est précisément le produit du sens de la pensée comme recherche, c'est-à-dire comme temporalisation. Cette articulation se produit comme méthode, et là encore non pas une méthode qui serait une technique, mais ce qui fait que le chemin parvient au-delà de lui-même vers un objet — *methodos*."<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> This is evidently his aim in the first chapter of the second part of the text on Aristotle, cfr. *ibi*, pp. 12 - 31.

<sup>130</sup> Quesne, Philippe, *Les Recherches philosophiques du jeune Heidegger*, cit., p. 9.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibidem*.

Delineating itself as “une analyse phénoménologique préthéorétique de la pensée, et ceci comme philosophie,”<sup>132</sup> Heidegger’s project reveals constant questioning to be its proper source. Moreover, this becomes the proper method of his research, as significantly underlined by the French scholar: a method which is not technical, but rather a proper *way* — *ὁδός*, path, modality.

Besides facticity, as already mentioned, the other term involved in Heidegger’s early pursuits is ‘hermeneutic’. During the 1923 course, he defines the term ‘hermeneutics’, proposing also an etymological explanation:

“Der Ausdruck *Hermeneutik* soll die einheitliche Weise des Einsatzes, Ansatzes, Zugehens, Befragens und Explizierens der Faktizität anzeigen.

ἐρμηνευτική (ἐπιστήμη, τέχνη) ist eine Bildung von ἐρμηνεύειν, ἐρμηνεία, ἐρμηνύς. Die Etymologie des Wortes ist dunkel.

Der Name des Gottes Ἑρμῆς, des Botschafters der Götter, wird damit in Beziehung gebracht,”<sup>133</sup>

in English

“The expression «*hermeneutics*» is used here to indicate the unified manner of the engaging, approaching, accessing, interrogating and explicating of facticity. The word ἐρμηνευτική [hermeneutics] (ἐπιστήμη [science], τέχνη [art]) is formed by ἐρμηνεύειν [interpreting], ἐρμηνεία [interpretation], ἐρμηνύς [interpreter].

It is related to the name of the god Ἑρμῆς [Hermes], the message of the gods.”<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>133</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 63, Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)*, cit., p. 9.

<sup>134</sup> van Buren, John, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Ontology. The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, cit., p. 6 [author’s emphasis].



These lines make it clear that hermeneutics and facticity are strictly connected with one another: the essential fact of historical life implicates a certain perspective, a particular hermeneutics, towards what is encircling. Vice versa, any hermeneutics cannot avoid considering the peculiar *hic et nunc* of its appearance, which is always factually present.

Heidegger, after an excursus through some extracts taken from Aristotle, Plato, Augustine and others in order to explain how this term was employed and changed during the history of philosophy, adds:

“Im Titel der folgenden Untersuchung ist Hermeneutik *nicht* in der modernen Bedeutung und überhaupt nicht als noch so weit gefaßte Lehre *von* der Auslegung gebraucht. Der Terminus besagt vielmehr im Anschluß an seine ursprüngliche Bedeutung: eine bestimmte Einheit des Vollzugs des ἐρμηνεύειν (des Mitteilens), d. h. des zu Begegnung, Sicht, Griff und Begriff bringenden *Auslegen der Faktizität*.”<sup>135</sup>

translated as

“In the title given to the following investigation, «hermeneutics» is *not* being used in its modern meaning, and in no sense does it have the meaning of such broadly conceived doctrine *about* interpretation. In connection with its original meaning, this term means rather: a definite unity in the actualizing of ἐρμηνεύειν (of communicating), i.e., of the *interpreting of facticity* in which facticity is being encountered, seen, grasped, and expressed in concept.”<sup>136</sup>

Heidegger here underlines the proper hermeneutical act, describing it as “a definite unity” of the act of communication. Communicating is implicitly hermeneutical. Hence, in his reading, hermeneutics regards the

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<sup>135</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 63, Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)*, cit., p. 14 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>136</sup> van Buren, John, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Ontology. The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, cit., p. 11 [author’s emphasis].

specific way in which a meaningful facticity displays itself. Therefore the message, that is to say the content of such communication, needs a *lóγos* in order to be expressed.

I would now linger on the German term “*der Mitteilen*” chosen by Heidegger when he underlines the necessity of a space of a pre-existing relationship so that communication can occur. This is the reason that hermeneutics could take place in “eine bestimmte Einheit des Vollzugs”: such conduct is possible in a *mit-sein* horizon. That is to say, that the context of a structured relational environment is prior to any factual happening and to any communication as well, but also that every hermeneutic act occurs in such a context, i.e., intervenes in this dimension of significance.<sup>137</sup>

Moreover, delineating the particular proximity of *Dasein*'s facticity with hermeneutics, Heidegger explains:

“Das Wort ist in seiner ursprünglichen Bedeutung deshalb gewählt, weil es — wenngleich grundsätzlich ungenügend — doch anzeigenderweise einige Momente betont, die in der Durchforschung der Faktizität wirksam sind. [...] Die Hermeneutik hat die Aufgabe, das je eigene Dasein in seinem Seinscharakter diesem Dasein selbst zugänglich zu machen, mitzuteilen, der Selbstentfremdung, mit der das Dasein geschlagen ist, nachzugehen. In der Hermeneutik bildet sich für das Dasein eine Möglichkeit aus, für sich selbst *verstehend* zu werden und zu sein.”<sup>138</sup>

translated into English as

“This word was chosen and is being used in its original meaning because, though basically inadequate, it nonetheless highlights in an indicative manner a few factors which are at work in the investigation of facticity. [...] Hermeneutics has the task of making the *Dasein* which is in each case our own accessible to

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<sup>137</sup> It could be useful to underline the plurality of such meaningful horizons, which are not unique and that might coexist.

<sup>138</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen, Band 63, Ontologie (Hermeneutik der Faktizität)*, cit., pp. 14 - 15 [author's emphasis].

this Dasein itself with regard to the character of its being, communications Dasein to itself in this regard, hinting down the alienation from itself with which it is smitten. In hermeneutics what is developed for Dasein is a possibility of its becoming and being for itself in the manner of an *understanding* of itself.”<sup>139</sup>

Once again, Heidegger points out how the phenomenological investigation which he is determined to accomplish turns out to be a research on the hermeneutical exposition of *Dasein* and its facticity — its situational experience. Nevertheless, the title of the course makes reference to ontology, so it is evident that from Heidegger’s perspective this topic is a matter concerning Being. Hermeneutics is peculiar activity through which the proper “*sein*” of *Dasein* becomes accessible to itself.

After these first philosophical investigations, still using the language adopted and without completing abandoning his influences, Heidegger deepens some of these issues in *Being and Time*, where *λόγος* is related to facticity but also with *ἀλήθεια*.

### 2. 3. *Being and Time*: an in-depth analysis of *λόγος* and facticity

Within the framework of this hermeneutics of facticity, Heidegger, in *Being and Time*, presents the corresponding position of *λόγος* in this sense, which is far from the so-called ‘traditional’ logic. This is observed in the ontological disclosure that occurs *before* any possibility of articulating a sentence. Fay summarizes with the following words what Heidegger presents through the pages of his 1927 work:

“The apophatic «as» of the proposition with which *λόγος* came to be identified, when it is ontologically interpreted, is seen as a derivative mode of truth. What it asserts is something about a being present-at-hand. But this possibility of making assertions about beings present-at-hand presupposes that these beings

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<sup>139</sup> van Buren, John, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Ontology. The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, cit., p. 11; cfr. also *ibidem*: “When looked at from the side of its «object», hermeneutics — as this object’s presumed mode of access — clearly shows that this object has its being as fomenting capable of interpretation and in need of interpretation and that to be in some state of having-been-interpreted belongs to its being.”

have been previously owned, each as such a being, through the hermeneutics «as» of interpretative comprehension.”<sup>140</sup>

The major difference between Heidegger’s account of logic and the traditional one may be recognized in the ontological interpretation: on Heidegger’s account, Western logic proceeds from an ontology of presentness, where entities are considered in their presence-at-hand, namely as *Vorhandenes*,<sup>141</sup> and not in “the deep richness of Being as *φύσις — ἀλήθεια*, emergence-into-presence from concealment,”<sup>142</sup> as suggested by him instead.

With Heidegger’s own words:

“Das in der Vorhabe gehaltene Seiende, der Hammer zum Beispiel, ist zunächst zuhanden als Zeug. Wird dieses Seiende »Gegenstand« einer Aussage, dann vollzieht sich mit dem Aussageansatz im Vorhinein ein Umschlag in der Vorhabe. Das *zuhandene Womit* des Zutunhabens, der Verrichtung, wird zum »*Worüber*« der aufzeigenden Aussage. Die Vorsicht zielt auf ein Vorhandenes am Zuhandenen. *Durch* die Hin-sicht und *für* sie wird das Zuhandene als Zuhandenes verhüllt,”<sup>143</sup>

translated in English as

“The entity which is held in our fore-having — for instance, the hammer — is proximally ready-to-hand as equipment. If this entity becomes the ‘object’ of an assertion, then as soon as we begin this assertion, there is already a chance-over in the fore-having. Something *ready-to-hand with which* we have to do or perform something, turns into something ‘*about which*’ the assertion that points it out is made. Our fore-sight is aimed at something present-at-hand in

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<sup>140</sup> Fay, Thomas A., “Heidegger and the Formalization of Thought,” cit., p. 11.

<sup>141</sup> Cfr. *Ibi*, p. 9.

<sup>142</sup> Fay, Thomas A., “Heidegger and the Formalization of Thought,” cit., p. 9.

<sup>143</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., pp. 157 - 158 [author’s emphasis].

what is ready-to-hand. Both by and for this way of looking at it [Hin-sicht], the ready-to-hand becomes veiled as ready-to-hand.”<sup>144</sup>

Heidegger reveals his way of thinking the occurrence of the passage between the presence of some thing within *Dasein*'s horizon and the subsequent assertion about that same thing. The proposal Heidegger presents about the ontological derivation of logic is different from what he considers to be Greek thought, but at the same time in his reading, at this precise point of Heidegger's philosophical project, propositions do not say something about the disclosure or about the (un)concealment itself of the worldly entities. Rather, the sentences concern, show, and evidence the role that these presences delineate for *Dasein*, in the relational context in which it dwells, but with a specific focus on *Dasein* itself. This is evident from the previous citation, in which the attention of the thinker is on the way things are ready-to-hand or “about which” for *Dasein*, in the hermeneutical dwelling of *Dasein*. Hence, even if the Heideggerian ontology on *λόγος* and logic as found in *Being and Time* is not strictly comparable to that of the Greeks, it still remains within the horizon of phenomenology. In this interaction between facticity and a phenomenological description, it is possible to consider logic not only in its apophantical expression, but also in its hermeneutical aspect. This is the reason that Heidegger claims:

“Das »Als« greift in seiner Funktion der Zueignung des Verstandenen nicht mehr aus in eine Bewandtnisganzheit. Es ist bezüglich seiner Möglichkeiten der Artikulation von Verweisungsbezügen von der Bedeutsamkeit, als welche die Umweltlichkeit konstituiert, abgeschnitten. Das »Als« wird in die gleichmäßige Ebene des nur Vorhandenen zurückgedrängt. Es sinkt herab zur Struktur des bestimmenden Nur-sehen-lassens von Vorhandenem. Diese Nivellierung des ursprünglichen »Als« der umsichtigen Auslegung zum Als der

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<sup>144</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 200 [author's emphasis].

Vorhandenheitsbestimmung ist der Vorzug der Aussage. Nur so gewinnt sie die Möglichkeit puren hinsehenden Aufweisens,”<sup>145</sup>

in English

“In its function of appropriating what is understood, the ‘as’ no longer reaches out into a totality of involvements. As regards its possibilities of Articulating reference-relations, it has been cut from that significance which, as such, constitutes environmentality. The ‘as’ gets pushed back into the uniform plane of that which is merely present-at-hand, and letting one see it in a definite way. This leveling of the primordial ‘as’ of circumspective interpretation to the «as» with which presence-at-hand is given a definite character is the speciality of assertion. Only so does it obtain the possibility of exhibiting something in such a way that we just look at it.”<sup>146</sup>

At the same time, Heidegger intends to emphasize both the original element of the as-structure of the hermeneutical facticity and the consequent understanding, that is to say the meaning, derived from the application of this structure. Pointing out something “as something” reveals the articulation of the “reference-relations” that guarantees it in its being as such: it establishes a sort of rupture thanks to which that element is no longer dissolved into the indeterminate possibility. Rather, it is recognized in the interaction with other elements, that is to say in the ordered relations that reveal that same item in its meaningful position. This happens firstly in the experience of being-in-the-world, which provides the ground for the assertion and the discourse: hence things are not only present-at-hand but are exhibited as such through *λόγος*.

For our purposes, the emphasis Heidegger places on the hermeneutical aspects of this process is particularly interesting:

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<sup>145</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 158 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>146</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., pp. 200 - 201 [author’s emphasis].

“So kann die Aussage ihre ontologische Herkunft aus der ver- stehenden Auslegung nicht verleugnen. Das ursprüngliche »Als« der umsichtig verstehenden Auslegung (*ἐρμηνεία*) nennen wir das existenzial-*hermeneutische* »Als« im Unterschied vom *apophantischen* »Als« der Aussage,”<sup>147</sup>

which is translated as

“Thus assertion cannot disown its ontological origin from an interpretation which understands. This primordial ‘as’ of an interpretation (*ἐρμηνεία*) which understands circumspectively we call the «existential-*hermeneutical* ‘as’» in distinction from the «*apophantical* ‘as’» of the assertion.”<sup>148</sup>

As mentioned above, here Heidegger’s attention is on the hermeneutic of *Dasein* in what he calls its “appropriation” [*der Zueignung*] of the surrounding world, followed by an indication expressed as sentence. Put differently, Heidegger recognizes and highlights an already existing relation between *Dasein* and the world, but at the same time he is attentive not to the encounter of two disclosures but only to the attitude, or the fashion of being that is proper of *Dasein* in this relation. This can be seen in the words he chooses to describe *λόγος* in *Being and Time*. Here Heidegger is concerned with how *λόγος* was conceived in the framework of ancient ontology, specifying how in that philosophical horizon “the *λόγος* itself is an entity, and, [...] it is something present-at-

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<sup>147</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 158 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>148</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 201 [author’s emphasis].

hand.”<sup>149</sup> Hence, *λόγος* expresses itself by sequences of words<sup>150</sup> and it was intended as something that the human could adopt or use as a worldly thing. Moreover Heidegger deepens his account in his discussion on the nature of *λόγος* as *λόγος τινός*, i.e., *λόγος* about something:

“Dies erste Suchen nach der Struktur des so vorhandenen *λόγος* findet ein *Zusammenvorhandensein* mehrerer Wörter. Was stiftet die Einheit dieses Zusammen? Sie liegt, was *Plato* erkannte, darin, daß der *λόγος* immer *λόγος τινός* ist. Im Hinblick auf das im *λόγος* offenbare Seiende werden die Wörter zu *einem* Wortganzen zusammengesetzt. *Aristoteles* sah radikaler; jeder *λόγος* ist *σύνθεσις* und *διαίρεσις* zugleich, nicht entweder das eine – etwa als »positives Urteil« – oder das andere – als »negatives Urteil«. Jede Aussage ist vielmehr, ob bejahend oder verneinend, ob wahr oder falsch, gleichursprünglich *σύνθεσις* und *διαίρεσις*. Die Aufweisung ist Zusammen- und Auseinandernehmen,”<sup>151</sup>

which is

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<sup>149</sup> *Ibidem*; cfr. Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 159: “[...] der *λόγος* selbst ein Seiendes und gemäß der Orientierung der antiken Ontologie ein Vorhandenes.” Heidegger presents the same reference to Plato, especially in Sheehan, Thomas, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Logic: The Question of Truth*, cit., p. 120: “In the *Sophist*, Plato asks: What makes a plurality of words that follow one after the other form a *κοινωνία*, an ensemble in which the words are present to each other? The answer, he says, consists in the fact that *λόγος* is *λόγος τινός*: speaking is speaking of and about something. The unity is constituted and becomes intelligible from what is being spoken about;” for the German see Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 21, Logik Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976, p. 142: “Plato fragt im »Sophistes«: Was yacht es, daß die Mannigfaltigkeit von Wörtern, die aufeinanderfolgen, eine *κοινωνία* biliet – win Zusammen all Miteinander? Das liegt, sat er, darn, daß der *λόγος* *λόγος τινός* its – die Rede int Rede über und von etwas. Die Einheit konstituiert sich aus dem Beredeten selbst her und wird von da verständlich.” On this topic and on some consequences deriving from it see Dahlstrom, Daniel O., “Heidegger’s Ontological Analysis of Language,” in Powell, Jeffrey, (ed.) *Heidegger and Language*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013, pp. 13 - 31.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibidem*: “Words are proximally present-at-hand; that is to say, we come across them just as we come across Things; and this holds for any sequence of words, as that in which the *λόγος* expresses itself;” for the German version see Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 159: “Zunächst vorhanden, das heißt vorfindlich wie Dinge sind die Wörter und ist die Wörterfolge, als in welcher er sich ausspricht.”

<sup>151</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 159 [author’s emphasis].



“In this first search for the structure of λόγος as thus present-at-hand, what was found was the Being-present-at-hand-together of several words. What establishes the unity of this «together»? As Plato knew, this unity lies in the fact that the λόγος is always λόγος τινός. In the λόγος an entity is manifest, and with a view to this entity, the words are put together in *one* verbal whole. Aristotle saw this more radically: every λόγος is both σύνθεσις and διαίρεσις, not just the one (call it ‘affirmative judgment’) or the other (call it ‘negative judgment’). Rather, every assertion, whether it affirms or denies, whether it is true or false, is σύνθεσις and διαίρεσις equiprimordially. To exhibit anything is to take it together and take it apart.”<sup>152</sup>

The first element I would underline is the importance of the unity in the framework of an analysis on λόγος. Then he also adds that within every reflection on λόγος and on its consequences, two aspects are always present. These are dynamic expression, earlier attributed to the Greek concept of φύσις,<sup>153</sup> and the element of gathering, of togetherness, of unity. Heidegger seems to suggest an interpretation of the gesture of logic as the indicator of boundaries, or rather the means through which confines are delimited and thereby shown. With λόγος as discourse, man and nature are displayed in their various ontological interactions through

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<sup>152</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 201.

<sup>153</sup> Cfr. the following paragraph on Heidegger and the course he held on Aristotle’s *Physics*.

every assertion:<sup>154</sup> asserting is making manifest those connections, addressing them, putting them together or uncoupling them. The claim that “to exhibit anything is to take it together and take it apart” first of all concerns relations. Such a claim means that though λόγος things are manifested in their togetherness as well as in their separations, they are pointed out as themselves but also as not others. Things are manifested in their differences, underlying or critically expressing the context in which they appear as these things.

Λόγος as discourse, in its ἀπόφανσις (letting be seen), i.e., both as junction, as putting together, composition, union and also as division, distinction, separation, were two aspects already faced by Heidegger in the lecture course during the winter semester between 1925 and 1926. Here, in *Logic: The Question of Truth*, he suggested the role of λόγος is to act the exhibitor of an ontology and, through a deep examination of Aristotelian logic, he clarifies how σύνθεσις and διαίρεσις might be

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<sup>154</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Logic: The Question of Truth*, cit., p. 3: “Λόγος, then, is what reveals an ontological connection between the other two universal regions we mentioned: human being (ἦθος) and world (φύσις). So the regions that these three words designate provide us with an essential (if rough) classification of beings. Correspondingly the three disciplines of physics, ethics, and logic do not come together by chance. Rather, this threefold division and articulation is essential, and by means of it the three disciplines deal with the entirety of all beings. The basic topic of philosophy is the whole of beings; and these three disciples present us with a division of philosophical labor that we must hold to as entirely natural;” for the German see Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 21, Logik Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*, cit., p. 3: “λόγος its etwas, worin such also ein Seinzusammenhang zwischen den vorgenannten zwei universalen Bezirken bekundet: Mensch (ἦθος) — Welt (φύσις). Met dem, was die drei Ausdrücke bezeichnen, haben wir eine, wenn auch rohe, so doch wesenhafte Gliederung des Seienden. Entsprechend sind also die drei Disziplinen Physik — Ethik — Logik nicht einfach zusammengerten, sondern sie betreffen in einer schon ganz wesenhaften Gliederung das All des Seienden. Sofern das Ganze des Seienden das Grundthema der Philosophie ist, zeigt sich in den drei Disziplinen eine Einteilung der Aufgaben der Philosophie, die als eine ganz natürliche festgehalten werden muß.”

interpreted<sup>155</sup> as consequences of the hermeneutical “as structure.”<sup>156</sup> Moreover, especially in the context of this work, Heidegger stresses the ontological source of *λόγος* as its starting and returning point. He claims:

“Das schlichte Erfassen also gerade der natürlichste gegebenen Umweltdinge ist ein ständiges *Zurückkommen* auf ein Begegnendes, und ein ständiges Zurückkommen, das notwendig ein Zurückkommen ist, weil nämlich mein eigentliches Sein als Immer-schon-vorweg-sein-bei-etwas. Weil mein Sein ständig so ist, daß ich mir selbst vorweg bin, muß ich, um etwas Begegnendes zu fassen, aus diesem Vorwegsein auf das Begegnende zurückkommen,”<sup>157</sup>

in English

“Thus the direct understanding of something that is given in the lived world in the most natural way is constantly a *returning* to what I encounter, a constant return that is necessary because my own authentic being, as concernful-dealing-with-things-in-the-world, has the property of always-already-being-ahead-with-something [*Immerschon-vorweg-sein-bei-etwas*]. Because my being is such that I am out ahead of myself, I must, in order to understand something I encounter, come back *from* this being-out-ahead *to* the thing I encounter.”<sup>158</sup>

From this quote it is possible to trace a sort of hermeneutic circle also operating in Heidegger’s interpretation of *λόγος*: the philosopher shows

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<sup>155</sup> *Ibi*, p. 114 and following, especially pp. 123 - 124.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibidem*; on the same topic, even if referred more specifically to *Sein und Zeit*, see also Dahlstrom, Daniel O., “Heidegger’s Ontological Analysis of Language,” cit., p. 21: “Just as predication typically co-constitutes how an assertion is about something yet also presupposes that aboutness, so the apophatic «as» supposes but also enters into the composition of the hermeneutic «as». The claim that the apophatic «as» builds upon the hermeneutic «as» still stands inasmuch as, for example, I refer to something as a lever, asserting «This is a lever» (the apophatic «as»), because I understand-and-use it as such (the hermeneutic «as»). But while such instances of the apophatic «as» suppose a use, that is, an interpretation, of things in a certain way within a certain context, they are also co-constitutive of it” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>157</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 21, Logik Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*, cit., p. 147 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>158</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Logic: The Question of Truth*, cit., p. 124 [author’s emphasis].

his efforts in highlighting the deep link between the understanding *Dasein* achieves through *λόγος* and what is surrounding *Dasein*, asserting that what encountered is encountered as something and, at the same time, that this is due to *Dasein* itself, who with language returns to things as they are, i.e., as they are considered in the as-structure. In other words, Heidegger demonstrates the profound roots of logic in the *relation* existing between what Western metaphysics used to call ‘subject’ and ‘object’. Here, he emphasizes that the understanding of a given thing is not entirely ascribable to subjective knowledge, neutrally separated from the world. Rather, it concerns a return to the elements that stimulate such an understanding — those previously encountered through experience. The same possibility of *λόγος* as *σύνθεσις* and *διαίρεσις* is to be found in *λόγος τινός*, meaning that the hermeneutic as-structure, as adherent to experience, is the starting point for meaningful logical expressions.

On the same subject, in his 1929/1930 lecture course released with the title *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*,<sup>159</sup> Heidegger clearly advances an understanding of the hermeneutical as-structure in terms of relationality. Once again, while discussing about Aristotle’s *λόγος ἀποφαντικός*, Heidegger attests:

“Zuvor ist jedoch noch einmal zu erinnern an das Problem: Welt ist Offenbarkeit des Seienden als solchen im Ganzen. Dabei wurden das >als< und das >im Ganzen< herausgehoben. Beide stehen im Zusammenhang mit der Offenbarkeit. Das >als< wurde im Sinne einer >Beziehung< gefaßt, eingeführt nur als formale Anzeige des >als. Diese Beziehung ist zur Struktur des Satzes zugehörig<,”<sup>160</sup>

rendered in English as

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<sup>159</sup> McNeill, William, Walker Nicholas, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995.

<sup>160</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 29/30, Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt - Endlichkeit - Einsamkeit*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983, p. 441.

“First of all, however, we must recall the problem again: world is the manifestedness of beings as such as a whole. Here we drew attention to the ‘as’ and the ‘as a whole’. The two are connected to this manifestedness. We grasped the ‘as’ in terms of a ‘relation’, introduced merely as a *formal indication* of the ‘as’. The relation belongs to the structure of the statement.”<sup>161</sup>

However, as he explicitly affirms, the relationality here observed is contextualized in the “formal indication” of the assertion. In other words, Heidegger is still focused on *λόγος* in its fundamental relation with *Dasein*’s language, in so far as it belongs to *Dasein*’s existential horizon. So, in this period, he reveals a particular interest in the relational aspect of ontology and in *λόγος*. However, these are not understood to be on the same facet of his reasoning, since *λόγος* appears to be the only location where the “as” relation belongs.

Hence, it is now evident that for Heidegger, since its very beginning, an interest in relations was pivotal to his ontological investigation. However, at this point in his thinking, he did not yet connect this relational context to *λόγος* as being itself. Logic was considered in its relation to *Dasein*, but only in how the phenomena were expressed and made manifest in language. These two different kinds of relations, ontological and logical, were already present as fundamental elements in his philosophical framework, however they were initially supposed to describe different areas.

As we are going to see in further detail, in this period Heidegger interprets the “let be seen” in terms of an “apophatic structure.” In other words, *λόγος* is conceived in strict interaction with phenomenology precisely because phenomenon is “das, was sich zeigt, das Sichzeigende,

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<sup>161</sup> McNeill, William, Walker Nicholas, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, cit., pp. 304 - 305 [author’s emphasis].

das Offenbare,”<sup>162</sup> that is to say “that which shows itself, the manifest.”<sup>163</sup> Thus, in the phenomenological method he developed in his proximity to Husserl and which he thoroughly presents in *Being and Time*, phenomenon and λόγος are the first and most important constituents indicating the existence of a prior relationship which is the ontological foundation of *Dasein*, namely its relation with Being. Later, Heidegger will focus on a mutual (un)concealing operating through λόγος. This will reveal itself as an essential side of Being, not only in the dialoguing activity of *Dasein*, but as the same language of Being, the meaningful expression of it through beings and beyond them.

#### 2. 4. Language and λόγος in *Being and Time* and in other early writings

In his articulation of the existentials characterizing *Dasein*, within *Being and Time*, Heidegger dedicates some pages to the issue of λόγος and language. As it will be evident here, Heidegger is still moving within a phenomenological framework and, in this sense, conceives of λόγος as the exemplification of the as-structure characterizing factual life.

In *Being and Time*, the philosopher presents the difference between *Sprache* (language) and *Rede* (discourse).<sup>164</sup> As Dahlstrom suggests “the distinction falls neatly into the ontological economy that he uses to navigate his existential analysis, namely, the difference between being on hand, being handy, and being-here (*Vorhanden-, Zuhanden- and Dasein*).”<sup>165</sup> To be more precise, *Rede* pertains only to being-here and vice versa. This is to say, “discursiveness and being-here are not identical but they are equivalent.”<sup>166</sup> Or, to use more Heideggerian language, “discourse is existential, a constitutive way of being-here that is disclosure of our

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<sup>162</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 28.

<sup>163</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 51 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>164</sup> *Ibi*, § 34, p. 203 and following.

<sup>165</sup> Dahlstrom, Daniel O., “Heidegger’s Ontological Analysis of Language,” cit., p. 14.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibidem*.

being-here.”<sup>167</sup> From these assumptions it is possible to describe a particular way of being regarding *Dasein*, and it is in this way that Daniel Dahlstrom proceeds:

“To say that we exist as discursive beings that is to say that, in and through our discursiveness, the meaning of being (i.e., being this or that, including ourselves) discloses itself to us, no less fundamentally than it does in the ways we find ourselves emotionally disposed in the world and in the ways we understand (project and work on) possibilities in our everyday lives.”<sup>168</sup>

The scholar is particularly concerned with noting Heidegger’s tendency towards considering *λόγος* as discourse in its crucial role for *Dasein*. The meaning of Being is fundamentally disclosed within discourse, as it also is for emotional disposition and for the comprehension of our possibilities.<sup>169</sup> Through discourse, Heidegger claims,

“Die befindliche Verständlichkeit des In-der-Welt- seins *spricht sich als Rede aus*. Das Bedeutungsganze der Verständlichkeit *kommt zu Wort*. Den Bedeutungen wachsen Worte zu. Nicht aber werden Wörterdinge mit Bedeutungen versehen”<sup>170</sup>

translated as

“The intelligibility of Being-in-the-world — an intelligibility which goes with a state-of-mind — *expresses itself as discourse*. The totality-of-significations of

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<sup>167</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>169</sup> For a more detailed analysis on the topic of the possibility in Heidegger’s description of *Dasein* see McNeill, William, “Rethinking the Possible: On the Radicalization of Possibility in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*,” *theory@buffalo* 13 (2009), 105 - 125.

<sup>170</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 161 [author’s emphasis].

intelligibility is *put into words*. To significations, words accrue. But word-Things do not get supplied with significations.”<sup>171</sup>

Where significations, i.e., meanings, are present, it is possible to find words as well. However, Heidegger claims, things are not provided with meaning.<sup>172</sup> Even more explicitly, he states:

“Reden ist das »bedeutende« Gliedern der Verständlichkeit des In-der-Welt-seins,”<sup>173</sup>

which is

“Discoursing or talking is the way in which we articulate ‘significantly’ the intelligibility of Being-in-the-world.”<sup>174</sup>

Whereas language is defined in the following way

“Die Hinausgesprochenheit der Rede ist die Sprache. Diese Wortganzheit, als in welcher die Rede ein eigenes »weltliches« Sein hat, wird so als innerweltlich Seiendes wie ein Zuhandenes vorfindlich. Die Sprache kann zerschlagen werden in vorhandene Wörterdinge,”<sup>175</sup>

that is to say

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<sup>171</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 204.

<sup>172</sup> In this sentence it is clear the distance between Heidegger’s account of *λόγος* at this stage of his thought, where meanings are because the completely active, and I would say appropriating, role of *Dasein*, whereas later this would be something guaranteed by Being and its presence.

<sup>173</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 161.

<sup>174</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 204.

<sup>175</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 161.



“The way in which discourse get expressed is language. Language is a totality of words — a totality in which discourse has a ‘worldly’ Being of its own; and as an entity within-the-world, this totality thus becomes something which we may come across as ready to hand. Language can be broken up into word-Things which are present-at-hand.”<sup>176</sup>

According to this claim, because language is conceived as a “totality,” discourse has a worldly connotation. What follows is that language is encountered by *Dasein* as somehow “ready to hand,” that is to say, something present-at-hand, and so employable by *Dasein* itself. Consequently,

“Die Rede ist existenzial Sprache, weil das Seiende, dessen Erschlossenheit sie bedeutungsmäßig artikuliert, die Seins- art des geworfenen, auf die »Welt« angewiesenen In-der-Welt- seins hat,”<sup>177</sup>

in English

“Discourse is existentially language, because that entity whose disclosedness it articulates according to significations, has, as its kind of Being, Being-in-the-world — a Being which is has been thrown and submitted to the ‘world’.”<sup>178</sup>

Wanda Torres Gregory underlines how, “in his move to the concept of language as the worldly expressedness of discourse, Heidegger is able to develop a more definitive account of how language serves as the realm for the expression of meaning.”<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 204.

<sup>177</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 161.

<sup>178</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 104.

<sup>179</sup> Gregory, Wanda Torres, *Heidegger’s Path to Language*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016, p. 26; cfr. *ibi*, p. 27: “As Jacques Derrida claims, it is thus important to pay particular attention to how «the question of being unites indissolubly with the precomprehension of the word being.»”

Moreover, through a re-articulation of the Greek definition of the human as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, Heidegger also proposes a consideration of λόγος, adding a reflection on *Dasein*'s struggle between what appears to be its destiny and its condemnation: because its own constitutive essence, *Dasein* cannot avoid expressing itself through discourse. But, at the same time, its discourse, as soon as it is pronounced through language and words, comes to be part of the world and in this way might be adopted as tool or instrument. Namely, it might be manipulated, decontextualized, and reconsidered until it comes to mean something different. When λόγος as discourse becomes language, it risks losing its strict connection with the spatial and temporal elements of its first appearance, which is to say that it might be considered for itself, isolated, objectified, and extrapolated by its first meaningful presentation, taken and reemployed in order to create a new one. What is the difference between these two behaviours? With Heidegger, we must answer: relationships, i.e., the structural connection involving *Dasein* and λόγος.

It is evident that here Heidegger's account presents clear differences compared to his later works, as will be discussed further. Nevertheless, here it is already possible to trace "at least the seeds of of his mature views in that account."<sup>180</sup>

Heidegger reports some considerations similar to those previously mentioned in the course he held in the summer of 1924 that we have already presented.<sup>181</sup> Here Heidegger clearly interprets the term at issue neither as reason nor as language in a strict sense. Heidegger, through an attentive reading of Aristotle, writes

“Λόγος: »Sprechen«, nicht im Sinne des Einen-Laut-von-sich-Gebens, sondern des *über etwas* Sprechens in der Weise des *Aufzeigen des Worüber* der

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<sup>180</sup> Dahlstrom, Daniel O., "Heidegger's Ontological Analysis of Language," cit., p. 13.

<sup>181</sup> See paragraph 1. 3; Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit..

Sprechens, durch das sich das Besprochene zeigt. Die eigentliche Funktion des λόγος ist ἀποφαίνεσθαι, das »Eine-Sache-zum-Sehen-Bringen«,”<sup>182</sup>

translated as

“Λόγος: «speaking», not in the sense of uttering a sound but speaking *about something* in a way that *exhibits the about-which* of speaking by showing that which is spoken about. The genuine function of the λόγος is the ἀποφαίνεσθαι, the «bringing of a matter to sight».”<sup>183</sup>

Just as in the analysis he presented in the pages of *Being and Time*, λόγος is understood in its hermeneutical connotation, recognizing that it does not indicate only the act of speaking but concerns also a *speaking about something*. However, Heidegger underlines, speaking about something is equivalent to “showing that which is spoken about.” This showing is revealed by the term ἀποφαίνεσθαι, which Aristotle usually places next to the word λόγος when his intention is to indicate that what we do through proposition is to let something be seen, as will be more evident in the second part of the present project.

He follows,

“Jedes Sprechen ist, vor allem für die Griechen, ein Sprechen *zu einem* oder *mit anderen*, *mit sich selbst* oder *zu sich selbst*,”<sup>184</sup>

which is

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<sup>182</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2002, p. 17.

<sup>183</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 14.

<sup>184</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 17.

“Every speaking is, above all for the Greeks, a speaking *to someone* or *with others*, *with oneself* or *to oneself*.”<sup>185</sup>

A comprehension of *λόγος* as speaking, and therefore as speech, not only suggests the manifestation of something addressed as something, but at the same time it implies the presence of other *λόγοι*. It is not possible to separate the intention of making something evident from the will to do so for an addressee. Indeed, there is no way of defining which is prior to the other, since *λόγος* is an essential peculiarity of the human and because of the necessary com-presence of others, there is no opportunity to determine which would be derived from the other. In other words, thinking about this issue in terms of linear causality is not helpful. Man, community, language; world and word: they appear together and in their togetherness. Heidegger seems to evoke a sort of relational primacy occurring in the political dimension,<sup>186</sup> ‘political’ here considered in its etymological sense. In this same text, it is possible to recall other passages where this relational aspect is considered in all its weightiness. These quotes are crucial for the purposes of our project, because here Heidegger explicitly reveals the link between *λόγος* and the relational dimension. Following his premises, he states:

“[...] des *λόγος* in einen Seinzusammenhang, der vorläufig als Leben des Menschen bezeichnet ist,”<sup>187</sup>

translated as

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<sup>185</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 14.

<sup>186</sup> For a detailed presentation of the topic in Aristotle see Kirkland, Sean, “On the Ontological Primacy of Relationality in Aristotle’s Politics and the «Birth» of the Political Animal,” in *Epoché*, volume 21:2 (Spring 2017), pp. 401 - 420.

<sup>187</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 17.

“[...] λόγος refers to a being-context that is preliminarily described as the life of the human being.”<sup>188</sup>

The main term here investigated is characterized, again, as a sort of hermeneutical understanding, as the meaningful horizon within which “the life of the human being” is inscribed. Here, it is possible to trace a first movement that Heidegger will develop later, the consideration of λόγος as Being and context, a togetherness structured relationally. At this stage of Heidegger’s thought, this relational context represents the world of the human being, the environment dense with significance from and in which it dwells with others.

Moreover, engaging a dialogue with the statements from Aristotle’s *Politics*, he follows his thematization:

“[...] in diese Bestimmung, λόγον ἔχον, ein fundamentaler Charakter des Daseins des Menschen sichtbar wird: *Miteinandersein*. Und zwar nicht etwa Miteinandersein im Sinne des Nebeneinandergestelltseins, sondern im Sinne des *Miteinandersprechendeins* in der Weise der Mitteilung, Widerlegung, Auseinandersetzung,”<sup>189</sup>

in other words

“[...] in this determination (λόγον ἔχον), a fundamental character of the being-there of human beings becomes visible: *being-with-one-another*. This is not being-with-one-another in the same sense of being-situated-alongside-one-another, but rather in the sense of *being-as-speaking-with-one-another* through communication, refuting, confronting.”<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 17.

<sup>189</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 47 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>190</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 33 [author’s emphasis].

Heidegger warns the reader not to understand *being-with-one-another* as a mere closeness, a proximity. Here the “with” is comprehended in a more essential way: it is exactly through λόγος as discourse, i.e., sharing “communication” that such contiguity among humans finds its proper meaning. Λόγος is interpreted as discourse, in its consequently linguistic relevance, and its description in relation to man discloses its power of connection, its capacity of relating beings who are provided with λόγος.

Then, proceeding along a path that would connect politics and language, he also claims

“Es zeigt sich, daß κοινωνία, die den Hausstand (οἰκία) bildet, allein auf dem Grunde des λέγειν möglich ist, auf dem Grundtatbestand, daß das Sein des Menschen Sprechen mit der Welt ist, das ist: Sichaussprechen, mit anderen Sprechen. Sprechen ist nicht primär und zunächst ein Vorgang, zu dem nachher andere Menschen dazukommen, so daß es dann erst ein Sprechen mit anderen würde, sondern das Sprechen ist in ihm selbst als solches Sichaussprechen, Miteinandersprechen mit anderen Sprechenden und deshalb das seinsmäßige Fundament der κοινωνία,”<sup>191</sup>

rendered as

“It is shown that the κοινωνία which forms the household (οἰκία) is only possible on the ground of λέγειν, on the basis of the fact that the being of the human being is speaking with the world—expressing itself, speaking with others. Speaking is not primarily and initially a process that other human beings may join in on later, so that only then would it become speaking with others. Rather, speaking is, in itself and as such, self expressing, speaking-with-one-another where others are themselves speaking; and therefore speaking is, according to its being, the fundament of κοινωνία.”<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 50.

<sup>192</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., pp. 35 - 36.

Λόγος as speaking not only makes manifest things as they are, as those things, creating in such a way the world of *Dasein* typical of the previous description taken from *Being and Time*, but also displays that the commonality with other people, with other λόγοι, dia-loguing with them, is the source of such world where *Dasein* dwells. Sharing the same language, or the same meanings, though in the presence of differences, signifies being a community.

All of these citations allow us to conclude that Heidegger, during the 1920s, not only once more reflects the importance of the relational context for *Dasein*, but also engages with it in terms of language and of λόγος. He seems to suggest, even if in a very unripe way, something that will be developed further: that is to say that only in the openness of relationality could language exist. In other words, only where there are contextualized relations is truth possible.

## 2. 5. Heidegger's critique of logic: the issue of Nothing<sup>193</sup>

In 1929, on the occasion of his return to Freiburg, having assumed Husserl's position, Heidegger held a public lecture in which the main topic he examined was 'Nothing' [*das Nichts*]. And it was precisely during this lecture that he made some statements regarding logic which were considered to be a strong critique of it and of other scientific disciplines mainly relying on logical reasoning. In effect, in articulating the main differences among the academic subjects, Heidegger notices that science never addresses *das Nichts*, i.e., the Nothing, preferring to focus only on *Seiende*, beings. He claims:

“Die Wissenschaft will vom Nichts nichts wissen. aber ebenso gewiß bleibt bestehen: dort, wo sie ihr eigenes Wesen auszusprechen versucht, ruft sie das Nichts zu Hilfe. Was sie verwirft, nimmt sie in Anspruch,”<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> This paragraph, opportunely edited for the event, was presented at the SEP - FEP joint conference 2018 at the University of Essex.

<sup>194</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2004<sup>3</sup>, p. 106.

in English

“Science wants to know nothing about the nothing. But even so it is certain that when science tries to express its own proper essence it calls upon the nothing for help. It has recourse to what it rejects.”<sup>195</sup>

Science, in so far as it is concerned with things, that is to say with objects, is not willing to investigate Nothing. However, it is precisely this No-thing that is the condition for things to come to appearance, to present themselves. Nothing is what lets things be. Therefore science finds itself in the curious position of having recourse to something not only unconsidered, but to something that it seems to reject and that, further, is actually the initial source of its very essence. So, if not the scientist, who is going to seek this Nothing? It is, Heidegger argues, the aim of the philosopher, since Being, the philosopher’s concern, is *not* a being, namely *Nicht-Seiende*. In Heidegger’s words:

“Denn das Nicht ist die Verneinung der Allheit des Seienden, das schlechthin Nicht-Seiende,”<sup>196</sup>

translated as

“For the nothing is the negation of the totality of beings; it is nonbeing pure and simple.”<sup>197</sup>

Being is No-thing, so it cannot be the object of investigation for science, whose attention is devoted to a deep analysis of things and their components — science’s search for atomic particles, for instance. Rather,

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<sup>195</sup> McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 84.

<sup>196</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., pp. 107 - 108.

<sup>197</sup> McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 85.



Nothing is the principal issue of research for philosophy, which listens and pays attention to what is *in-between*, what *co-involves*. Continuing his reasoning, Heidegger states that

“Das Nichts bleibt nicht das Gegenüber für das Seiende, sondern es enthüllt sich als zugehörig zum Sein des Seienden”<sup>198</sup>

in English

“The nothing does not remain the indeterminate opposite of beings but unveils itself as belonging to the being of beings.”<sup>199</sup>

Nothing is not in opposition to Being, i.e., it is not the opposite of a presence. On the contrary, it “belongs” to the being of beings itself, namely it is something among things but not determinable as *a* thing. Heidegger clearly claims that Nothing is part of the being itself. Fay tries to explain Heidegger’s perspective in this way:

“But since Heidegger wishes to forestall any possible confusion of Being with the beings with which science is concerned, he will speak of this Being which is not-a-being as the Nothing (*das Nichts*).”<sup>200</sup>

Therefore, according to Fay, Heidegger articulated this entire argument about *Nichts* in order to support his main thesis about the ontological difference and so to avoid the possible confusion between Being and beings. Speaking of Nothing instead of Being is a stratagem with which he addresses science, presenting his ontological position, using this term that science might refuse but that at the same time is etymologically related to

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<sup>198</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 120.

<sup>199</sup> McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 94.

<sup>200</sup> Thomas A., *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit. p. 2.

what science is mainly concerned with, namely things. Pointing out one of the possible consequences of such assumptions, Fay adds:

“[...] one might reasonably object, is it not a manifest piece of nonsense and a blatant violation of all of the rules of logic to attempt to treat of «the Nothing,» since the very attempt to treat of it must somehow presuppose that it *is*? It would seem that the principle of contradiction, which is the cornerstone of logic, is at stake here, and indeed logic itself.”<sup>201</sup>

Science grounds its knowledge on entities that, from a logical point of view, are perfectly described by the principle of non contradiction, which states that a thing cannot be and not be at the same time. If the attention of science is dedicated to objects, and only to them, that is to say objects considered by themselves, the consequent modality of a scientific knowledge shall be one that is based on the principle of non contradiction. This turns out to be the logical counterpart of the metaphysics of science, or, more precisely, of the metaphysics of science understood as following this principle, because they appear to share the same object of interest: things, that is, beings. Consequently any other attempt to propose a philosophical investigation of Nothing, that is to say, about what allows things to be, would overcome logic, as it has been conceived in the history of Western metaphysics. Further, Heidegger is fully aware of this.

Critically engaging with science means critically engage with logic, and, even more precisely, with certain interpretations of the principle of non contradiction. Here, I see the Heideggerian project revealing its most radical, and at the same time its most original, philosophical aspect: instead of following a common tendency in philosophy, a trend initiated in Modernity, Heidegger proposes a new path. Philosophy has looked at science as an attainable model, not only because of the way scientific knowledge expresses itself in a clear and distinct language, but also

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<sup>201</sup> *Ibidem* [author's emphasis].

because of the evident success of such an approach. Philosophy ceased to be philosophy and, instead, seemed to transform itself due to its desire to be more like science. This in turn led philosophy to become less attentive to the multiple shades of reality and more directed toward a productive transformation of it. No longer an observance, a *listening*, to the various connections among the multiple aspects of reality and their intersections, philosophy became an increasingly laboured analysis that, by continuing to subdivide every object of interest and to look for the smallest fundamental element, missed the vital breath of the ungraspable source. We must credit Heidegger with bringing forth arguments to motivate philosophy as that love for wisdom that does not mean meticulously knowing each aspect of each thing, but rather being able to pay attention to nothing, to letting everything be, and being able to draw our attention here.

Although it may appear naive, this is to be the task of philosophy, according to Heidegger's thought. And I would add that such a seemingly simple task is nonetheless not unsophisticated at all, since it invites us to constantly pay attention to what surrounds us and to *how* those elements we address as reality gather together and change, while, however, some aspects seem to remain constant. How could such attentive awareness be described as effortless, when it is the very struggle of the human condition that demonstrably require it? Is it not rigor that is demanded for a permanent standing, between earth and sky, among others?<sup>202</sup>

Continuing with Heidegger's reading of logic, he proceeds in the same lecture with the following words:

“[...] das Nichts ist der Ursprung der Verneinung, nicht umgekehrt. Wenn so die Macht des Verstandes im Felde der Fragen nach dem Nichts und dem Sein gebrochen wird, dann entscheidet sich damit auch das Schicksal der Herrschaft

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<sup>202</sup> Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, *Amicizia*, Milano: Ugo Mursia Editore, 2016, pp. 131 - 132.

der »Logik« innerhalb der Philosophie. Die Idee der »Logik« selbst löst sich auf im Wirbel eines ursprünglicheren Fragens,”<sup>203</sup>

in English

“[...] the Nothing is the origin of negation, not vice versa. If the power of the intellect in the field of inquiry into nothing and into being is thus shattered, then the destiny of the reign of «logic» in philosophy is thereby decided. The idea of «logic» itself disintegrates in the turbulence of a more originary questioning.”<sup>204</sup>

Given its crucial ontological role, it is the case that Nothing is the very starting point for negation rather than the contrary. But Nothing cannot be investigated by a logic that calls itself scientific, due to its exclusive attention to things. As a consequence, following these premises, a logic so conceived cannot inform philosophy. Fay highlights that in this passage the word “logic” is presented between quotation marks, suggesting that Heidegger considers the term in a particular sense,<sup>205</sup> that is to say that Heidegger addresses his criticism to a certain way of considering logic in its unquestioned supremacy. In Heidegger’s opinion, it is time to raise a “more primordial questioning” regarding logic, because then what follows is an urgent questioning of Being. Further, it is the case that in this new

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<sup>203</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 117.

<sup>204</sup> McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 92; here Fay’s translation of the same passage, Fay, Thomas A., “Heidegger and Formalization,” cit., p. 11, and Fay, Thomas A., Heidegger, *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., p. 2: “[...] the Nothing is the source of negation and not the other way around. If this breaks the might of understanding in the field of questioning into the Nothing and Being, then the fate of the dominance of «logic» in philosophy is also decided. The very idea of «logic» disintegrates in the whirl of a more primordial questioning.”

<sup>205</sup> Fay, Thomas A., “Heidegger and Formalization,” cit., p. 11: “Logic, one should be careful to note, is placed in quotation marks in the text, and so is used in a special sense. The «idea of logic» which is «dissolved» by a more original manner of questioning is to be understood as a reductionist logician which totally dominates all philosophic thinking.”

way logic would not “exhaust all of the possibility of thought.”<sup>206</sup> Fay, commenting on Heidegger’s claim, attests:

“By the very fact that the rules of logic preclude even the possibility of a meaningful questioning about the Nothing, logic’s fate has been decided.”<sup>207</sup>

Once again, if logic considers any potential question about nothing futile, its destiny will follow from this.

With this analysis of the strict connection between logic, or rather *λόγος*, and Being that Heidegger considers, it is now possible to read through the lines of such statements, and to try to deduce a different reading of them. Here, Heidegger is not referring to logic in order to show its unsuitability compared to philosophy, but rather to point out its limits and, above all, to (re)direct logic to its ontological source. Indeed, if we consider Being in its nothingness and, following the reasoning Heidegger is proposing in this context, if we recognize that science is concerned only with things, then it is possible to see that the basic criteria for logic should not be the application of formal rules. Rather, this basic criteria is revealed to be Nothing, No-thing, namely Being, that which displays and (un)conceals itself. Nothing, that which is incomprehensible for logic, is its principle. Nothing, which is impossible to fully express and can only be mentioned in sentences, is the starting point for any sentence. Nothing happens and this is the ontological root for *any* thing.

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<sup>206</sup> *Ibi*, p. 12.

<sup>207</sup> Fay, Thomas A., Heidegger, *Heidegger: The Critique of Logic*, cit., p. 3.

## Chapter 3. Heidegger's λόγος after the Turn

### 3. 1. Meanings of Kehre

Starting from the 1930s, in the years following the publication of *Being and Time*, Heidegger deals with some problematic issues in his thought, especially in the unresolved part not written for his 1927 work. The project presented in that volume was not completed because, he says,

“my thinking failed to adequately express this reversal and did not succeed with the [transcendental] language.”<sup>208</sup>

The reversal he refers to regards what was meant to be the third section of *Being and Time*, that is to say the section in which the phenomenological description would proceed from the world to *Dasein*. What was put to question was the transcendental approach in such a discussion. Addressing this issue, Thomas Sheehan attests:

“Heidegger made a first stab at *BT* I.3 in his 1927 course «Basic Problems of Phenomenology,» where he continued to use the transcendental-horizonal approach of *BT* I.1-2. However, the effort made little progress, and at that point Heidegger’s plan to work out *BT* I.3 within a transcendental framework collapsed.”<sup>209</sup>

Sheehan is very critical of those interpreters of Heidegger that understand the *Kehre* as a “shift in Heidegger’s approach to his central topic,”<sup>210</sup> rather, he considers the turn itself to be “Heidegger’s central topic.”<sup>211</sup> As

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<sup>208</sup> McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., pp. 249 - 250.

<sup>209</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, “The Turn” in *Martin Heidegger. Key Concepts*, B. W. Davis (ed.), cit., p. 89.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibi*, p. 82.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibidem*.

a consequence, “the *Kehre* in its basic and proper sense never «took place», least of all in Heidegger’s thinking.”<sup>212</sup>

In order to clarify the argument he is proposing, Sheehan distinguishes three different meanings of the Turn:

“(i) the basic and proper sense — the bond between *Dasein* and *Sein*; (ii) the 1930s shift in how Heidegger treated that bond; and (iii) the act of resolve as a transformation in one’s relation to that bond.”<sup>213</sup>

From these words, the scholar seems to consider the *Kehre* to be not only Heidegger’s shift in addressing to his ontological topic, but also to include two other elements: first of all the relation between Being and *Dasein*, secondly the proper action of transforming what regards every *Dasein* in its relation to Being.

Sheehan suggests a better explanation, especially as concerns the first meaning of this term: according to his interpretation of Heidegger’s thought, Heidegger conceives of the *Kehre* as *Gegenschwung*, namely the “reciprocity” that occurs between the need of Being for *Dasein* and the need of *Dasein* for Being.<sup>214</sup> He continues:

“The Latin *reci-proci-tas* means literally «back-and-forth-ness», which is how Heidegger understands the tension or «oscillation» (*Erzittern*) between *Dasein*’s thrownness into and its sustaining of *Sein*.”<sup>215</sup>

Sheehan’s position seems to resolve the *Kehre* within Heidegger’s thought not insofar as it is not a complete reversal of his philosophy after *Being and Time*, but rather is a sort of consequence already intrinsic in the premises of his work. Yet something shifts in Heidegger’s philosophical

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<sup>212</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibidem*.

research and, in order to properly understand it, Sheehan proposes to pay attention to the definition of Being as ‘meaning’. Momentarily choosing to maintain a reference to the pre-phenomenological lexicon with the aim to explain the issue, he states:

“[...] one should be clear that Heidegger himself understood *Sein* phenomenologically, that is, within a reduction from *being* to *meaning*, both (a) as giving meaning to the meaningful (= *das Sein des Seienden*) and (b) as the meaning-giving *source* of the meaning of the meaningful (= *das Ereignis*).”<sup>216</sup>

Moving from a strictly phenomenological background, Sheehan here suggests that every phenomenological occurrence, as an addressee of intention, is full of significance. Hence, as a consequence, what it is is meaningful and so requires a source for that meaning, which in Sheehan’s reading is found in Being itself. Briefly:

“[...] *das Seiende* is «the meaningful», and *das Sein* gives it meaning.”<sup>217</sup>

Therefore, according to this perspective, *das Sein*, Being, and *das Seiende*, a being, are reciprocally involved in a relation of meaning, where both need the other in order to express itself. In his presentation about Heidegger’s thought, Quesne appears to share the same opinion, affirming that

“La significativité a donc — au sense large — une fonction ontologique, dans la mesure où elle indique ce qui existe: existe ce qui est significatif.”<sup>218</sup>

What exists is in a contextualized scenario, that is to say in a relational horizon where what is involved brings meaning not only by itself but also

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<sup>216</sup> *Ibi*, p. 83.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>218</sup> Quesne, Philippe, *Les Recherches Philosophiques du Jeune Heidegger*, cit., p. 161.



by how it is related to what surrounds it. But what about this relation that is fundamental for the contribution of meaning? How ought it be described? Does it not seem to be beneath the same appearance of the significance that Sheehan, along with Quesne, intends to develop in his analysis?

Moreover, here Quesne demonstrates how this position is an attempt to overturn *le problème ontologique*, since, especially in Heidegger's early writings where he focuses on the topic of facticity, the meaning of existence and the character of reality belong to factive life.<sup>219</sup> Sheehan suggests a similar interpretation since he considers that Heidegger, when indicating *das Seiende*, means "things not as just existing-out-there (*existens*) but rather insofar as they make sense within human concerns and thus are meaningful and significant (*bedeutsam, verständlich, sinnhaft*)."<sup>220</sup>

Combining the above three definitions of *Kehre* Sheehan presented and the previously mentioned considerations about Being and meaning, now is the moment to follow Sheehan's arguments to see how he attempts to comprehend the Heideggerian term at issue.

Considering firstly the *Kehre* as the necessary bond between *Dasein* and *Sein*, he alludes to some statements pronounced by Heidegger:

"The basic idea of my thinking is precisely that meaning [*Sein*], i.e., the process of meaning-giving [*die Offenbarkeit des Seins*] requires human being; and

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<sup>219</sup> *Ibidem*: "Mais l'intérêt de cette notion est ce qu'elle bouleverse le problème ontologique. En effet, de quoi y a-t-il «sens d'existence» ou «caractère de réalité»? Des objets, des choses, des contextes? Non. Il y a «sense d'existence» ou «caractère de réalité» del la «vie factive». Cela signifie que l'ontologie ne préjuge rien sur les objets, la forme des objets, ou même le nombre des objets qui existent, mais que l'ontologie est dite de la «vie factive». [...] Que signifie alors, à travers cette notion de significativité, une ontologie de la vie factive, pour autant qu'elle n'est ni ontologie naïve des objets ni existence comme position par la vie factive? En fait, le propre de ce qui se donne comme significatif pour une vie factive est de ne pas se donner comme objets, comme chose, comme contexte, ou avec une forme déterminée, mais de se donner comme significatif [...]. Tout ce qui sert à déterminer le sens d'existence ou le caractère de réalité d'un objet contient déjà en soi des présuppositions ontologiques — objectivité, temps, espace, etc. Ce qui se donne comme significatif a caractère ontologique, mais c'est le caractère ontologique de quelque chose qui est problématique dans son caractère de forme: l'ontologie est moins le quelque chose que le «il y a»."

<sup>220</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, "The Turn," cit., p. 83.

conversely that human being is human insofar as it stands in [i.e., sustains] the process of meaning-giving.”<sup>221</sup>

In this way of reading Heidegger’s words, it appears that Heidegger’s main point is the bond occurring between *Dasein* and meaning, thanks to which things have their significance. Nevertheless, Sheehan prefers to stress the meaning itself, whereas I would rather linger on the relational aspects that, in my opinion, are the constitutive elements responsible for providing meaning and which are also already implied in a meaningful occurrence.

Proceeding with his analysis, Sheehan continues to point out the interpretative aspect of *Dasein*. As beforehand suggested, according to Heidegger, *Dasein* is hermeneutical, always needing meaning and always trying to make meaning possible.<sup>222</sup> Sheehan uses evocative words to underline its importance:

“Meaning is men’s life-breath. Take it away, obliterate its source and there is no human being left.”<sup>223</sup>

Superimposing Being and meaning, and considering the constitutive role of *Sein* in respect to *Dasein*, Sheehan highlights how significance is crucial for the very existence of the human, claiming it is as important as breathing. At the same time, to be operative and effective, meaning needs the human being as a place to appear. He states:

“Without *Sein* there is no *Dasein*. Without *Dasein* there is no *Sein*. Man must be *claimed* for, or *appropriated* to, or *thrown* into, sustaining the *a priori* process

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<sup>221</sup> *Ibi*, pp. 87 - 88; cfr. Wisser, Richard, *Martin Heidegger in Conversation*, New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann Publishers, 1977, p. 82.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibidem*.

for meaning-giving. And as claimed/appropriated/thrown, man is required to *projectively hold open* meaning-giving.”<sup>224</sup>

Once again, following his considerations concerning the equation between Being and meaning, Sheehan highlights their mutual belonging together, but at the same time his words may suggest another reading: if, in order for the meaning-giving to have access to *Dasein*, it is required to be “projectively open” and to maintain such openness, this suggests that meaning, to display itself, demands a *prior* relation or that what is meaningful is principally *such relation*. Openness is synonymous with un-closure, which recalls a relational experience where there is no isolation, but rather reciprocal interaction. Only where there is relation — and what type of relation will be discussed further — could there also be meaning. In my reading of Heidegger’s ontology, critical of Sheehan’s approach on this point, a consideration of Being as meaning is subsequent to the one that contemplates relation as one of the pivotal connotations of *Sein* in Heidegger’s thought. Gert-Jan van der Heiden provides us with some significant insights to deepen further this important point. In *The Truth (and Untruth) of Language: Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida on Disclosure and Displacement*<sup>225</sup> he highlights the relational aspect of *λόγος* from which meaning has meaning. Above all, he is precise in presenting Being in its withdrawing. As a consequence, *Dasein*’s aim is to take Being from concealment through language even if not in a fully determinate way that would be valid once for all. Moreover, he is attentive in underlining Heidegger’s “great care”<sup>226</sup> to show that the relation

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<sup>224</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

<sup>225</sup> van der Heiden, Gert-Jan, *The Truth (and Untruth) of Language: Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida on Disclosure and Displacement*, Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2010.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibi*, p. 26.

between language and what is said of it is not “a connection between two given beings.”<sup>227</sup>

Continuing his argument, Sheehan adds:

“The tension of those two [being and *Dasein*] is the fundamental factum, the *Kehre* in its basic and proper sense.”<sup>228</sup>

According to my interpretation, this tension or bond is essentially a fundamental relation (*das Verhältniss*), a grounding dynamic interaction thanks to which things are provided with meaning and that also requires *Kehre*. However, even if he appears to recognize its central role, Sheehan chooses once again not to stress this relational aspect in itself but only in its consequences on meaning. The relationally articulated Being is properly meaningful *because of* the ontological structured relation occurring. Further, in *Dasein*'s language it is also possible to say something, to relate words, because *Dasein* is always already *in structured relations* that cannot but be meaningful. This meaning, however, does not come only from the given context but also from *Dasein* itself thanks to its ability to establish new relations. From this, it is possible to then articulate language and words not only in evocative ways

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<sup>227</sup> *Ibidem*; moreover he adds: “A word is not in the first place a representation of a being. Instead, an assertion shows a being as it has been disclosed by the understanding.”

<sup>228</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, “The Turn,” cit., p. 88, [author's emphasis]. Sheehan chooses a quotation from Heidegger to sustain his position: “Appropriation has its innermost occurrence and its widest reach in the turn. The turn that is *a priori* operative in appropriation is the hidden ground of all other subordinate turns, circles, and circularities, which themselves are obscure in their provenance, remain unquestioned, and are taken in themselves as the «ultimate»;” cfr. Rojcewicz, Richard, and Vallega-Neu, Daniela, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012, p. 186.

but also in creative ones.<sup>229</sup> Van der Heiden, for example, insists on this aspect in stressing the manners in which Being withdraws itself, leading to the necessity of creativity for *Dasein*. He states:

“This creativity of truth is the creativity of finitude. We belong to a whole that we cannot encompass; this makes our finitude. The whole of being fundamentally *withdraws* itself, but it attracts us *not as the absolutely present and actual* being, but exactly as that which withdraws itself. Only when the whole is intrinsically concealed as the as-yet unthought, is creative task to uncover it and to disclose it, the most fundamental task of thinking.”<sup>230</sup>

In my opinion, van der Heiden is capable of grasping a fundamental aspect of the interpretation I propose: to recognize the whole in which we are involved, i.e., Being, in its withdrawing, means considering *Dasein*'s ability to listen to what remains unsaid — future relations. This requires the creativity to capture this concealing, these relations, that bring such meanings in language.

Returning to Sheehan's analysis, he notices that in *Being and Time*, Heidegger's project was to deepen the topic in two directions, from man to world and vice versa; both these moments were supposed to be considered in a transcendental-horizonal framework.<sup>231</sup> The second part was not presented in Heidegger's 1927 work and never appeared later, since he modified the manner in which to consider the matter. In effect, it

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<sup>229</sup> It would be possible to suggest that Sheehan would object to my reading by affirming that we can say something because of the meaning that is already present in the relational articulation. I find this to be true, but only moving from the consideration of the relational aspect in which we are involved. Moreover, it is my concern to emphasize the relational facet of this dynamic, otherwise I think that, by stressing more on the previous already given meaning, there would be no space for human freedom in creating or showing new meanings by break into the established setting. As I suggest, sustained by Van der Heiden words, Being shows itself through structured relations but, at the same time, it withdraws itself. It is in this withdraw, in this apparent retreat, in this *Lichtung*, that human being finds itself, thrown and free.

<sup>230</sup> van der Heiden, Gert-Jan, *The Truth (and Untruth) of Language: Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida on Disclosure and Displacement*, cit., p. 16 [author's emphasis].

<sup>231</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, “The Turn,” cit., p. 89. See also the beginning of this paragraph.

is precisely on the projectivity of *Dasein* that Heidegger's considerations were modified. Concerning this change, Sheehan declares:

“Shortly after publishing *Being and Time* Heidegger began shifting his method for treating [...] the reversal of direction. Instead of a transcendental approach in both steps, Heidegger adopted what he called a *seinsgeschichtlich* approach.”<sup>232</sup>

The transcendental way of expressing the reversal from world to man failed, and as a consequence Heidegger dedicated his efforts to a *seinsgeschichtlich* methodology. It is crucial to properly understand this term according to his thought. Sheehan offers the following understanding:

“Usually mistranslated as «being historical», the term *seinsgeschichtlich* has nothing to do with history and everything to do with *Es gibt Sein*. We may translate that latter phrase as: «Meaning-giving is a priori operative wherever there is human being» – which means that the *Schickung/Geschicht des Seins* (the «sending» or «giving of meaning») is the same as the meaning-giving bond of man-meaning.”<sup>233</sup>

Sheehan makes an effort to clarify what he defines as a different approach in Heidegger's method, a consequence of a change that Heidegger considered necessary at that stage of his thought. And Sheehan proposes his interpretation moving from the premises previously exposed, seeing in the *seinsgeschichtlich* an almost hermeneutical tendency always in effect whenever *Dasein* is present. In its being there (*Da-sein*), man is in a situated horizon of meaning which is provided by Being. So it is not only an issue related to an 'historical being', but of this contextualized perspective of sense given to the relation between Being and human.

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<sup>232</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibi*, p. 90.

Sheehan is attentive to point out the *essential* character of a not isolated projectivity of the human, as that would represent a continuity with what was proposed in *Being and Time*. Rather, here weight is placed on Being as source of meaning that, however, still requires the openness of *Dasein* to fully express itself.

As a consequence:

“The presupposition of the *seinsgeschichtlich* approach is that meaning is always-already given with human being itself rather than through some projective activity on the part of this or that person. Moreover, the emphasis now is less on man projectively *holding open* the world and more on man’s *being required* to hold open the world.”<sup>234</sup>

In other words, Sheehan underlines that in this period Heidegger completes his detachment from phenomenology: in this sense, it is not only possible for *Dasein* to project holding open the world, it is necessarily to act in such a way. What follows is that *λόγος* cannot be considered as discourse alone, as pointing out, as letting something be seen as such, that is to say that *λόγος* cannot be considered only in its functional role of expressing, relating, gathering things as they phenomenologically appear to *Dasein*. There is instead a deeper relation that permits this encounter, or better, that *requires* it. The passage between the preliminary consideration of projective *Dasein* and this second one just exposed is called “leap” by Heidegger: according to Sheehan, the term was chosen because “he considers it impossible to make a smooth and simple transition from a transcendental to a *seinsgeschichtlich* approach.”<sup>235</sup> To provide elements for his position, Sheehan suggests to refer to the 1930 essay titled *On the Essence of Truth*, where Heidegger states:

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<sup>234</sup> *Ibi*, pp. 90 - 91 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>235</sup> *Ibi*, pp. 92 - 93; he adds, *ibidem*: “Thus «the leap into the Kehre that is a priori operative in appropriation» means overcoming the transcendental-horizonal approach of *BT* I.1-2 and starting afresh with the *seinsgeschichtlich* («meaning-i-already-given») approach of *BT* I.3.”

“Die Wahrheit des Wesen ist das Wesen der Wahrheit,”<sup>236</sup>

for which he proposes this translation

“The process of meaning-giving (*die Wahrheit des Wesen*) is the source of truth-as-correspondence (*das Wesen der Wahrheit*).”<sup>237</sup>

This is because, in the mentioned essay, Heidegger argues that:

“1. Truth as correspondence is made possible by human freedom, which is man’s a priori relatedness to the meaningful (= sections 1-5 of *On the Essence of Truth*)

2. Human being is bound up with two newly formulated dimensions of the hiddenness of the meaning-giving source (= sections 6-7 of the essay):

(a) the source as intrinsically concealed (*Verbergung* as the «mystery»);

(b) the source as overlooked and forgotten (*Irre*).”<sup>238</sup>

Sheehan sees in the second step a “*new* dimension,”<sup>239</sup> because “showing that the source of all meaning is intrinsically «concealed» (i.e., unknowable in the strict sense of the term)”<sup>240</sup> entails that “in order to know what meaning-giving is, we would have to presuppose the very meaning-giving itself.”<sup>241</sup> What is interesting to remark is that he emphasizes a connection with such a Heideggerian outcome and authenticity or inauthenticity characterizing the dimension of *Dasein*. In his words:

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<sup>236</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 201.

<sup>237</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, “The Turn,” cit., p. 93.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibi*, p. 92.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

<sup>240</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibidem*.



“At the best we can only experience *that* the source is, without knowing *what is responsible* for it. We can sense our fate (facticity) as thrownness into finite and mortal meaning-giving and then either embrace it in an act of resolve (authenticity) or flee from our essential involvement in it (inauthenticity).”<sup>242</sup>

Through human experience it is possible to behold the origin of meaning-giving, namely of Being, thanks to *Dasein*'s condition of thrownness. *Dasein* might also behave in accordance to such exposure or not. The acceptance or rejection of such involvement determines the authenticity or inauthenticity of human existence. In other words, our willingness to be attentive to Being speaks to the way of our living. A way that, in Heidegger's view, is not decided once for all: he insisted all his life on the importance of questioning, a questioning which, the more deeply it grasps

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<sup>242</sup> *Ibidem* [author's emphasis].

the human, the more it leads to a silent involved action.<sup>243</sup> This action is ‘silent’ because, on Heidegger’s account, it should — and Heidegger uses the normative “should” here — not be articulated in mere talk: once that *Dasein*, in its relation to Being, experiences restraint, its language becomes closer to Being, thus less disposed to colloquial communication.

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<sup>243</sup> See Rojcewicz, Richard, Schuwer André, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected “Problems” of “Logic,”* Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994, pp. 3 - 4: “The task of this brief preliminary interpretation of the essence of philosophy will simply be to attune our questioning attitude to the right basic disposition or, to put it more prudently, to allow this basic disposition a first resonance. But, then, philosophy, the most rigorous work of abstract thought, and—disposition? Can these two really go together, philosophy and disposition? To be sure; for precisely when, and because, philosophy is the most rigorous thinking in the purse dispassion, it originates from and remains within a very high disposition. Pure dispassion is not nothing, certainly not the absence of disposition, and not the sheer coldness of the stark concept. On the contrary, the pure dispassion of thought is at the bottom only the most rigorous maintenance of the highest disposition, the one open to the uniquely uncanny fact: that there *are* beings, rather than not. If we had to say something immediately about this basic disposition of philosophy, i.e., of future philosophy, we might call it «restraint» [*Verhaltenheit*]. [...] Restraint is the basic disposition of the relation to Being, and in it the concealment of the essence of Being becomes what is most worthy of questioning. Only one who throws himself into the all-consuming fire of the questioning has the right to say more of the basic disposition than its allusive name. Yet once he has wrested for himself this right, he will not employ it but will keep silent. For all the more reason, the basic disposition should never become an object of mere talk, for example in the popular and rash claim that what we are now teaching is a philosophy of restraint” (translator’s emphasis); Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 45, Grundfragen der Philosophie. Ausgewählte »Probleme« der »Logik,«* cit., pp. 1 - 2: “Diese kurze Vordeutung auf das Wesen der Philosophie hat lediglich die Aufgabe, unsere fragende Haltung auf die rechte *Grundstimmung* abzustimmen oder, vorsichtiger gesprochen, diese Grundstimmung zu einem ersten Anklang zu bringen. Doch: Philosophie, die strengste denkerische Arbeit des Begriffes, und — Stimmung? Wie geht beides zusammen, Philosophie *und* Stimmung? Allerdings; denn gerade wenn und weil die Philosophie das härteste Denken aus der reinsten Nüchternheit bleibt, entspringt sie aus und verweilt sie in ihrer höchsten Stimmung. Reine Nüchternheit ist ja nicht nichts, gar nicht das Fehlen der Stimmung, auch nicht die bloße Kälte des starren Begriffes, sondern die reine Nüchternheit des Denkens ist im Grunde nur das strengste Ansichhalten der höchsten Stimmung, jener nämlich, die sich geöffnet hat den in sich einzigen Ugeheuren: daß Seiendes *ist* und nicht vielmehr nicht ist.

Diese Grundstimmung *der* Philosophie, d. h. der *künftigen* Philosophie, nennen wir, wenn davon überhaupt unmittelbar etwas gesagt werden darf: die *Verhaltenheit*. [...] Die *Verhaltenheit* ist die *Grundstimmung des Bezuges zum Seyn*, in welchem Bezug die Verborgenheit des Wesen des Seyns das Fragwürdigste wird. Nur wer sich in das verzehrende Feuer des Fragens nach diesem Fragwürdigsten stürzt, hat ein Recht, von dieser Grundstimmung mehr als nur dies hinweisende Wort zu sagen. Wenn er dieses Recht errungen hat, wird er es nicht gebrauchen, sondern schweigen. Niemals aber darf die angezeigte Grundstimmung der Gegenstand eines Geredes werden, etwa nach jener beliebten und schnellfertigen Art, die jetzt feststellt, hier werde eine Philosophie der *Verhaltenheit* gelehrt” [author’s emphasis].

I would linger and emphasize the common root of the word *Verhaltenheit*, employed by Heidegger in this context, and the word *Verhältnis*, often used by Heidegger while speaking about the relation Being is. Both these terms entail a staying together, being together. Put differently: a gathering.

‘Involved’ because, precisely in its relation to Being, *Dasein* is more open to what it is, in an ek-sistential manner.<sup>244</sup>

The third and last meaning of *Kehre* proposed by Sheehan is inherent to the “existentiell transformation (*Verwandlung*) of human beings and their worlds of meaning by way of an insight into *Kehre-1*<sup>245</sup> and a corresponding act of resolve.”<sup>246</sup> Using the letter Heidegger wrote to Richardson as a source, where Heidegger takes some lines from the lecture course *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected «Problems» of «Logic»* held during the Winter Semester 1937/1938, Sheehan is able to affirm that such a meaning of turn “had actually been at issue as early as *Being and Time*, the motto of which was, in effect, «Become what you already are».”<sup>247</sup> Here Heidegger’s words:

“Immer wieder ist einzuschärfen: In der hier gestellten Wahrheitsfrage gilt es nicht nur eine Abänderung des bisherigen Begriffes der Wahrheit, nicht eine Ergänzung der geläufigen Vorstellung, es gilt eine *Verwandlung des Menschseins* selbst. Diese Verwandlung ist nicht durch neue psychologische oder biologische Einsichten gefordert — der Mensch ist hier nicht Gegenstand irgendeiner Anthropologie —, der Mensch steht hier zur Frage in der tiefsten und weitesten, der eigentlich grundhaften Hinsicht, der Mensch in seinem

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<sup>244</sup> On this point, see the discussion developed about Heidegger’s claims in *Letter on «Humanism»*.

<sup>245</sup> This might be the moment to recall Sheehan’s distinction of *Kehre* in the text I am quoting. The scholar understands the term at issue in three different ways: the first one is as it is presented by Heidegger in the Contributions; the second is the *seinsgeschichtlich* approach; the third concerns the transformation of human beings. See Sheehan, Thomas, “The Turn”, cit., p. 87: “To keep things distinct, I shall use «*Kehre-1*» to designate the basic *Kehre* discussed in *Contributions*, and shall designate the other meanings of *Kehre* by subsequent numbers.”

<sup>246</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, “The Turn”, cit., p. 94.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibidem*; cfr. Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 145: “Und nur weil das Sein des Da durch das Verstehen und dessen Entwurfcharakter seine Konstitution erhält, weil es *ist*, was es wird bzw. nicht wird, kann es verstehend ihm selbst sagen: »werde, was du bist!«.” [author’s emphasis]; in English see Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 186: “Only because the Being of the «there» receives its Constitution through understanding and through the character of understanding as projection, only because it *is* what it becomes (or alternatively, does not become), can it say to itself ‘Becoming what you are’, and say this with understanding.”

Bezug zum Sein, d. h. in der Kehre: das Seyn und dessen Wahrheit im Bezug zum Menschen. Mit der Bestimmung des Wesen der Wahrheit geht die notwendige Verwandlung des Menschen zusammen. Beides ist dasselbe,”<sup>248</sup>

which Sheehan, adding some notes, translates as

“Over and over again we have to insist: What is at stake in the question of truth...is a transformation in the human being itself. ... Man comes into question here in the deepest, broadest, and genuinely fundamental perspective: human being in relation to *Seyn* — i.e., in *Kehre-2: Seyn* and its truth in relation to human being. The determination of the essence of truth is accompanied by a necessary transformation of man. The two are the same.”<sup>249</sup>

Considering these statements, Sheehan explains that Heidegger understands this phrase as an invitation deriving from “one’s own nature to *become* that very nature by way of a personal conversion from living inauthentically to becoming what and how one essentially is.”<sup>250</sup> This topic is the central issue in the dialogue between Sartre and Heidegger as well, in *L’Existentialism est Un Humanism*<sup>251</sup> and the *Letter on*

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<sup>248</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 45, Grundfragen der Philosophie. Ausgewählte »Probleme« der »Logik,«* cit., p. 214 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>249</sup> Since I am here following Sheehan arguments, I employ the quotation he used in his essay, *ibidem*; cfr. Rojcewicz, Robert and Schuwer, André, *Martin Heidegger. Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected «Problems» of «Logic,»* cit., p. 181: “We must insist over and over that what is at stake in the question of truth as raised here is not simply an alteration of the previous concept of truth, nor a supplementation of the usual representation, but a transformation of humanity itself. This transformation is not the result of new psychological or biological insights. For man is not here the object of any sort of anthropology. On the contrary, man is here in question in the most profound and most extensive respect, the one properly foundational; i.e., we are questioning man in his relation to Being, or, after the turning, we are questioning Being in its truth in relation to man. The determination of the essence of truth is accompanied by a necessary transformation of man. Both are the same.”

<sup>250</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, cit., p. 94 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>251</sup> Sartre, Jean-Paul, *L’Existentialisme est Un Humanisme*, Paris: Gallimard, 1996; for the English version see Macomber, Carol, Elkaim-Sartre, Ariette, Cohen-Solal, Annie (trans.) *Jean-Paul Sartre. Existentialism is a Humanism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

«*Humanism*,» respectively. Employing his chosen lexicon once again, Sheehan claims that

“*Being and Time* is ultimately meant as a phenomenological protreptic to coming back to and taking over the facticity that defines human being. It is an exhortation to personally assume one’s hermeneutical mortality [...]. Only in such a radically first-person act of conversion is authentic meaning-giving at work.”<sup>252</sup>

Moving from the facticity of Heidegger’s early works, through Sheehan’s interpretation of *Kehre*, it has been possible to underline how in Heidegger’s ontology relational aspects are fundamentally explicative for his philosophical investigation. Such an inherent element seems to be closely adherent to any description on the dynamic lived experience of *Dasein*. While in the previous paragraphs *λόγος* was examined from a phenomenological perspective, after some considerations on the *Kehre* it will be presented in light of further implications of the different approach Heidegger appears to present after *Being and Time*.

### 3. 2. Relation, *λόγος* and meaning: another possible interpretation

In my opinion, as I tried to highlight by an attentive analysis of his arguments, what Sheehan fails to emphasize in his detailed exposition is exactly the relational aspect thanks to which meaning takes its source. Every meaning is unfruitful if separated from a relational context, because it is precisely from a relational context that meaning makes sense. The essential relation between *Dasein* and *Sein* is the reason for meaning to exist, to arise in the first place. It is possible to find references to validate this claim in *The Letter on «Humanism,»* which Sheehan considers as well. Here, Heidegger clearly attests to the importance of the relational element while explaining the ex-istential aspect of *Dasein*. He claims:

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<sup>252</sup> Sheehan, Thomas, “The Turn,” cit., p. 94.

“Wie verhält sich jedoch, gesetzt daß wir überhaupt geradehin so fragen dürfen, das Sein zu Ek-sistenz? Das Sein selbst ist das Verhältnis, insofern Es die Ek-sistenz in ihrem existenzialen, das heißt ekstatischen Wesen an sich hält und zu sich versammelt als die Ortschaft der Wahrheit des Sein inmitten des Seienden. Weil der Mensch als der Eksistierende in dieses Verhältnis, als welches das Sein sich selbst schickt, zu stehen kommt, indem er es ekstatisch aussteht, das heißt sorgend übernimmt, verkennt er zunächst das Nächste und hält sich an das Übernächste. Er meint sogar, dieses sei das Nächste. Doch näher als das Nächste, das Seiende, und zugleich für das gewöhnliche Denken ferner als sein Fernstes ist die Nähe selbst: die Wahrheit des Seins,”<sup>253</sup>

in English

“But how — provided we ought to ask such a question at all — how does being relate to ek-sistence? Being itself is the relation<sup>254</sup> to the extent that it, as the locality of the truth of being amid beings, gathers to itself and embraces ek-sistence in its existential, that is, estatic, essence. Because the human being as the one who ek-sists comes to stand in this relation that being destines for itself, in that he ecstatically sustains it, that is, in care takes upon himself he at first fails to recognize the nearest and attaches himself to the next nearest. He even thinks that this is the nearest. But nearer than the nearest, than beings, and at the same time for ordinary thinking farther than the farthest is nearness itself: the truth of being.”<sup>255</sup>

Hence, it is Heidegger himself that remarks on relational participation as ontologically fundamental for the meaning-giving that Sheehan addresses.

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<sup>253</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 332.

<sup>254</sup> Heidegger adds a footnote later: “*Plato’s Doctrine of Truth*, first edition, 1947: Relation from out of restraint (withholding) of refusal (of withdrawal).”

<sup>255</sup> McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 253.

I find what Heidegger affirms in the course he held in 1935 and entitled *Introduction to Metaphysics*<sup>256</sup> to be even more enlightening. Precisely when discussing λόγος, in the space of few pages he affirms at least four times that λόγος is *actually* Being and attests to its relational – and structured – aspect. He states:

“Λόγος ist die ständige Sammlung, die in sich stehende Gesamtheit des Seienden, d. h. das Sein. [...] Λόγος kennzeichnet das Sein in einer neuen und doch alten Hinsicht: Was seiend ist, in sich gerade und ausgeprägt steht, das ist in sich von sich her gesammelt und hält sich in solcher Sammlung,”<sup>257</sup>

that is to say

“*Logos* is constant gathering, the gatheredness of beings that stands itself, that is, Being. [...] *Logos* characterizes Being in a new and yet old respect: that which is in being, which stand straight and prominently in itself, is gathered in itself and from itself, and holds itself in such gathering.”<sup>258</sup>

Moreover, presenting some conclusions about Heraclitus fragments 114, 103 and 8, Heidegger adds:

“1. Das Sagen und Hören ist nur ein rechtes, wenn es in sich zuvor schon auf das Sein, den Logos,”<sup>259</sup>

in English

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<sup>256</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, New Haven - London: Yale University Press, 2014<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>257</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 139.

<sup>258</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 145.

<sup>259</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 141.

“1. Saying and hearing are proper only when they are intrinsically directed in advance toward Being, toward logos;”<sup>260</sup>

furthermore he states

“2. Weil das Sein als Logos ursprüngliche Sammlung ist, kein wenig gilt, gehört zum Sein der Rang, die Herrschaft,”<sup>261</sup>

translated as

“2. Being as logos is originally gathering, not a heap or pile where everything counts just as much and just as little - and for this reason, rank and dominance belong to Being.”<sup>262</sup>

And again:

“Deshalb ist das Sein, der Logos, als der gesammelte Einklang, nicht leicht und in gleicher Münze für jedermann zugänglich, sondern entgegen jenem Einklang, der jeweils nur Ausgleich, Vernichtung der Spannung, Einebnung ist, verborgen,”<sup>263</sup>

rendered as

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<sup>260</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 147.

<sup>261</sup> Heidegger, Martin, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 141.

<sup>262</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 147.

<sup>263</sup> Heidegger, Martin, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., pp. 141 - 142.



“Thus Being, *logos*, as the gathered harmony, is not easily available for everyone at the same price, but is concealed, as opposed to that harmony which is always a mere equalizing, the elimination of tension, leveling.”<sup>264</sup>

Even if all the above quotes appear to support my argument, I would nonetheless ask that we consider the following passage, since here Heidegger provides a definition of Being concerning all its aspects and, as we are going to see, meaning is not among them. Rather, meaning is thought as a *consequence* of Being’s characteristics. Here in Heidegger’s words:

“Weil das Sein *λόγος*, *ἁρμονία*, *ἀλήθεια*, *φύσις*, *φαίνεσθαι* ist, deshalb zeigt es sich gerade nicht beliebig,”<sup>265</sup>

translated as

“Because Being is *logos*, *harmonia*, *alētheia*, *phusis*, *phainesthai* <*logos*, harmony, unconcealment, *phusis*, self-showing>.”<sup>266</sup>

Heidegger clearly presents the various aspects of *Sein* and specifies the role of *λόγος* in this sense: prior to any kind of connection, before truth, anterior to the principle of manifestation and appearance, being is *λόγος*. *Λόγος* gathers and orders, revealing itself as the principle of organization of reality. *Λόγος*, or rather the “letting-lie-before-all-

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<sup>264</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 148.

<sup>265</sup> Heidegger, Martin, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 142.

<sup>266</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 148.

together” (*beisammen-vorliegen-Lassen*),<sup>267</sup> is what exceeds beings, thus, according to Heidegger’s interpretation *Λόγος* is Being. It is *λόγος*, in its dynamic (un)concealing, that gives a framework that allows us to identify or propose meaning.

Quesne provides the following support for my interpretation:

“Il y a quelque chose qui se donne comme significatif, mais ce quelque chose ne peut être préjugé dans sa forme. C’est pourquoi tout ce que nous pouvons dire de ce quelque chose est qu’il s’indique dans la vie factive, et qu’il est en attente de forme, que sa forme est problématique, objet d’une recherche questionnante.”<sup>268</sup>

Quesne here demonstrates a specific concern with meaning, facticity and form that I share. What is given as meaning challenges form — contributes to in-form at the same time that it is precisely the form, understood as the relational structure which is at issue here. It might be helpful to remind ourselves that in the Aristotelian lexicon, for example, *λόγος*, together with *εἶδος*, *μορφή*, and *σχῆμα*,<sup>269</sup> is one of the words we translate as ‘form’.

Even Miguel de Beistegui, in his *The New Heidegger*, provides some elements to sustain my position, affirming that

“Heidegger’s reaction to this metaphysical conception of the world and of ourselves [the one which distinguishes *res extensa* and *res cogitans*, fixing a dualism between man and world] is to say that we exist only in and through our relation to the world, that we, as human beings, are nothing independent from,

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<sup>267</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Pfullingen: Günther Neske, 1959<sup>2</sup>, p. 211; Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, New York: Harper and Row Editions, 1984, p. 62. In the English edition the translation is slightly different but significant, in effect the editors choose to render *beisammen-vorliegen-Lassen* with “letting-lie-together-before.”

<sup>268</sup> Quesne, Philippe, *Les Recherches Philosophiques du Jeune Heidegger*, cit., p. 161.

<sup>269</sup> See for example the “Introductory Notes” with which Sachs prefaces the chapters of the Aristotelian work on the soul.

and in addition to, our being-in-the-world. This means that we are not a substance, and not a thing, but, precisely, an existence, always and irreducibly open to and onto the world, always moving ourselves within a certain pre-theoretical *understanding* of it. Openness to the world is what defines our being, not thought. Thought is one way — and indeed a distinct way — of ‘understanding’ the world, or of comporting ourselves towards it. But it is certainly not the only way, nor indeed the primordial one. [...] Heidegger insisted on this intimate and necessary connection between who we are and, between the being of the being human, and philosophical thought: not because thought is a capacity that we have and that can direct itself towards a number of objects, including ourselves, but because philosophy is born of this life itself, and expresses it. Heidegger wants to show how philosophy, when properly understood, stems from this life that we are.”<sup>270</sup>

De Beistegui is persuasive in pointing out at least two crucial intentions typical of Heidegger’s thought. First of all, he emphasizes the phenomenological roots guiding Heidegger’s procedure: in a certain way, philosophy comes from life and shares a deep connection with it. *Dasein*’s condition as being-in-the-world indicates the profound bond between the two. Secondly, and this might be seen as a consequence of the first element, de Beistegui underlines its interdependence with the world, in other words, its relation to it. Being and relation: this constitutes *Dasein*. Moreover, another passage of Heidegger’s could reinforce this position. In her essay about Heidegger’s key term *Ereignis*, Daniela Vallega-Neu<sup>271</sup> points out that such a word, even if not with the same meaning and importance as it will assume within the framework of Heidegger’s thought in late 1930s, made its first appearance in one of Heidegger’s early works.

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<sup>270</sup> de Beistegui, Miguel, *The New Heidegger*, London - New York: Continuum International Publishing Book, 2005, pp. 12 - 13 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>271</sup> Vallega-Neu, Daniela, “*Ereignis*: the event of appropriation” in *Martin Heidegger. Key Concepts*, B. W. Davis (ed.), cit., pp. 140 - 154.

The lecture course held in 1919 and titled *Towards the definition of philosophy* presents the following statement:<sup>272</sup>

“*Er-leben* [«lived experience»] does not pass by me, like a thing that I would posit as object; rather I *er-eigne* [«en-own» or «appropriate»] it to myself and it *er-eignet* such [this would commonly be translated as «it happens»; of we attempted to render the literal sense, we may render it as «appropriates itself», or it «en-owns itself»] according to its essence. And if, looking at it, I understand lived experience in that way, then I understand it not as a process [*Vor-gang*], as a thing, object, but rather as something totally new, as *Ereignis*.”<sup>273</sup>

Even if the previous quotes from Heidegger and this latter one belong to two very different periods, separated by more than twenty years of philosophical inquiry, these words nonetheless resonate for us in the context of our present discussion, speaking of the tight, quivering togetherness of Being, *Dasein*, world, and hermeneutic. In this first moment it seems that *Ereignis* is something emerging from the occurrence of all the parts characterizing lived experience. *Ereignis* designates a happening of a process involving *Dasein* and the elements it interacts with in a relational dynamic that appears to begin from *Dasein* itself. However, after the 1930s and the consequent abandoning of the transcendental horizon, Heidegger’s *Ereignis* seems more similar to an appropriation taking place from the historical situation defined by Being in its happening,<sup>274</sup> i.e., as Event.

Beings are only in relational contexts, in relational happenings, this is to say that here beings are meaningful, beings find their ontological

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<sup>272</sup> Sadler, Ted, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, London - New Brunswick: The Athlone Press, 2000, p. 63.

<sup>273</sup> I report here the translation proposed by Daniella Vallega-Neu in the essay mentioned in the previous note since it has been modified, “*Ereignis*: the event of appropriation,” cit., p. 141.

<sup>274</sup> See the work of Daniela Vallega-Neu in this sense, for example in “Heidegger’s Poetic writings,” in Powell, Jeffrey, (ed.) *Heidegger and Language*, cit., pp. 119 - 145 and Gregory, Wanda Torres, *Heidegger’s Path to Language*, cit., pp. 35 - 49.

foundation: Being expresses itself in this particular way, in the complexity of interactions which might not be captured by scientific instruments and for which any attempt to write or to report any speculative production is already too late.<sup>275</sup> This is the reason why, as we are going to see in the following paragraphs, a consideration of *λόγος* becomes crucial to understand how Heidegger considers as Being from the 1930s forward.

### 3. 3. Conceiving *Λόγος* from the 1930s: rethinking *ζῶον λόγον ἔχον*

In accordance with Sheehan's position on how to approach the issue of *Kehre*, henceforth the task of the present research should be to explain how in such a perspective *λόγος* is conceived. Because some elements have already been provided above, we will now proceed in greater detail. As previously mentioned, after *Being and Time* what changes in Heidegger's thought is the bond between *Dasein* and *Sein*, hence if until that moment *λόγος* was understood by Heidegger in relation to the phenomenological link between these terms, consequently its meaning will shift as well.

The first place I would refer to in order to deepen the topic at issue is *The Letter on «Humanism»* where Heidegger declares:

“Das Wesen des Menschen besteht aber darin, daß er mehr ist als der bloße Mensch, insofern dieser als des vernünftige Lebewesen vorgestellt wird. »Mehr« darf hier nicht additiv verstanden werden, als sollte die überlieferte Definition des Menschen zwar die Grundbestimmung bleiben, um dann nur durch einen Zusatz des Existenziellen eine Erweiterung zu erfahren. Das »mehr« bedeutet: ursprünglicher und darum in Wesen wesentlicher. Aber hier zeigt sich das Rätselhafte: der Mensch ist in der Geworfenheit. Das sagt: der Mensch ist als der ek-sistierende Gegenwurf des Seins<sup>276</sup> insofern mehr denn das animal rationale, als er gerade weniger ist im Verhältnis zum Menschen, der sich aus der Subjektivität begreift. Der Mensch ist nicht der Herr des Seienden. Der

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<sup>275</sup> This issue will be recalled again later, referring specifically to Claudia Baracchi's recent publications.

<sup>276</sup> In this point Heidegger adds a footnote in 1949: “besser: im Sein qua Ereignis.”

Mensch ist der Hirt des Seins. In diesem »weniger« büßt der Mensch nichts ein, sondern er gewinnt, indem er in die Wahrheit des Seins gelangt. Er gewinnt die wesenhafte Armut des Hirten, dessen Würde dann beruht, vom Sein selbst in die Wahrheit seiner Wahrheit gerufen zu sein,<sup>277</sup>

translated as

“But the essence of the human being consists in his being more than merely human, if this is represented as «being a rational creature». «More» must not be understood here additively, as if the traditional definition of the human being were indeed to remain basic, only elaborated by means of an existentiell postscript. The «more» means: more originally and therefore more essentially in terms of his essence. But here something enigmatic manifests itself: the human being is thrownness. This means that the human being, as the ek-sisting counterthrow [*Gegenwurf*] of being, is more than *animal rationale* precisely to the extent that he is less bound up with the human being conceived from subjectivity. The human being is not the lord of beings. The human being is the shepherd of being. Human beings lose nothing in this «less»; rather, they gain in that they attain the truth of being. They gain the essential poverty of the shepherd, whose dignity consists in being called by being itself into the preservation of being’s truth.”<sup>278</sup>

In this passage Heidegger remarks on the necessity to (re)think the definition of man as *animal rationale*, moving from a new consideration of what *rationale* means, namely of what is meant with the Greek *λόγος*, since “*animal rationale*” is the Latin translation of the Greek “ζῷον λογὸν ἔχων.” Considering the definition of man as *animal rationale* in accordance with the metaphysical approach that has characterized Western philosophy since Aristotle, the tendency is to think the human being in its subjectivity and consequently in what might be interpreted as

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<sup>277</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 342.

<sup>278</sup> Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Letter on «Humanism»* in McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., p. 260.

its superior position compared to the other beings (“the lord of beings”). Heidegger, on the other hand, seems to suggest a different interpretation, wherein the position of *Dasein* appears in a certain way to be more intimate with Being, closer to beings, not governing them but rather letting them be, letting beings express, and so being the witness of Being. “Being more than merely human” indicates the openness of *Dasein*, that it is always *in-der-Welt* and in a relation with Being. This is to say that it is constantly more than *only* itself. Heidegger underlines this aspect through the word *ek-sistentia*, where the *ek* is supposed to evoke that continual movement and restless dynamic of *Dasein* and what surrounds it. The essence of the human being is more than being as merely human not because it has been given a particular feature,<sup>279</sup> but because of its essential being. A being which is less subjective and is instead considered

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<sup>279</sup> *Ibi*, p. 253: “But the human being is not only a living creature who possesses language along with other capacities. Rather, language is the house of being in which the human being ek-sists by dwelling, in that he belongs to the truth of being, guarding it;” for the German see Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 333: “Der Mensch aber ist nicht nur ein Lebewesen, das neben anderen Fähigkeiten auch die Sprache besitzt. Vielmehr ist die Sprache des Haus des Seins, darin wohnend der Mensch ek-sistiert, indem er der Wahrheit des Seins, sie hütend, gehört”.

in its humble belonging to Being,<sup>280</sup> in the “poverty” of such relation, where what is given is Being and truth.

This is the reason that he discusses *λόγος* and logic:

“Man ist so erfüllt von »Logik«, daß alles sogleich als verwerfliches Gegenteil verrechnet wird, was der gewohnten Schläfrigkeit des Meinens zuwider ist. [...] Die »Logik« versteht das Denken als das Vorstellen von Seiendem in seinem Sein, das sich das Vorstellen im Generellen des Begriffes zustellt. Aber wie steht es mit der Besinnung auf das Sein selbst und das heißt mit dem Denken, das die Wahrheit des Seins denkt? Dieses Denken trifft erst das anfängliche Wesen des *λόγος*, das bei Plato und Aristoteles, dem Begründer der »Logik«, schon verschüttet und verlorengegangene ist. Gegen »die Logik« denken, das bedeutet nicht, für das Unlogische eine Lanze brechen, sondern heißt nur: dem *λόγος* und seinem in der Frühzeit des Denkens erschienenen Wesen nachdenken, heißt: sich erst einmal um die Vorbereitung eines solchen Nachdenkens bemühen. Was sollen uns alle noch so weitläufigen Systeme der Logik, wenn sie sich und sogar ohne zu wissen, was sie tun, zuvor der Aufgabe entschlagen, nach dem Wesen des *λόγος* auch nur erst zu fragen? Wollte man Einwände zurückgeben, was freilich unfruchtbar ist, dann könnte man mit größerem Recht sagen: der Irrationalismus als Absage an die ratio herrscht unerkannt und

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<sup>280</sup> See also Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Letter on «Humanism,»* cit., p. 252: “Being is the nearest. Yet the near remains farthest from the human being. In truth, however, it always thinks only of beings as such; precisely not, and never, being as such;” Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 331: “Das Sein ist das Nächste. Doch die Nähe bleibt dem Menschen am fernsten. Der Mensch hält sich zunächst immer schon und nur an das Seiende. Wenn aber das Denken das Seiende als das Seiende vorstellt, bezieht es sich zwar auf das Sein. Doch es denkt in Wahrheit stets nur das Seiende als solches und gerade nicht und nie das Sein als solches.” For some considerations on this topic as well as on its link with technology see also Bernasconi, Robert, *The Question of Language in Heidegger’s History of Being*, New Jersey: Humanities, 1985, pp. 71 - 72: “Heidegger’s attempt to enable us to recognize that even in technology humanity is claimed by Being begins by acknowledging that this is not our immediate experience: «it seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself» (VA 35; BW 308). His posture of being «lord of the earth» encourages him in the illusion that everything he encounters is his own construct. [...] We are concerned with the counterpart of the philosophical thesis that «man is the measure of all things». [...] But, for Heidegger, that man encounters only himself is the «final delusion». It is the culmination of the history of the growing oblivion of Being, and Heidegger would say that in technology human beings preeminently fail to encounter themselves in their essence — granted that their essence is to be claimed by Being (W 155; BW 204). And yet here in technology, human beings are addressed by Being, as much as they are anywhere. It is a matter of recognizing technology as itself an epoch in the destiny of Being.”



unbestritten in der Verteidigung der »Logik«, die glaubt, einer Besinnung auf den λόγος und auf das in ihm gründende Wesen der ratio ausweichen zu können,”<sup>281</sup>

in English

“We are so filled with «logic» that anything that disturbs the habitual somnolence of prevailing opinion is automatically registered as a despicable contradiction. [...]

«Logic» understands thinking to be the representation of beings in their being, which representation proposes to itself in the generality of the concept. But how is it with meditation on being itself, that is, with the thinking that thinks the truth of being? This thinking alone reaches the primordial essence of λόγος, which was already obfuscated and lost in Plato and in Aristotle, the founder of «logic». To think against «logic» does not mean to break a lance for the illogical but simply to trace in thought the λόγος and its essence, which appeared in the dawn of thinking, that is, to exert ourselves for the first time in preparing for such reflection. Of what value are even far-reaching systems of logic to us if, without really hawing what they are doing, they recoil before the task of simply inquiring into the essence of λόγος? If we wished to bandy about objections, which is of course fruitless, we could say with more right: irrationalism, as a denial of *ratio*, rules unnoticed and uncontested in the defense of «logic», which believes it can eschew meditation on λόγος; and on the essence of *ratio*, which has its ground in λόγος.”<sup>282</sup>

The essence of man is more than merely being human and *ratio* has its ground on λόγος, although these considerations do not exhaust its semantic realm. The human necessarily transcends itself to be “more originally and therefore more essentially in terms of his essence,” hence it is more than its individual subjectivity. Heidegger is here pointing out the fundamental importance of the openness of the human, that is to say of

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<sup>281</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., pp. 347 - 348.

<sup>282</sup> McNeill, William, (ed. and trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Pathmarks*, cit., pp. 264 - 265.

the *ontological disposition to relation* that characterizes *Dasein*. Even in its more intimate constitution *Dasein* cannot avoid this particular connotation, which grounds its existence and also its bond with Being. From within such a perspective, *λόγος* cannot be considered only as *ratio*, or a tool with which the human is able to build systems of logic, but, rather, it is contemplated more essentially. As previously mentioned, a redefinition of *λόγος* appears within a broader consideration of *Dasein*, which is no longer identified with discourse or with the language through which the human being indicates phenomena as they appear to it. By moving to other writings where Heidegger elaborates this different interpretation of *λόγος* even further, it is possible to underline this ontological connotation.

### 3. 4. Heidegger's considerations on *λόγος* as Being

The argumentation here presented began with the crucial role of hermeneutics and facticity in the first Heideggerian ontology, as well as their relation to a first interpretation of *λόγος* in this sense. It then demonstrated the ontological connotation of the *Kehre*. Throughout, what has always been emphasized is the importance of relations in such a context. Adding new elements, we shall now proceed in two principal directions that are deeply correlated: first, by considering Heidegger's writings on Heraclitus's fragments it will be possible to see how the togetherness, the relational aspect of *Dasein* and *Sein*, might be evoked by the Greek term *λόγος* and secondly we will make the ontological importance of *λόγος* more clear.

The two works in which Heidegger dedicates the most lengthy considerations to Heraclitus's *λόγος* are the lectures held in 1951 and published under the title «Logos» in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*<sup>283</sup> and his *Einführung in die Metaphysik*.<sup>284</sup> The former one has appeared in

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<sup>283</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, cit..

<sup>284</sup> Seidel, George Joseph, *Martin Heidegger and the Pre-Socratics: An Introduction to His Thought*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964, p. 87.

English in the volume *Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, whereas the latter one has been published as a stand alone volume. The 1951 lecture can be considered a more incisive version of the 1944 course.<sup>285</sup> As pointed out by William Richardson, “that Heidegger should devote a formal study to λόγος in Heraclitus is not at all surprising.”<sup>286</sup> What amazes the scholar is rather that “it took him so long to do so.”<sup>287</sup> However, it is not so curious that Heidegger decided to direct his researches to a careful examination of this term and to Heraclitus’ fragments in this later period, insofar as Heidegger’s study concerns these enigmatic phrases in which many philosophical themes are entailed and wherein words are found to be dense with meanings not superficially available.

In my opinion, the course entitled *Introduction to Metaphysics* is one of Heidegger’s masterpieces: along all the pages he poses, step by step, the question of Being from multiple perspectives, interconnected as sides of the same reality, in a descriptive way. The published text is the transcription of a course held at the University of Freiburg in the summer semester of 1935, where the main argument is the discussion of Being in its entirety. Here, while describing the various declinations of Being, Heidegger discusses the issue of Being and thought, and consequently dedicates his attention to λόγος as well. For the purposes of this project, what is interesting to highlight about this text is the articulated analysis of λόγος, where Heidegger explicitly suggests that λόγος is Being, or, more precisely, one of the aspects of it.<sup>288</sup> But in which sense exactly? What of Being is expressed in λόγος?

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<sup>285</sup> *Ibi*, p. 8; cfr. also Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, cit., p. 1.

<sup>286</sup> Richardson, William J., *Heidegger. Through Phenomenology to Thought*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967; Richardson also confirms that the summer course of 1934 is “the most significant” title concerning an analysis of Heidegger’s understanding of λόγος, cfr. *ibi*, p. 490.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>288</sup> See also in the previous chapter my response to Sheehan’s interpretation of Being, meaning and *Kehre* where a quote from those pages is referenced.

Heidegger begins his examination on the specific concept of Being and thinking by underlining the sense in which they could be considered juxtaposed. He sees the separation between Being and thinking in the evidence that

“[...] was jetzt gegen das Sein unterschieden wird, das Denken, nicht nur inhaltlich ein Anderes als Werden und Schein, sondern auch die Richtung der Entgegensetzung ist eine wesentlich andere. Das Denken setzt sich dem Sein dergestalt gegenüber, daß dieses ihm vor-gestellt wird und demzufolge wie ein Gegen-stand entgegensteht. Solches ist bei den vorgenannten Scheidungen nicht der Fall. Daraus wird nun auch ersichtlich, warum diese Scheidung zu einer Vorherrschaft gelangen kann. Sie hat die Übermacht, insofern sie sich nicht zwischen und unter die anderen drei Scheidungen stellt, sondern sie alle sich vorstellt und also sie vor-sich-stellend, sie gleichsam umstellt,”<sup>289</sup>

in other words

“[...] not only is what is now distinguished from Being — that is, thinking — different in content from becoming and seeming, but the direction of the opposition is also essentially different. Thinking sets itself against Being in such a way that Being is re-presented to thinking, and consequently stands against thinking like an ob-ject <*Gegen-stand*, that which stands against>. This is not the case in the separations mentioned earlier [Being and Becoming, Being and Seeming]. And now we can also see why this separation can attain predominance. It has the superior power, inasmuch as it does not set itself between and among the other three separations [the two just mentioned and Being and the Ought], but represents all of them to itself and thus, setting them before itself, envelops them, so to speak.”<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 124.

<sup>290</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 128.

Heidegger, in his consideration of Being and what differs from it,<sup>291</sup> points out the peculiar and pivotal role of thinking which, in his words, appears to mean a particular “superior power,” able to “represent” and “envelop” all other restrictions. Thinking proceeds in a sort of specular way, since it “re-presents,” presents Being itself again, i.e., what Being is. But this is not all: Being, Heidegger warns, “stands against” thinking in such a way that the latter has Being as its “ob-ject.” Thus, it already seems to suggest an important link, a crucial interrelation, between the two. Moreover, he also proposes a significant consequence which follows from his approach to the topic at issue, claiming

“[...] das Denken nicht allein das Gegenglied einer irgendwie andersgearteten Unterscheidung bleibt, sondern zum Boden und Fußpunkt wird, von wo aus über das Entgegenstehende entschieden wird und zwar so weitgehend, daß das Sein überhaupt vom Denken her seine Deutung empfängt,”<sup>292</sup>

which is to say

“[...] thinking is no longer just the opposing member in some new distinction, but becomes the basis and footing on which one decides about what stands against it, so much that Being in general gets interpreted on the basis of thinking.”<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> *Ibi*, p. 103: “We will now pursue the distinctions between Being and some other. In doing this, we will learn that, contrary to the widely accepted opinion, Being is anything but an empty word for us. Instead it is determined in so multifaceted a fashion that we can hardly manage to preserve this determination sufficiently;” Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 101: “Wir verfolgen jets die Unterscheidungen des Seins gegen Anderes. Dabei sollen wir zwar erfahren, daß uns das Sean entgegen der landläufigen Meinung alles andere denn ein leeres Wort ist, vielmehr so vielseitig bestimmt, daß wir uns kaum zurecht finden, um die Bestimmtheit genügend zu bewahren.”

<sup>292</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 124.

<sup>293</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 128 - 129.

Heidegger clarifies the position of thinking, its responsibility in describing and interpreting Being, and its displaying itself as one *means* to approach what is “against it.” Moreover, Being displays itself as “something more essential than the mere relation to beings”<sup>294</sup> because “the distinction stems from the way in which what is distinguished and separated belongs inceptively and intrinsically to Being itself.”<sup>295</sup> That is to say that “the heading «Being and thinking» names a distinction that is, so to speak, demanded by Being itself.”<sup>296</sup>

Heidegger then continues defining what is interpreted by the term “thinking,” coming to the definition of logic as the “science of thinking.”<sup>297</sup> More precisely, he presents the traditional definition of logic as “the science of thinking, the doctrine of the rules of thinking and the forms of what is thought.” At the same time, and here lies the point of interest for us, he responds to this definition critically, saying that

“Die Logik enthebt uns aller Mühe, umständlich nach dem Wesen des Denkens zu fragen,”<sup>298</sup>

which is translated

“Logic relieves us of the trouble of asking elaborate questions about the essence of thinking.”<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> *Ibi*, p. 131.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibi*, pp. 131 - 132.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibi*, p. 132.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibi*, p. 132; Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 128.

<sup>298</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 128.

<sup>299</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 132.

Heidegger then questions that which would be understood by logic and by λόγος as well. Heidegger states:

“Indessen möchten wir doch noch eine Frage vorbringen. Was heißt »Logik«? Der Titel ist ein verkürzter Ausdruck für ἐπιστήμη λογική. Wissenschaft vom λόγος. Und λόγος meint hier die Aussage. Die Logik soll aber doch die Lehre vom Denken sein. Warum ist die Logik die Wissenschaft von der Aussage? Weshalb wird das Denken von der Aussage her bestimmt? Dies versteht sich ganz und gar nicht von selbst.”<sup>300</sup>

in English

“However, we would still like to raise one question. What does «logic» mean? The term is an abbreviation for *epistēmē logikē*, the science of *logos*. And *logos* here means assertion. But logic is supposed to be the doctrine of thinking. Why is logic the science of assertion? Why is thinking defined by assertion? This is by no means self-evident.”<sup>301</sup>

Once again, Heidegger points out the lack of questioning about those foundations that logic fails to discuss for itself. This point has already been deepened in our above discussion of the 1929 lecture. Heidegger is extremely suspicious of acquainting thinking with asserting and, consequently, conceiving of logic as a science where “*eon*, the Being of beings, appears as *idea*, and as *idea* becomes the «ob-ject» of *epistēmē* <scientific knowledge>.”<sup>302</sup> Thereafter, Heidegger turns his attention to the etymology of the word λόγος, trying in doing so to propose a new perspective on logic. He retraces the origins of the term to its roots

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<sup>300</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 128.

<sup>301</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 132.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibi*, p. 133.

referring to collecting, gathering, interrelation, and relationship,<sup>303</sup> concluding that

“[...] der Name *λόγος* auch dann noch, als er längst Rede und Aussage bedeutete, seine ursprüngliche Bedeutung behaltet hat, indem er das »Verhältnis des einen zum anderen« bedeutet,”<sup>304</sup>

translated as

“[...] the word *logos* retained its original meaning, «the relation of one thing to another», long after it had come to mean discourse and assertion.”<sup>305</sup>

Here Heidegger is very careful and precise in specifying that this is the first interpretative meaning to keep in mind while pronouncing or referring to the word *λόγος*, hence it should also be borne in mind while translating it. Heidegger, through some considerations on Heraclitus' fragments, explains the sense in which *λόγος* is relation, affirming that

“[...] *λόγος* ist: *die Gesammeltheit des Seienden selbst*,”<sup>306</sup>

that is to say

“[...] *logos* is: *the gatheredness of beings themselves*,”<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> *Ibi*, p. 137; cfr. Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 133.

<sup>304</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 133.

<sup>305</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 137 -138.

<sup>306</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 138 [author's emphasis].

<sup>307</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 143 [author's emphasis].



or even

“Λόγος ist die ständige Sammlung, die in sich stehende Gesammeltheit des Seienden, d. h. das Sein,”<sup>308</sup>

in other words

“*Logos* is constant gathering, the gatheredness of beings that stands itself, that is, Being.”<sup>309</sup>

Within the framework of such reasoning, two consequences follow from the quotes above: first Heidegger’s insists on considering the rational *λόγος* as a togetherness that maintains itself through a “gathered coming to presence;”<sup>310</sup> second, Heidegger clearly and explicitly asserts that *λόγος* is Being. Hence, Heidegger indicates that one of the essential aspects of Being concerns the togetherness of beings themselves, in the way they present themselves. But this also regards the way in which beings are gathered, connected to one another: *λόγος* reveals Being as *ξυνόν*, that is to say as “what gathers everything together in itself and holds it together.” The way in which beings come to us is through an ordered manifestation. However, this does not mean that they may not still be an enigma for us. Rather, it indicates the path of our human experience where, wandering through beings, we try to live in their and our togetherness. In Being as *λόγος* such relational gathering is “not a heap or pile where everything counts just as much and just as little,”<sup>311</sup> but an “originary gathering.”<sup>312</sup> Affirming that in *λόγος* the position of what is involved “counts” is saying

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<sup>308</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 139.

<sup>309</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 145.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibi*, p. 147.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibidem*.

that it represents a certain order, and introduces a principle of organization that places or gives place to what is gathered. However, in this precise context speaking of “order,” “structure,” or “organization” does not refer to a lack of novelty or the impossibility of new configurations. On the contrary, Heidegger’s project is aimed at presenting the initial co-belonging and the original mutual referring of *λόγος* and *φύσις*, where the latter represents the not completely accessible, the unpredictable source of the possibility of unpredicted ways for Being.<sup>313</sup> In this original togetherness, in order for Being to present itself in this particular fashion, the *way*, the *how*, of relations is constitutively fundamental. And what Heidegger here suggests is that such a display occurs both for beings and for Being. Therefore he appears

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<sup>313</sup> Cfr. Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 15 - 16: “Now, what does the word *phusis* say? It says what emerges from itself (for example, the emerges the blooming of a rose), the unfolding that opens itself up, the coming-into-appearance in such unfolding, and holding itself and persisting in appearance—in short, the emerging-abiding away. According to the dictionary, *phuein* means to grow, to make grow. But what does growing mean? Does it just mean to increase by acquiring bulk, to become more numerous and bigger?

*Phusis* as emergence can be experienced everywhere: for example, in processes in the heavens (the rising of the sun), in the surging of the sea, in the growth of plants, in the coming forth animals and human beings from the womb. But *phusis*, the emerging sway, is not synonymous with these processes, which still today we count as part of «nature». This emerging and standing-out-in-itself-from-itself may not be taken as just one process among others that we observe in beings. *Phusis* is Being itself, by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable. [...] *Phusis* means the emerging sway, and the endurance over which it thoroughly holds sway. [...] *Phusis* is the event of standing forth, arising from the concealed and thus enabling the concealed to take its stand for the first time” (it is very interesting the suggestion provided by the two English translators about this last sentence, in fact, they claim, *ibidem*, footnote 12: “[...] Heidegger is playing on the etymological connection between *Entstehen* (genesis, growth) and *Stand* (a stand, state, situation, condition)”; cfr. Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., pp. 16 - 17: “Was sagt nun das Wort *φύσις*? Es sagt das von sich aus Aufgehende (z. B. das Aufgehen einer Rose), das sich eröffnende Entfalten, das in solacer Entfaltung in die Erscheinung-Treten und in ihr sich Halten und Verbleiben, kurz, das aufgehend-verweilende Walten. Lexikalisch bedeutet *φύειν* wachsen, wachsen machen. Doch was heißt wachen? Meint es nur das mengenmäßige Zu-nehmen, mehr und größer Werden? Die *φύσις* als Aufgehen kana überall, z. B. an den Vorgängen des Himmels (Aufgang der Sonne), am Wogen des Meeres, am Wachstum der Pflanzen, am Hervorgehen von Tier und Mensch aus den Schoß, erfahren werden. Aber *φύσις*, das aufgehenden Walden, ist nicht gleichbedeutend mit diesen Vorgängen, die wir heute noch zur »Natur« rechnen. Dieses Aufgehen und In-sich-au-sich-Hinausstehen darf nicht als ein Vorgang genommen werden, den wir unter andern am Seienden beobachten. Die *φύσις* ist das Sein selbst, kraft dessen das Seiende erst beobachtbar wird und bleibt. [...] *Φύσις* meint das aufgehende Walten und das von ihm durchwatete Währen. [...] *Φύσις* ist das *Ent-stehen*, aus dem Verborgenen sich heraus — und dieses so erst in den Stand bringen” [author’s emphasis].

to be aware of the difficulties inherent in such an understanding of Being, adding

“Deshalb ist das Sein, der Logos, als der gesammelte Einklang, nicht leicht und in gleicher Münze für jedermann zugänglich, sondern entgegen jenem Einklang, der jeweils nur Ausgleich, Vernichtung der Spannung, Einebnung ist, verborgen: ἁρμονία ἀφανῆς φανερῆς κρείττων, »der nicht (unmittelbar und ohne weiteres) sich zeigende Einklang ist mächtiger denn der (allemal) offenkundige« (Frg. 54),”<sup>314</sup>

in other words

“Thus Being, logos, as the gathered harmony, is not easily available for everyman at the same price, but is concealed, as opposed to that harmony which is always a mere equalizing, the elimination of tension, leveling: ἁρμονία ἀφανῆς φανερῆς κρείττων, «the harmony that does not show itself (immediately and without further ado) is more powerful than the harmony that is (always evident)» (fragment 54).”<sup>315</sup>

Heidegger adds another element to his reasoning on Being and *λόγος*, i.e., *ἁρμονία*. If *λόγος* brings together, it gathers even what might differ. In other words, *λόγος* is the structural relation that involves what differs in a

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<sup>314</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., pp. 141 - 142.

<sup>315</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 148.

dynamic tension.<sup>316</sup> However, Heidegger claims, this tension is harmony, or, more precisely, a hidden harmony difficult to trace for everyone “at the same price.” Moreover, such harmonic movement is not a “levelling” appropriation, that is to say that it is not a relation in which the elements implicated are minimised or diminished by the relation itself. Λόγος is the structural relation in which every constituent finds its place and shows its properly unique relevance. Λόγος speaks the way in which things relate within themselves and one to the each other, in multiple levels of interaction. Λόγος is primarily and first of all a specific mode of relation. But it is also Being.

Therefore, Being is relation. It is structuring and structured relation. But this claim also means that Being is everything else that this type of relation entails: excess, involvement, changeability, and permanence. Being is the iridescent color of life we constantly aim to catch through language, with our inborn tendency to manifest, but that remains unfathomable in its inherent and deep constitution. That excess that we chase is indomitable, it invariably escapes, renews itself endlessly in new forms and in new ways. It is that which we might only ever attempt to hear, to listen. Even here, even now, while trying to delineate its outlines. At the same time, Heidegger argues that the presence of this harmonic relation is not “easily available,” meaning that there is not an easy or prefigured access to it for everyone. Hearing λόγος is difficult, because it is characterized by the tendency to present and conceal itself. Nevertheless, human is ζῶον λόγον ἔχον: paying attention to λόγος is inscribed in its own essential constitution. *Dasein* might be described in

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<sup>316</sup> Cfr. *Ibi*, p. 149: “Gathering is never just driving together and piling up. It maintains in a belonging-together that which contends and strives in confrontation. It does not dissolve what it pervades into an empty lack of opposites; instead by unifying what contends, the gathering maintains it in the highest acuteness of its tension;” cfr. Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 142: “Die Sammlung ist nie ein bloßes Zusammentreiben und Anhäufen. Sie behält das Auseinander — und Gegenstrebige in eine Zusammengehörigkeit ein. Sie läßt es nicht in die bloße Zerstreung und das nur Hingeschüttete zerfallen. Als Einbehalten hat der λόγος den Charakter des Durchwaltens, der φύσις. Sie löst das Durchwaltete nicht in eine leere Gegensatzlosigkeit auf, sondern erhält aus der Einigung des Gegenstrebigen dieses in der höchsten Schärfe seiner Spannung.”

this way because λόγος, before signifying ‘reason’, is identified with language. Human being is ζῶον λόγον ἔχον because of its essential ability to let beings appear through language, an ability that is possible due to its relation to truth, namely Being, as disclosure. In van der Heiden’s words, “the task of disclosure consists in bringing to presence what is utterly and simply concealed”<sup>317</sup> and “the truth of language consists in bringing what is concealed into unconcealment.”<sup>318</sup>

Georg Seidel, commenting on this topic, expresses the idea of what he calls the “process of collecting the covered over”<sup>319</sup> where “the hidden away is brought to presence.”<sup>320</sup>

In the “Logos” lecture, Heidegger lingers on the etymological root of λόγος, discussing especially the meaning inherent in the verb from which the term derives — λέγειν. Here he proposes the following translation:

“Eigentlich bedeutet λέγειν das sich und anderes sammelnde Nieder- und Vorlagen,”<sup>321</sup>

in English

“Λέγειν properly means the laying-down and laying-before which gathers itself and others.”<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> van der Heiden, Gert-Jan, *The Truth (and Untruth) of Language: Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida on Disclosure and Displacement*, cit., p. 39. Here he also states: “In the first place, when Heidegger speaks about the essence of human beings, he speaks very classically about human *logos*” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>318</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>319</sup> Seidel, George Joseph, *Martin Heidegger and the Pre-Socratics: An Introduction to His Thought*, cit., p. 94.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>321</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, cit., p. 208.

<sup>322</sup> Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, cit., p. 60.

Here Heidegger deepens what elsewhere he described as “the relation of all relations,”<sup>323</sup> namely the “synthetic power”<sup>324</sup> that is Being. Heidegger recognizes in the etymological meaning of the word the sense of “laying-down” [*Nieder-lagen*], “laying-before” [*Vor-lagen*], a “laying-side-by-side” which is a “laying-together.”<sup>325</sup> In other words, he clearly recognizes the *ontological primacy of the relation* that *Sein* is as *λόγος*. He suggests that in the laying proper to *λόγος* there is a gathering, similar to “the gleaning at harvest time” that “gathers fruit from the soil” or even “the gathering of the vintage” which is a “picking grapes from the vine.”<sup>326</sup> I would highlight the possible double translation of the German “vor,” as the English “before”: it has a spatial connotation, suggesting the presence of something facing it, but also a temporal one, namely indicating a previous presence. In my opinion, Heidegger’s instruction might be read in both directions: collecting something, as for example the grapes found in front of us, in a ordered way with the aim to shelter them, would also mean that they were previously lying there. This might be the reason why Heidegger claims:

“Jedes Lesen ist schon Legen. Alles Legen ist von sich her lesend. Denn was heißt legen? Das Legen bringt zum Liegen, indem es beisammen-vor-liegen läßt. Allzugern nehmen wir das «lassen» im Sinne von weg- und fahren-lassen. Legen, zum Liegen bringen, liegen lassen bedeutete dann: um das Niedergelegte und Vorliegende sich nicht mehr kümmern, er übergehen. Allein das λέγειν, legen, meint in seinem «beisammen-vor-liegen-Lassen» gerade dies, daß uns das Vorliegende anliegt und deshalb angeht. Dem «legen» ist als dem

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<sup>323</sup> Hertz, Peter D., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. On the Way to Language*, New York: Harper and Row, 1971, p. 107; see the German version in Heidegger, Martin, *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, Pfullingen: Günter Neske, 1982, p. 215.

<sup>324</sup> Gregory, Wanda Torres, *Heidegger’s Path to Language*, cit., p. 41.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>326</sup> Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, cit., p. 61; see the German version in Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, cit., p. 209.

beisammen-vorliegen-Lassen Duran gelegen, das Niedergelegte als das Vorliegende zu behalten,”<sup>327</sup>

which is

“Every gathering is already a laying. Every laying is of itself gathering. Then what does «to lay» mean? Laying brings to lie, in that it lets things lie together before us. All too readily we take this «letting» in the sense of omitting or letting go. To lay, to bring to lie, to let lie, would then mean to concern ourselves no longer with what is laid down and lies before us — to ignore it. However, λέγειν, to lay, by its letting-lie-tgether-before means just this, that whatever lies before us involves us and therefore concerns us. Laying as letting-lie-together-before [*beisammen-vorliegen-Lassen*] is concerned with retaining whatever is laid down as lying before us.”<sup>328</sup>

Without fully developing the argument in an explicit manner, Heidegger delineates a sort of symmetry: something lies before us, gathered, since every gathering is a lying and vice versa, and in our way of gathering we participate in the same movement. The human, as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, collects something that is *already given* as gathered, that presents itself in such a fashion. Or perhaps this is more than a symmetry, in that he might highlight a priority of an ontological λόγος that finds in the human a sort of echo. He attests:

“Der λόγος als das Sein selbst ist doch offenbar das Tiefe, in das der weitweisende λόγος der Menschenseele hinaus zeigt,”<sup>329</sup>

which is

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<sup>327</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, cit., p. 209.

<sup>328</sup> Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, cit., p. 62.

<sup>329</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, cit., pp. 305 - 306.

“The λόγος as being itself is clearly the depth within which the far-reaching λόγος of the human soul points.”<sup>330</sup>

Hence, it is evident that according to Heidegger’s perspective it is the human saying that follows from λόγος and not the opposite.<sup>331</sup> This lying as “letting-lie-tgether-before” affects *Dasein*, and consequently it is relevant for the human, who is part of the multifaceted disclosure of Being. While, in his first writings, Heidegger addresses λόγος as the act of making manifest (τῷ δηλοῦν), now λόγος is recognized as the very ontological source of such manifestation, of such (un)concealment. Employing other words, one might affirm that “the laying of *legein* preserves Being in unconcealment.”<sup>332</sup> In his 1931 course on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* Θ, Heidegger clearly states:

“Λέγειν: lesen, zusammenlesen, sammeln, das eine zum anderen legen un so das eine zum anderen in ein Verhältnis setzen; und damit dieses Verhältnis selbst setzen. Λόγος: die Beziehung, das Verhältnis. Das Verhältnis ist das, was sie darin Setzenden zusammenhält. Die Einheit dieses Zusammen beherrscht und regelt die Beziehung der sich Verhaltenden. Λόγος ist daher Regel, Gesetz, und zwar nicht als über dem Geregelten irgendwo schwebend, sondern als das, was das Verhältnis selbst ist: die innere Fügung und Fuge des in Beziehung stehenden Seienden. Λόγος ist das regelnde Gefüge, die Sammlung des unter sich Bezogenen,”<sup>333</sup>

translated as

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<sup>330</sup> [My translation].

<sup>331</sup> Seidel, George Joseph, *Martin Heidegger and the Pre-Socratics: An Introduction to His Thought*, cit., p. 93.

<sup>332</sup> Brogan, Walter A., *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Twofoldness of Being*, Albany : State University of New York Press, 2005, p. 97.

<sup>333</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 33, Aristoteles, Metaphysik Θ 1 - 3. Von Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2006<sup>3</sup>, p. 121.



“Λέγειν: to glean, to harvest, to gather, to add one to the other, and so to place the one in relation to the other, and thus to posit this relationship itself. Λόγος: the relation, the relationship. The relationship is what holds together that which stands within it. The unity of this together prevails over and rules the relation of what holds itself in that relation. Λόγος means therefore rule, law, yet not as something which is suspended somewhere above what is ruled, but rather as that which is itself the relationship: the inner jointure and order of the being which stand in relation. Λόγος is the *ruling structure*, the *gathering* of those beings related among themselves.”<sup>334</sup>

Even if this passage is taken from a text in which he does not directly address his attention to Heraclitus and to Heraclitus’ fragments, nevertheless in his words it is possible to trace what Heidegger will later describe as Being<sup>335</sup> as well as some elements further developed in a more systematic analysis while explaining what Heraclitus meant using the term at issue. Λόγος is the relationship, Heidegger affirms. Precisely, λόγος is “die Beziehung, das Verhältnis”: connection, interaction, contact, but also mutual relation, being in-between, an intimate correlation. Moreover, he also proceeds in describing which kind of relation is conceived: λόγος is a relation in which a coexistence of diversity and unity is present,<sup>336</sup> i.e., λόγος expresses something dynamic but not disintegrating, rather, it forms a coherence, creates a union. To do so, to be effective in this way, λόγος produces an order between the components it holds together and, as a consequence of such an arrangement, is also

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<sup>334</sup> Brogan, Walter A., Warnek, Peter, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Aristotle’s Metaphysics Θ 1 - 3: On the Essence and Actuality of Force*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Bloomington University Press, 1995, p. 103 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>335</sup> See especially the quotations from Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit..

<sup>336</sup> van der Heiden, Gert-Jan, *The Truth (and Untruth) of Language: Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida on Disclosure and Displacement*, cit., p. 55: “Heidegger understands the gathering of saying in a Heraclitean way as the gathering of day and night, winter and summer, peace and war, the present and the absent — in sum as the gathering of opposites. The whole is not ruled over by a supreme presence or a supreme light such as the sun, and the night is not the privation of light. Rather, the whole lets night and day be together and lets them show their own particular appearance as well as their mutual difference. After all, the night has its own mode of unconcealment in which the sky is disclosed to us in a way the day never can.”

the rule that inheres in what is gathered by it. Hence, Heidegger suggests an interpretation of *λόγος* as *structured relation*, deeply involved with what is and so extremely evident in its concreteness. He specifies that it concerns a “inner juncture,” not “suspended somewhere.” Keeping the assumptions from the lessons about Aristotle in mind and comparing them with the 1951 lecture and with the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, it is possible to propose a reading of Heidegger's ontology as a relational ontology, where relations are not merely linear or horizontal connections, but are instead considered to be layered structures. Being is here, in these close interactions, forming them, involving them, exceeding them. *Dasein* included.<sup>337</sup>

As Brogan affirms,<sup>338</sup> and Seidel confirms,<sup>339</sup> Heidegger is interested in explaining why *λόγος*, from the original meaning of letting-lie-together-before (*beisammen-vorliegen-Lassen*), indicates saying and speaking as well. Heidegger specifies that *λόγος* as language reveals once again its feature *ἀποφαίνεσθαι*,<sup>340</sup> consequently it lets appear what “comes

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<sup>337</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 145 - 146: “Fragment 103 says: «gathered in itself, the same is the beginning and the end in the circumference of the circle». [...] Heraclitus says (fragment 8): «What stands in opposition carries itself over here and over there, the one to the other, it gathers itself from itself». What strives in opposition is gathering gatheredness, *logos*,” for the German see Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 141: “Frg. 103 sagt: »in sich gesammelt, dasselbe ist der Ausgang und das Ende auf der Kreislinie«. [...] *Heraklit* sagt Frg 8: »Das Gegeneinanderstehende trägt sich, das eine zum anderen, hinüber und herüber, es sammelt sich aus sich.« Das Gegenstrebige ist sammelnde Gesammeltheit *λόγος*” [author’s emphasis]. Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 5: “An entire axiomatic configuration can be overturned and overcome by the results of the demonstrative procedures for which it grounds (and hence, at once, un-grounds).” Even if the argument proposed in this quote lies outside the main issue here discussed, I would like to underline the specification posed by Baracchi on the twofold nature of the ground, something capable both to give reason and at the same time to provide the elements for the eclipse of what generates.

<sup>338</sup> Brogan, Walter A., *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Twofoldness of Being*, cit., p. 97.

<sup>339</sup> Seidel, George Joseph, *Martin Heidegger and the Pre-Socratics: An Introduction to His Thought*, cit., pp. 93 - 94.

<sup>340</sup> Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, cit., p. 64; cfr. Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, cit., p. 213.

forward in its lying before us.”<sup>341</sup> Gregory claims accordingly that such considerations put “into question human-centered conceptions by focusing on the apophantic essence of language;”<sup>342</sup> hence, “the later Heidegger assigns to saying the primordial function of showing, which lets-see or lets-appear.”<sup>343</sup>

Moving from the previous premises, even the translation of the famous phrase ζῶον λόγον ἔχον will be subject to modifications, in the light of these new insights concerning the essence of λόγος. When interpreting this Greek word in an ontological way, the definition of the human in which it is displayed as the principal feature, needs to be revisited. If λόγος can no longer be thought as reason, measurement, that faculty of thought detached from the external world, what will the destiny of man be?

“[...] Der Mensch ist ζῶον λόγον ἔχον — das Lebende, das so lebt, daß sein Leben als Weise zu sein unrsprüngliche Verständnis der Sprache und ihrer fundamentalen Bedeutung für die Wesenbestimmung des Menschen kommt im Griechischen dadurch zum Ausdruck, daß es kein Wort gibt für Sprache in unserem Sinne, sondern sofort dasjenige, was wir >Sprache< nennen, als λόγος bezeichnet word, als Kundschaft. Der Mensch »hat das Wort«; es steht bei ihm selbst, wie er sein Sein sich kundgemacht hat und wohin er sich im Ganzen des Seienden gestellt sieht (vgl. Plato, Kratylos 399 c). Sein in Kraft der Sprache —; Sprache dabei freilich nicht lediglich als Mittel des Aussagen und Mitteilens, was sie zwar auch ist, sondern Sprache als dasjenige, worin die Offenbaret und Kundschaft der Welt überhaupt aufbricht und ist,”<sup>344</sup>

in English

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<sup>341</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>342</sup> Gregory, Wanda Torres, *Heidegger's Path to Language*, cit., p. 41.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>344</sup> Heidegger, Martin, *Aristoteles, Metaphysik Θ 1 - 3*, cit., p. 128.

“[...] the human being is ζῶον λόγον ἔχον — the living being who lives in such a way that his life, as way to be, is defined in an originary way by the command of language. The original understanding of language, which was of fundamental importance for the definition of the essence of human being, gains expression in Greek in such a way that there is no word for language in our sense. Rather, what we call «language» is immediately designed as «λόγος», as conversance. The human being «has the word»; it is the way he makes known to himself his being, and the way in which he sees himself placed in the midst of being as a whole (compare Plato, *Cratylus* 399c). To be empowered with language—; language, however, not merely as a means of asserting and communicating, which indeed it also is, but language as that wherein the openness and conversance of world first of all bursts forth and is.”<sup>345</sup>

With these words, Heidegger focuses on what it means that the human is characterized by λόγος in the framework of his thought, given his considerations on the etymology of the term, which is defined differently than from the initial phenomenological inquiries previously presented. First of all, he is very attentive in underling the essential mutual belonging of the two, defining man as the living being which is described by the “command” of language and that through language “makes known to himself his being.” But he also warns not to be hasty in identifying language with asserting and communicating. These two are indeed aspects of language, but not its ground, i.e., not its essential source. Such origin should be found instead in the “openness and conversance” of language as λόγος. In this sense, the human is not granted an arbitrary power in its use of language. If Being says itself through λόγος, the human is encountering an already speaking λόγος when meeting the world: therefore *Dasein* is not the imposition of one’s λόγος on language, but instead what occurs is that one names a λόγος that is speaking to *Dasein*. It is an encounter, a relation that comes to be established. This is the reason that Heidegger in «Logos» affirms that “the naming (ὄνομα),

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<sup>345</sup> Brogan, Walter A., Warnek, Peter, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Aristotle’s Metaphysics Θ 1 - 3: On the Essence and Actuality of Force*, p. 109.

thought in terms of λέγειν, is not the expressing of a word meaning but rather a letting-lie-before in the light wherein something stands in such a way that it has a name.”<sup>346</sup> Here Heidegger’s distance from those related sections of *Being and Time* or from the early works is clear: what previously indicated an activity proper to *Dasein* in its hermeneutical facticity as being-in-the-world, and now articulates language as λόγος, the expression of a λέγειν, does not depend on the thrownness of it. Rather, it is the expression of an encounter, an event, able to gather *Dasein* and *der Welt*, where the world is not only seen only as the world of *Dasein*. “Talking” and “saying” are then comprehended in their “proper sense — as «laying» and «gathering».”<sup>347</sup> Moving from such comprehension of λόγος, another consideration follows: the confrontation with a λόγος, means that the task of man should be to keep hearing what comes throughout the displaying and revealing of entities. Moreover because this dynamic is expressed by λόγος, one might observe that “this living force that the human being is has logos in the same way that it has «within» it an *arché* of movement”, as pointed out by McNeill.<sup>348</sup>

Thanks to the reflection about λόγος presented by Heidegger, we can deduce a new way of interpreting logic itself: we should no longer pay attention only to rigorous procedures in order to define the truth of a proposition, rather we are called to a rigorous and attentive listening to what happens in the encounter with the surrounding world, in the revealing that is present in this meeting, in the way in which the elements co-involved in the occurrence relate to one another. Attentive to the novelty that always appears, to the new that emerges from the constant dynamic which modifies itself, reflected in a changing of or in space and time. We should recognize that logic has and must maintain deep roots in

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<sup>346</sup> Krell, David F., Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, cit., p. 73.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>348</sup> McNeill, William, “In Force of Language: Language and Desire in Heidegger’s Reading of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* Θ,” in Powell, Jeffrey, (ed.) *Heidegger and Language*, cit., p. 59.

our experience, which is no longer to be considered to be subjective, but is rather contextualized, in a relational (un)concealment.

Brogan, while addressing this issue, affirms

“The way of *logos* is not a logic or formal system of language that we place between ourselves and beings in order to interpret beings through language. Rather, language itself is the deposit and formalization of the discoveries about beings and being that the original relationship of human and beings makes evident. Divorced from this primary meaning, language loses its force and falls out of its element.”<sup>349</sup>

My reading of Heidegger’s suggestions might be more radical than the one Brogan is presenting. Considering what Heidegger exposes about *λόγος* and Being in the passages referenced above, I would propose that, in a certain way, *λόγος* is the very language of Being: the way through which Being speaks or presents itself in a meaningful fashion, because *λόγος* says the relations through which Being displays itself, gathering the elements as such a relational structure. Language is the “deposit and formalization” because it is Being itself, it is the manner in which Being says itself, even through our *λόγος*. This is also the reason why, “divorced from this primary meaning” language evidently “falls out of his element.” If language comes to be considered as completely separated from the world, if it is considered merely as a subjective faculty inherent to the human alone, and only to its individual constitution, an abyssal

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<sup>349</sup> Brogan, Walter A., *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Twofoldness of Being*, cit., p. 95.

misunderstanding occurs. Then man loses itself, errant among beings,<sup>350</sup>  
a homeless thing in the midst of other things.

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<sup>350</sup> See Capuzzi, Frank A., (trans.) *Letter on «Humanism,»* cit., p. 258: “Only thus does the overcoming of homelessness being from being, a homelessness in which not only human beings but the essence of the human being stumbles aimlessly about.

Homelessness so understood consists in the abandonment of beings by being. Homelessness is the symptom of oblivion of being. Because of it the truth of being remains unthought. [...] As the destiny that sends truth, being remains concealed. [...] Homelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world,” in German, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914 - 1970, Band 9, Wegmarken*, cit., p. 339: “Nur so beginnt aus dem Sein die Überwindung der Heimatlosigkeit, in der nicht nur die Menschen, sondern das Wesen des Menschen umherirrt.

Die so zu denkende Heimatlosigkeit beruht in der Seinsverlassenheit des Seienden. Sie ist das Zeichen der Seinsvergessenheit. Dieser zufolge bleibt die Wahrheit des Seins ungedacht. [...] Das Sein als das Geschick, das Wahrheit schickt, bleibt verborgen. [...] Die Heimatlosigkeit wird ein Weltchicksal.”

I would like to recall here one of the most well known poems by Giacomo Leopardi, the Italian poet that more than many others was able to translate into words the errant, thrown condition of the human. In *Canto Notturmo di Un Pastore Errante dell'Asia (Night-Song Of A Wandering Shepherd of Asia)* he imagines a dialogue between a simple man and nature, represented by the moon. The man questions our human condition, so limited by knowledge and characterized by sufferance. It seems to me that his words might give the same suggestion that Heidegger is trying to describe speaking about homelessness. Leopardi writes:

“Mille cose sai tu, mille discopri,  
Che son celate al semplice pastore.  
Spesso quand'io ti miro  
Star così muta in sul deserto piano,  
Che, in suo giro lontano, al ciel confina;  
Ovver con la mia greggia  
Seguirmi viaggiando a mano a mano;  
E quando miro in cielo arder le stelle;  
Dico fra me pensando:  
A che tante facelle?  
Che fa l'aria infinita, e quel profondo  
Infinito Seren? che vuol dir questa  
Solitudine immensa? ed io che sono?”

in English

“You know a thousand things, reveal  
a thousand things still hidden from a simple shepherd.  
Often as I gaze at you  
hanging so silently, above the empty plain  
that the sky confines with its far circuit:  
or see you steadily  
follow me and my flock:  
or when I look at the stars blazing in the sky,  
musing I say to myself:  
‘What are these sparks,  
this infinite air, this deep  
infinite clarity? What does this  
vast solitude mean? And what am I?”

**Part II**  
**Λόγος as relation**  
**from a metaphysical perspective**



## Chapter 4. Aristotle's *λόγος*: an important anthropological introduction to this issue

### 4. 1. Metaphysics: in which sense?

In the previous chapters our aim was to point out relation's ontological foundation. Through a dialogue with Heidegger and his studies on *λόγος*, it has been argued that *λόγος* is completely involved in every consideration of ourselves and of the encounter with the world. Now it is time to step back to find the right distance from which a more general perspective is possible, i.e., a metaphysical perspective. Here metaphysics has a meta-descriptive connotation. It connotes precisely the categories of meaning through which we are able to contextualize what it is. Apart from the level of ontological immediacy, the dimension of significance proposes and unravels itself. As human beings, we have the ability to interpret our experience, by gathering the common elements facing us and formulating a critical reflection on it. Here the term "metaphysics" makes no reference to another reality beyond the one we live in which would be more profuse and actual. Instead it is recognised as the possibility and the ability to observe "physics" with a different overlook, an all-encompassing view which tries to collect the continuity represented by some regularities we encounter in order to receive and assign a meaning to them. Hence, the intersection between ontology and metaphysics — these terms indicate two different planes where the first describes what is in its unlimited and various shades, while the second abstracts or conceptualizes those suggestions.

Ontology: to describe what it is when something is.

Metaphysics: to elaborate those categories of meaning according to which we organize our knowledge.

Ontology without metaphysics would be unable to assemble any kind of *ἐπιστήμη* or develop any kind *σοφία*,<sup>351</sup> while a metaphysics without an

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<sup>351</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 1999, pp. 3 - 9; Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, Oxford: E typographeo Clarendoniano, 1957, pp. 3 - 9 (982a4 - 984b22).

ontology would be mere speculation incapable of reflecting on reality. Like Echo and Narcissus,<sup>352</sup> if they live separately, they are destined to vanish. Here I assume and share the position of Claudia Baracchi, who, in many works, discusses and argues, through precise references to the Aristotelian texts, that metaphysics connotes a knowledge with deep influences from physics, providing further implications to ethics. Even if in the *Corpus Aristotelicum*, for example, *Physics* is listed before the metaphysical treatise, this does not mean that *Metaphysics* “can be actually left behind.”<sup>353</sup> Moreover,

“Aristotle’s trajectory culminates with the ethics-political treaties and comes to close with the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, showing that the ultimate concern of the Greek philosopher is the examination of first principles as they operatively display themselves in the world and inform human practices — while, in turn, human practices critically shape the ways in which issues such as first principles emerge as problems and are interrogated.”<sup>354</sup>

Baracchi also underlines how a certain Western tradition tends to organize the sequence of Aristotle’s writings beginning with “logic followed by metaphysics, *and only subsequently* physics and the other disciplines.”<sup>355</sup> However, this position is grounded on the “not-so-evident assumptions regarding the hierarchical dualism of reason and experience.”<sup>356</sup> The purpose of the following pages is not to arrive at a metaphysical explanation that remains separate from and immune to

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<sup>352</sup> Cfr. Cassin, Barbara “Saying What One Sees, Letting See What One Says,” in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Aristotle*, C. Baracchi (ed.), London - New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013, p. 22: “Narcissus: the simple look that only sees itself, sight reduced to the worst of seeing — the simulacrum. Echo: the simple voice that only repeats itself, speech reduced to the worst of speech — to sound. Narcissus and Echo miss each other eternally and die desiccated: sight and speech, obscured in this way, are untenable, and slowly die without each other.”

<sup>353</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “Introduction: Paths of Inquiry,” in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Aristotle*, cit., p. 5.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibi*, p. 6 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>356</sup> *Ibidem*.

reality. Here ontology and metaphysics are understood as two philosophical scopes distinguished only by their primary focus(es), however they cannot be considered completely independently from one another: ontological suggestions are unavoidable for the purposes of a metaphysical elaboration and, on the other hand, if we want to adopt a wider perspective, through which meaning can be given to the worldly existence we constantly face, we need categories of thought suitable for embracing a broader setting.

#### 4. 2. The importance of Aristotle's philosophical account for his definition of λόγος

In order to describe how relation, as we have previously defined it, could be understood in a metaphysical sense, in the next pages we are going to propose a comparison between relation and some of Aristotle's writings on λόγος, collected together under the title *Organon*.<sup>357</sup> However, before proceeding in this sense, it will be helpful to present some elements of the Aristotelian account concerning the human. In effect, Aristotle indicates by the Greek term λόγος characteristics of both man and discourse, among others:<sup>358</sup> if this happened in the context of Greek thought, so attentive in naming the multiplicity of the real, there is probably something to discover about this homonymy. According to the

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<sup>357</sup> The title *Organon* under which Aristotle's writing on logic were collected was set by Alexander of Aphrodisias by the end of the II Century A.D. and the beginning of the III, cfr. Reale, Giovanni, *Introduzione a Aristotele*, Roma - Bari: Laterza, 2014, p. 141: "Therefore the term «*organon*,» which means «tool,» introduced by Alexander of Aphrodisias to designate logic in its entire (and starting from the IV century A. C. adopted as title to the aggregate of all the Aristotelian writing concerning logic) well defines the concept and the purpose of the Aristotelian Logic, that aims to provide the mental instruments necessary to deal with any kind of investigation" [author's emphasis, my translation]; Migliori, Maurizio, "Introduzione Generale" in *Aristotele. Organon. Categorie - De Interpretatione - Analitici Primi - Analitici Secundi - Topici - Confutazioni Sofistiche*, Milano: Bompiani, 2016, p. xxv: "*Organon* derives intact from *ergon*, «work», so it conveniently underlines the function of logic as mean, as tool" [author's emphasis, my translation]; cfr. Bernardini, Marina, "Saggio Introduttivo alle *Categorie*," in M. Migliori (ed.) *Aristotele. Organon*, cit., p. 7.

<sup>358</sup> For an explanation that addresses more than the two meanings relevant to our current context, see the paragraph in which the etymology of the term is discussed.

definition that Aristotle poses at the very beginning of his work titled *Categories*,<sup>359</sup>

“Ὅμωνυμα λέγεται ὧν ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν, ὁ δὲ κατὰ τοῦνομα λόγος τῆς οὐσίας ἕτερος,”<sup>360</sup>

which is translated as

“When things have only a name in common and the definition of being which corresponds to the name is different, they are called *homonymous*.”<sup>361</sup>

Here, we call two terms which share only the same name but differ for their defining arguments homonyms. However, Aristotle also claims, in the discussion on what is interpreted as being in the *Metaphysics*:

“Τὸ δὲ ὄν λέγεται μὲν πολλαχῶς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἓν καὶ μίαν τινὰ φύσιν καὶ οὐχ ὁμωνύμως,”<sup>362</sup>

in other words

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<sup>359</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963.

<sup>360</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, London: William Heinmann LTD, 1938, p. 12 (1a1 - 2).

<sup>361</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 3 [author's emphasis].

<sup>362</sup> Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, cit., p. 59 (1003a33 - 34).

“Being is meant in more than one way, but pointing toward one meaning and some one nature rather than ambiguously.”<sup>363</sup>

Hence, a question arises: what was originally indicated by the word *λόγος*, especially in the Aristotelian context? Is it the case that the term was employed to signify different entities with nothing in common, or rather was it used to refer to different aspects that are combined by something? And, subsequently, how might such an account of this term highlight the position of the human being as *ζῶον λόγον ἔχον*?

As often occurs in Aristotle's work, *λόγος* is said in many ways:<sup>364</sup> it is pivotal, for the intent of this research, to understand and clarify these issues in order to propose an interpretation of *λόγος* pertaining to relation. In ancient Greek language, this word was as familiar as ambiguous<sup>365</sup> and this is deducible from the many connotations of the term as well as from its frequent employment in various contexts. Consequently, even in Aristotle, *λόγος* finds an equally extensive and equivocal use,<sup>366</sup> however, as noticed by Aygün, he “never offers an analysis of this ambiguity.”<sup>367</sup> This might be considered unexpected for a

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<sup>363</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, cit., p. 53; cfr. also Shields, Christopher, *Aristotle*, Chicago: Routledge, 2014<sup>2</sup>, pp. 155 - 168: here Shields makes an argument about the «core-dependent» homonymy which, according to him, guarantees Aristotle “a positive approach to philosophical theorizing even in the face of non-univocity.” He continues, *ibi*, p. 167: “Aristotle’s apparatus of core-dependent homonymy thus also points to a way forward for philosophy conducted in the absence of the univocal definitions [...]. On Aristotle’s approach, univocal definitions are not restricted to the gods alone, because for a broad range of cases they are not to be had by any form of conscious mind. In their stead, philosophers can look to uncover the striking forms of order offered by core-dependent homonymy.”

A brief marginal consideration of this well known passage: since here the main interest is to stress the relational aspect of *λόγος* and consequently the Greek verb *λέγειν*, one might deduce that “being is meant in more than one way” because the ways in which we relate to it, the circumstances we find ourselves in relation to what it is are various and multiple, yet they share the fact that we refer to them using the same word, *ὄν*.

<sup>364</sup> Cfr. Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 3.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibi*, p. 5.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibidem*; here Aygün also informs, *ibidem*: “Bonitz reduces this ambiguity to a fourfold distinction which I shall roughly adopt without following its order: «standard,» «ratio,» «reason,» and «speech.»”

<sup>367</sup> *Ibidem*.

contemporary analysis, yet Aygün, while noting this lack in Aristotle's oeuvre, does not question the *reasons* why Aristotle, careful author and deep thinker, considered unnecessary a clarification dedicated to the employment or to the untangling of this term — or at least of its most common meanings. Underlying that Aristotle did not come across the requirement of an explanation in this sense, it may hint at a well established and wide presupposition of its meaning, such that it is not even considered to be an object of research. Actually, the mere fact that he did not provide such an account is evidence that the extended semantic area of the term λόγος was clear enough for the common knowledge of that period.<sup>368</sup>

Returning to our present concerns, Aristotle's interest in λόγος could be presented through the words of Russell Winslow, who poses

“the question of how, for Aristotle, *logos* shows itself, on the one hand, as a surrounding world of disposition and habits — a surrounding world that pushes individual humans into the repetitions of these habits in such a way that human beings become a kind of offspring of the *preiechon tou logou*, of the surrounding world of *logos*. Yet, equiprimordially with this embracing and informing horizon, we must grant and give expression to the possibility of a certain transformation that equally defines the human, qua *logos*-having creature, a metabolizing, motive potential inherent in human nature (and derived from the *periechon tou logou*) that enables a kind of cell-division and splitting-off of an organ of *logos* from the general body of the in-forming *logos* (a self-differentiating power which we shall see is simultaneously undergone and carried out by this very *logos* itself); that is, there must be human

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<sup>368</sup> Cfr. Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 6, where Aygün, confirming the central role of λόγος in Aristotle, however states: “Thus, [...] the word *logos* in the Aristotelian corpus is as familiar as it is ambiguous. *Logos* is not that which Aristotle did not think of. Indeed, far from it. *Logos* is rather a word that Aristotle persistently used without ever explaining or even thematizing it — a «Purloined Letter,» a blind spot, in his thought as well as in his vast posteriority, ancient and contemporary.”

deciveness, a cutting away from the general to make individual decision and responsibility possible.”<sup>369</sup>

As it is clear from the quote above, Winslow is mostly interested in the ethical consequences of a reflection on *λόγος*. Even if this is not the principal aim of the present argumentation, it presents us with several relevant consequences. Firstly, the scholar underlines the *ontological* aspect of the meaning of this ancient term, that is to say its (un)concealing happening, expressed and embodied by the environment in which a human being dwells with others and manifested by that human being’s disposition or habits. It is useful to recall that this was exactly the intent guiding us in the previous section of the current research, where, through multiple considerations of Heidegger’s passages on this concept, its relational character was underlined. Here, a second passage emerges: since *λόγος* is a peculiar attribute of man’s being, man holds the power to act in accordance with the surrounding settings or is able to interrupt, interfere with this dynamic procedure, creating unpredictable situations, that start from and yet are not reducible to them. Moreover, Winslow is able to individuate the subtle path between a binding context defined by *λόγος* and the creative ability articulated through human action: because of his interest in the strictly ethical consequences of this discussion, he points out the responsibility entailed by this interpretation both in Aristotle’s perspective and in the contemporary situation.

In this context, what does it mean to clarify the distinctive significations of the term at issue? As will be evident later, a reflection on such a topic will be crucial for pointing out precisely the passage from the ontological

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<sup>369</sup> Winslow, Russell, “On the Nature of Logos in Aristotle,” *Revue Philosophie Antique*, 6 (2006), p. 3 [author’s emphasis]. He also claims, *ibidem*: “But, can this scalpel of decision (*logos*) actually make a clean separation if it is itself an image of that from which it must become free (*logos*)?”

The file of this article could be downloaded here at the following link: [https://www.academia.edu/271402/On\\_the\\_Nature\\_of\\_logos\\_in\\_Aristotle](https://www.academia.edu/271402/On_the_Nature_of_logos_in_Aristotle)). From now on, I’m quoting referring to the pages indicated in the file just mentioned.

to the metaphysical level of understanding.<sup>370</sup> We have discussed the ontological level above, and we will later consider the metaphysical level as a meta-descriptive level,<sup>371</sup> because “only by attending to the physical

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<sup>370</sup> However, here is also implicit the development of a third passage: the ethical one, which should be interpreted not as a mere application of the principles presented in *Metaphysics*, but as the location where their actualization occurs. In the ethical space we encounter the (un)concealing happening of λόγος, starting from which we are able to argument through language and discourse. Such argumentation does not remain in a separate relation to the surrounding world, indeed it affects and influences that space. Claudia Baracchi presents reasons for this topic in some of her works, for example those previously quoted. Regarding the same issue, Winslow affirms: “[...] for Aristotle, *logos* is first and foremost an ethical/political question,” in “On the Nature of Logos in Aristotle,” cit., p. 4.

<sup>371</sup> Urbani Ulivi, Lucia, “La Struttura dell’Umano. Linee per un’Antropologia Sistemica,” in Aa. Vv. *Strutture di mondo. Il pensiero sistemico come specchio di una realtà complessa* a cura di L. Urbani Ulivi, Bologna: Il Mulino 2010, pp. 242 - 243; cfr. anche Urbani Ulivi, Lucia, *Introduzione alla Filosofia*, Lugano: Eupress FLT, 2005, p. 72: “[...] la metafisica è la determinazione razionale delle condizioni meta-empiriche dell’empirico. Tale definizione sottolinea come la metafisica sia un percorso razionale, cioè utilizzi delle argomentazioni per trovare e proporre ipotesi esplicative e afferma anche che ogni affermazione generale sul mondo empirico esce in realtà dalla capacità di conferma proprie dell’empirico [...]. Ecco allora la scelta di fare una metafisica che riconosce esplicitamente che ciò che consente di spiegare l’empirico travalica le possibilità di conferma empiriche e che intende procedere in tale ricerca per via razionale [...]”, translated in English as “[...] metaphysics is the rational determination of the meta-empirical conditions of the empirical. This definition emphasizes how metaphysics is a rational path, i.e., it employs arguments to find and propose explanatory hypotheses, and also states that any general affirmation on the empirical world actually escapes the empirical self-confirmation [...]. Here is the choice to make a metaphysics that explicitly recognizes that what explains the empirical actually travalates the possibilities of empirical confirmation and intends to proceed in such rational research [...]” [my translation]. Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, “Introduction: Paths of Inquiry,” cit., pp. 4 - 5: “Strictly speaking, analysis is not a science, but rather the illumination of the presuppositions always already implicit in every scientific endeavor, in fact, in every gesture of *logos*: methodological awareness, one can say, is the capacity for proceeding along a path (*hodos*) of inquiry while cultivating the consciousness of the structural conditions involved (*Metaphysics* 1005b3). It also prepares one to distinguishing different ways of proceeding, assessing the most appropriate in each case [...]. That Aristotle did not have, let alone think, the word «metaphysics» has been amply discussed with diverse results, and I shall leave it aside here. For, in the first place, prior to taking a position on whatever or not Aristotle «had» a metaphysics, it would be relevant to think through this problem in light of the fact that conceptual categories are not ahistorical, transhistorical entities, translatable and transportable from one epoch to another, across time and space, while remaining constant and intact. Indeed, Aristotle was among the thinkers most acutely aware of such difficulties pertaining to te philosophy of history, the genealogy of concepts, the finitude and mortality of cultures (*Metaphysics* I and II could hardly be more peremptory in this respect, as it *Metaphysics* XII.8),” and Baracchi, Claudia, “I Molti Sistemi di Aristotele,” in *Sistema e Sistematicità in Aristotele*, Pistoia: Petite Plaisance Editrice, 2016, pp. 110 - 11. See also Bartolini, Elena, *Per Un’Antropologia Sistemica: Studi sul De Anima di Aristotele*, Senago: Albo Versorio, 2015, p. 92.



may one come to the possibility of interrogating the physical in such a way as to transcend it.”<sup>372</sup>

#### 4.3. Human soul and λόγος

Surely, following the order of the *Corpus Aristotelicum*, the first writing in which the term λόγος not only appears but is also part of the ongoing discussion is the *Categories* and, more generally, those writings collected under the title *Organon*.<sup>373</sup> But within these texts, and also among other Aristotelian writings, λόγος is not always translatable as “reason” or “discourse.” The multiplicity of its semantic fields testifies to the various employment of the term by Aristotle and also by other authors. Moreover, Aristotle dedicates many pages to λόγος in other treatises,<sup>374</sup> for example in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and in *On the Soul*. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*<sup>375</sup> λόγος signifies “having portion of the soul”, as well as “having reason,” but also “world.”<sup>376</sup> It is in these writings that Aristotle considers “the way in which all the powers of the human soul can be developed and

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<sup>372</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “Introduction: Paths of Inquiry,” cit., p. 5.

<sup>373</sup> Cfr. Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 24: Aygün notices that, desiring to conduct research on λόγος which is also concerned with Aristotle, this is the recommended starting point since here “there is a clearly philosophical and yet cursory remark concerning the priority of things themselves to *logos*,” as will be clear later in the next chapter, entirely dedicated to the *Categories* and to *On Interpretation*. However, before introducing the more strictly logical treatises, I would first consider how λόγος is implicated in the Aristotelian anthropology due to the analogical correspondence between λόγος-occurring and λόγος-faculty before λόγος-syllogism.

<sup>374</sup> Cfr. Winslow, Russell, “On the Nature of Logos in Aristotle,” cit., p. 4: “For the most part [the focus will be on] the Ethical and Political works for their careful emphasis on these questions and as a way of casting lights on the phenomenon of what I here call the transformation of *logos* into *logos*. Yet, at the same time, we will discover that these concerns become most fully illuminated by attending to Aristotle’s physical works as well. In fact, one of the underlying assumption [...] will be that the Ethical and Political (and even *logos* itself) become understood only insofar as Aristotle’s *physis* — and principally nature understood as a source of motion — is allowed to be their animating ground.”

<sup>375</sup> For a detailed report on this topic see Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., pp. 127 - 135, pp. 175 - 180 and pp. 305 - 307. Cfr. also Winslow, Russell, *On the nature of Logos in Aristotle*, cit..

<sup>376</sup> Winslow, Russell, “On the Nature of Logos in Aristotle,” cit., p. 1.

combined.”<sup>377</sup> It is interesting to notice that the arguments and the reasoning about what most concerns the human soul are displayed in the essay concerning life and in the essay that considers the human behaviour which, of course, involves not only a single individual by itself but in its interacting with others, with its community, i.e., the human disposition which is always an inclination not only towards oneself but towards others as well.<sup>378</sup> This might be interpreted as a sign of continuity in Aristotle’s understanding of the topic at issue, where human life, defined by its having a human soul, is understood to be inseparable from the context in which it dwells. This understanding of human life appears immediately in its distance from our contemporary consideration of this same theme, an interpretation still considerably influenced by a modern

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<sup>377</sup> Sachs, Joe, “Recognizing the Soul,” in (trans.) *Aristotle’s On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, Chelsea: Sheridan Books Inc, 2004<sup>2</sup>, p. 31.

<sup>378</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 131: “It is only in a community that human beings can actualize their potential (humans are «by nature political»). *Logos*, *polis* and *anthrōpos* emerge in their indissoluble intertwinement. Within this framework is situated Aristotle’s elaboration of human nature, an elaboration whose aporetic structure is illuminated by the contrast between the being of the citizen and that of the human being as such.”

idea of the subject, of the individual.<sup>379</sup> In the treatise devoted to the study of the soul, *λόγος* appears when Aristotle directs his efforts toward grasping its various and distinctive peculiarities: here indeed *λόγος* resembles to a feature that permits one to approach the world in a way that is comparable to reasoning,<sup>380</sup> due to its role as mediator between *αἴσθησις* and *νοῦς*; moreover it is investigated in its bond with *νοῦς*, which is *without* *λόγος*, i.e., the part of human being which is not characterized by *λόγος*.<sup>381</sup> In the same work, the main issue is the comparison between the human soul, which finds its full expression in the noetic aspect, with the other typologies of souls, those observable in other living beings and whose presence within the human being makes possible

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<sup>379</sup> *Ibi*, cit., pp. 264 - 265: “We have already more than once underlined the distance between the philosophical ambiance here examined and the genuinely modern, paradigmatically Kantian, stance. If, with and after Kant, friendship as well as happiness come to be understood as categories pertaining to individual experience, marked by contingency and subsequently relegated to the private (indeed, it could be said the the very separation and contraposition of private and public rest on such a construal of friendship and happiness as, in each case, insular, diverse, essentially unrelated, and politically irrelevant pursuits), at this stage of the Greek reflection, and most notably with Aristotle, we consistently find the indication of a certain undecidability between private and public matters. [...] It could be said that the Aristotelian reflection provides resources for the systematic overcoming of the opposition of public and private or universality and singularity.” The author focuses here on the topic of friendship, but since the fundamental elements necessary for friendship to occur, this might be considered an appropriate example for the topic here discussed. See also *ibi*, p. 131: “More often than not, Aristotle seems to imply an understanding of the human being in its singularity, as a «this,» a unique being whom it is often arduous to refer back to a comprehensive conception of the human. On the one hand, in fact, the human being essentially and by nature belongs in the *polis*. On the other hand, the political constitution of the human being does not obviously dictate an understanding of the individual as an indifferent interchangeable unit. In other words, the individual is seen both as a «this,» whose singular identifying features by definition remain to be assessed, and as political in the sense of neither self-constituted nor yet autonomous. This appears to be the converse of what will have been the modern conception of the subject — construed, on the one hand, as free and absolved from heteronomous conditions and, on the other hand, as utterly homogeneous with respect to any other subject. The subject at once distinctively and indifferently rational, that is, characterized by the power of reason while least singular, least differentiated by reference to this power, this subject bespeaking then possibility of undifferentiated intersubjectivity, remains unthinkable for Aristotle.”

<sup>380</sup> References supporting this claim will be reported later, when this theme will be discussed in a more detailed manner.

<sup>381</sup> Providing a complete and detailed account of the Aristotelian psychology as well as an accurate description of what he means by the term *νοῦς* and how *λόγος* and *νοῦς* are related is not the aim of the present work. The present investigation is limited to this topic as far as it concerns a perspective on the term *λόγος*.

such thinking.<sup>382</sup> It is now evident, that to grasp the significance of λόγος as deeply and widely as possible, it is necessary to present its connection with what is indicated by the term “νοῦς.” Both these words belong to a vast horizon of meanings, and so, consequently, summarizing their semantic areas and their correlation in a few paragraphs is a very challenging task: furthermore this is not the main aim of present argumentation, even though it maintains an undeniable relevance to Aristotelian thought.

Many authors<sup>383</sup> have noticed that Aristotle employs similar terms to allude to both νοῦς and to αἴσθησις,<sup>384</sup> underlining their common element: πάθος. Indeed, the “passive” νοῦς and αἴσθησις are both characterized by the ability to receive something:<sup>385</sup> while the former is suited to receive forms; the latter is affected by material items. Such a reasoning is not concerned, however, with the two faculties of νοῦς that characterize the human according to Aristotle, namely the one acquiring forms and the other which he describes as not mixed with the body and always-at-work.<sup>386</sup> This latter will be introduced later in his account on

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<sup>382</sup> Cfr. Sachs, Joe, “Recognizing the Soul,” cit., p. 31.

<sup>383</sup> Here I am referring to the outcomes disclosed by the studies of Baracchi, Sachs, Winslow, and Aygün.

<sup>384</sup> Their relation is examined also in *Posterior Analytics*, cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., pp. 28 - 38: through the reading of some passages from this Aristotelian treatise, Baracchi here points out the “irreducibility, even of *epistēmē* itself, to the order of demonstration.”

<sup>385</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 89: “Not all natural motion involves the integration of matter. Some natural beings interact with beings without imposing their own forms onto others’ bodies. These beings are receptive not only to others’ material, but also to their form.”

<sup>386</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957, p. 170, Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., p. 142 (430a18-20). This argument will be deepened further in the next pages.

the soul and will be considered as the final element that guarantees human knowledge.<sup>387</sup> On this point, Aristotle claims:

“Περὶ δὲ τοῦ μορίου τοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς ὃ γινώσκει τε ἢ ψυχὴ καὶ φρονεῖ, εἴτε χωριστοῦ ὄντος εἴτε καὶ μὴ χωριστοῦ κατὰ μέγεθος ἀλλὰ κατὰ λόγον, σκεπτέον τίν’ ἔχει διαφορὰν, καὶ πῶς τοτὲ γίωεται τὸ νοεῖν. εἰ δὴ ἐστὶ τὸ νοεῖν ὡςπερ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι, ἢ πάσχειν τι ἂν εἴη ὑπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ ἢ τι τοιοῦτον ἄτερον. ἀπαυὲς ἄρα δεῖ εἶναι, δεκτικὸν δὲ τοῦ εἶδους καὶ δυνάμει ποιοῦτον ἀλλὰ μὴ τοῦτο, καὶ ὁμοίως ἔχειν, ὡςπερ τὸ αἰσθητικὸν πρὸς τὰ αἰσθητά, οὕτω τὸν πρὸς τὰ νοητά.”<sup>388</sup>

which is translated as

“About the part of the soul by which the soul knows and understands, whether it is a separate part, or not separate the way a magnitude is but in its meaning, one must consider what distinguishing characters it has, and how thinking ever comes about. If thinking works the same way perceiving does, it would be either some way of being acted upon by the intelligible thing, or something else of that sort. Therefore it must be without attributes but receptive of the form and in potency not to be the form but to be such as it is; and it must be similar so that as the power of perception is to the perceptible things, so is the intellect to the intelligible things.”<sup>389</sup>

As is possible to deduce from the passage, Aristotle questions the nature of that part of the human being that allows thought and, in doing

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<sup>387</sup> On this topic particularly interesting is what is exposed by Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 37, where she discusses some paragraphs from *Posterior Analytics*, in particular 100b5 - 17: “Noetic perception, then, concerns the non-mediated perception of principles. It provides the origin of scientific inquiry and, at the same time, is radically discontinuous, indeed, disruptive vis-à-vis the linear unfolding of such an inquiry. The apprehension of principles is not knowledge *meta logou*, accomplished through *logos*, although it grounds *logos* and discerns it in the phenomena perceived and ordered according to the whole.”

<sup>388</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., pp. 162 - 165 (429a10 - 18).

<sup>389</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., pp. 138 - 139.

so, is “acted upon” by “the intelligible thing.” From his description of *νοῦς*, Aristotle concludes that it must not be determined by any attributes in order to receive them from what is experienced. Moreover, Aristotle highlights the similarities with *αἴσθησις*, described in some previous paragraphs of *De Anima*.<sup>390</sup>

It seems that a passive nature is not the only attribute shared by *νοῦς* and *αἴσθησις*: their cooperation generates those human faculties that allow the passage from *λόγος*-occurring to *λόγος*-reasoning and then to *λόγος*-speech.<sup>391</sup> As far as *λόγος*-occurring is concerned, I refer to what was described in the previous pages, which dialogue with Heidegger’s account of this term from the ontological point of view and that, in the Aristotelian context might be compared albeit for different theoretical positions not explicitly identified, with what is expressed by the *προϋπαρχούσης γνώσεως*,<sup>392</sup> that is to say the preexistent form of knowledge influenced and structured<sup>393</sup> by the cohabitation with others that, in the same way, share *λόγος*. *Λόγος*-reasoning signifies the ability to employ and articulate what is noetically received,<sup>394</sup> but also its consequent “emancipation from experience.”<sup>395</sup> Moreover, *λόγος*-speech represents a broader elaboration, fully developed in the scientific demonstration or in the dialectic method, that is conveyed by

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<sup>390</sup> See especially chapters 5 - 12 in Book II of *De Anima* (Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath* pp. 94 - 139 (416b33 - 424b19) and Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle’s On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., pp. 95 - 120).

<sup>391</sup> See Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007, pp. 93 - 109 and Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., pp. 131 - 135.

<sup>392</sup> See Tredennick, Hugh, Forster, Edward Seymour, (transl.) *Aristotle. Posterior Analytics. Topica*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960, p. 24 (71a1 - 2).

<sup>393</sup> Commenting on this passage from *Posterior Analytics*, Baracchi in her *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., pp. 37 - 38 states: “All transmission and reception of knowledge that move across (*dia*) intuition or thinking (*noēsis*) in order to articulate themselves discursively presuppose a knowledge that must always already be there in order for any exchange to take place at all.”

<sup>394</sup> In this sense, *λόγος* interacts with what comes both from *αἴσθησις* and from *νοῦς*, gathering them in a meaningful way.

<sup>395</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit, p. 37.

discourse.<sup>396</sup> If sensation is the unavoidable perception through which the human is constantly dealing with what is other, it is also true that it is defined as *λόγος*, i.e., as mean,<sup>397</sup> between the embodied soul and the surrounding world, which in the specific case of the human is represented by the *πόλις*. In the framework of this analysis, *λόγος* is employed, as mentioned, in multiple ways and with different meanings. At the same time, it is useful to underline how, in a philosophical inquiry, these moments are addressed separately, but, in fact, because of their shared root, in our human experience they cooperate constantly.<sup>398</sup> Even now, writing these words. Even now, reading them. As humans, we constantly move through the interwoven relations that occur in our lives. Moreover, it seems that a common element is traceable within the various meanings in which Aristotle uses the term at issue: *λόγος* connects, in a structured way, what differs, gathering the elements it involves.<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> The Aristotelian *Organon* might be interpreted as the first attempt in the history of Western Philosophy to propose explanation and guidelines of this last aspect.

<sup>397</sup> The next paragraphs will present a passage from *On the Soul* where this identification finds its justification.

<sup>398</sup> Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 38: "The apprehension of principles emerges out of the silent unfolding of life itself: it is inscribed in my own constitution, or, rather, inscribes my constitution as never simply my own. I never subsist aside from the apprehending, but am constituted in this exposure to and undergoing of that which arrives, in this permanent openness." Also see Baracchi, Claudia, "Aristotele e il *Nous*. Note sulla Trascendenza Indicibile," in Grecchi, Luca, (ed.) *Immanenza e Trascendenza in Aristotele*, Pistoia: petite plaisance, 2017, p. 142: "E comunque, anche al di là del piano fisico-percettivo, l'immediatezza, l'*arche* che si esprime nell'unità di percipiente e percepito, è sempre già sfuggita all'articolazione conoscitiva. Quest'ultima è sempre e strutturalmente in ritardo, si ordina in una posteriorità inemendabile e irrecuperabile: il discorso analitico-ontologico è sempre rivolto a ciò che precede, sempre volto, proprio in quanto tale, a ciò che è già perduto. Fissa l'essere, al presente, del passato," which translated is "And yet, beyond the physical-perceptual level, the immediacy, the *arche* that expresses itself in the unity of the perceiver and the perceived is always already escaped from the cognitive articulation. The latter is constantly structurally delayed, it is ordained in an impermanent and unrecoverable posteriority: the analytic-ontological discover is always directed at what precedes, always turned, just as such, to what is already lost. It fixes the being, to the present, of the past" [my translation]. Here it is remarkable that Baracchi refers to *λόγος* which, because of its relationship with *νοῦς*, follows it. However, it is also true, as I attempted to demonstrate, that such noetic contact occurs in a context determined by *λόγος*-world, that is to say in a spatial and temporal horizon where *λόγος* in-forms the possibility for such experience to take place.

<sup>399</sup> See for example the passage from Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, cit., p. 118 (424a28). In this passage Aristotle addresses to sensation as a kind of *λόγος*, "relatedness" in Sachs' translation. Hence, sensation is a way through which things that differ come to be one, in a unity. See also *ibi*, p. 97 (417a20 - 22).

In any case, it is only when starting from “the primordial folds of life,”<sup>400</sup> that is to say from *αἰσθησις*, that the journey of knowledge begins. Baracchi, reading Aristotle, summarizes his concerns about this topic with the following words:

“The capacity for being taught, that is, for learning, at a most basic level presupposes the power of sensing. For from sensation arises in certain cases memory, and this development already in and of itself makes possible a degree of prudence (*phronēsis*) and learning (*manthanein*).”<sup>401</sup>

In describing how this happens, she affirms

“[...] I seize the similarities that turn the *perception* of a being into the *recognition* of a being, that is, the recognition of a being as the same, as a being that comes back after having been seen already, however altered in its returning or self-reproduction.”<sup>402</sup>

Proceeding from what Aristotle claims in *On the Soul*<sup>403</sup> and in the *Metaphysics*,<sup>404</sup> Baracchi points out how for Aristotle the perceptive dimension appears unavoidable for any description concerning

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<sup>400</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 20. Baracchi here reports an extract from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (980a27 - b25) to underline the role of memory and experience together with perception: “By nature animals [τὰ ζῷα] are born having sensation, and from sensation [ἐκ δὲ ταύτης] memory [μνήμη] comes into being in some of them but not in others.”

<sup>401</sup> *Ibi*, p. 21.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibi*, p. 20 [author's emphasis].

<sup>403</sup> *Ibidem*, note 4 where Baracchi refers to the passage 425b24 - 5, which she translates as follows: “It is in view of this that sensations [αἰσθήσεις] and imaginings [φαντασία] [of the sensed beings] are in the sense organs even when those [sensed beings] are gone.”

<sup>404</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, cit., p. 1: “All human beings by nature stretch themselves out toward knowing. A sign for this is our love of the senses; for even apart from their use, they are loved on their own account, and above all the rest, the one through the eyes;” in Greek, Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, cit., p. 1: “Πάντες ἄνθρωποι τοῦ εἰδέναι ὀρέγονται φύσει. σημεῖον δ' ἡ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἀγάπησις· καὶ γὰρ χωρὶς τῆς χρείας ἀγαπῶνται δι' αὐτάς, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἄλλων ἢ διὰ τῶν ὀμμάτων” (980a1 - 4).



knowledge and for any further developments on the same topic. Additionally, the “power of sensing” guarantees the first stage that allows for more complex attitudes, such as prudence and learning. In order to provide such a guarantee, a passage should occur between the immediate perception of a being and a subsequent recognition of the same. This “returning,” the Baracchi suggests, is indicative of an alteration, a distance between the two moments. Knowledge begins from sensation.<sup>405</sup> On the same issue, Ömer Aygün in his recent work on the concept of *λόγος* in Aristotle, underlines its presence in sensation, or even in the organs predisposed for it, with the following words:

“A sense organ is necessarily extended [...]; but what makes it a sense is «some *logos*,» which is not extended. This *logos* is the configuration of the sense organ, the relationship between extended things, and «hence it is clear why excess in the sensibles sometimes destroy the sense organs; for it the motion of the sense organ is too strong, the *logos* (which is sensation) is destroyed» (DA II, 12, 424a29-32).”<sup>406</sup>

Aygün indicates that even the very organ of sensation is predisposed in a certain way by “some *logos*” constituting it. It appears to be the case that the organ, if considered as an object of interest, displays itself according to a certain predisposition because of its internal *λόγος*, as it is a concrete *οὐσία*. Aygün, in the passage just quoted, decides not to translate the word *λόγος*,<sup>407</sup> but to underline the proximity of the term with another,

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<sup>405</sup> It is interesting to note that Aygün refers to sensation as a kind of *λόγος*, Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., pp. 97 - 101 (authors' emphasis). We might see here how sensation is a medium for the connection between external *λόγος* and human *λόγος*, representing the mediation — so, in fact, a relation — between the two.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibi*, p. 98.

<sup>407</sup> Cfr. Sachs, who in this passage translates it with the term ‘ratio’ (Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., p. 118) as well as (Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 136). Shiffman decides to not translate the term in his edition, see Shiffman, Mark, (trans.) *Aristotle. De Anima*, Newburyport: Focus Publishing, 2011, p. 72: “[...] the *logos* that is the perception is ruined [...]”

*αἰσθησις*. Moving from the Aristotelian claim he points out the sense in which they are, to a certain extent, the same: indeed he provides us with ample reason to justify his choice. Firstly, he presents the ontological relation occurring and involving the perceiver and what is perceived which is expressed through sensation, but also the means that *λόγος* as sensation represents. Such means act at the same time as the medium of the encountering in perception, gathering what differs *by nature*, but is in nonetheless in a certain sense identifiable *in that same nature* as what comes to meet through sensation, *being* the articulated and structured unity of each *οὐσία*, the here and now appearance of its eidetic aspect. Sachs, for example, argues something similar about forms, always in the context of Aristotle's research on soul, but from a different perspective and referring to *νοῦς*:

“In the body a multiplicity of motions is molded into a single way of being-at-work,<sup>408</sup> but again with our perceptions themselves there is a single awareness, a second forming of a third level of activity, the being-at-work of the perceiving soul. This is perhaps what Aristotle means when he says that the intellect is a form of forms (432a2). Since form is a being-at-work, a form of forms is a higher unity, a hierarchical structure organizing change at two levels.”<sup>409</sup>

Both these authors seem to point out the relational and involved aspects of *λόγος*, even in its connection with the noetic character of the human: Aygün insists on the engagement of the parts and consequently on the role of *λόγος* as medium; Sachs goes further while describing such relation not only for itself or for the constitutes comprehended within, but

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<sup>408</sup> Cfr. Sachs, Joe, “Recognizing the Soul,” cit., p. 9: “In that case, the thing does not hold out passively against change, but absorbs change into itself, molds in into a new kind of identity, a second level of sameness, a higher order of being. For such a being, to be at all depends on its keeping on being what it is. Aristotle sums up this way of being in his phrase *to ti ēn einai*, for what this sort of things is cannot be given by some arbitrary classification of it, but is what it keeps on being in order to be at all. Its very being is activity, being-at-work-, for which his word is *energeia*, and because it is a wholeness of identity achieved in and through being-at-work, Aristotle invents as a name for it the word *entelecheia*, being-at-work-staying-itself” [author's emphasis].

<sup>409</sup> *Ibi*, p. 13.

places it into a hierarchical entirety, a unity guaranteed by *νοῦς* but gathered in its formal aspects by *λόγος*.

In effect, returning to Aygün, we see that he often repeats the definition of *λόγος* employing the following or similar words:

“*Logos* once again names a limit of inclusivity — which, once violated, entails the destruction of what of which it is a *logos*,”<sup>410</sup>

and

“The animal is not only holding together the *logos* of its sense organ and the *logos* of its object without letting one yield to the other, it is also doing so while holding the medium *as medium*.”<sup>411</sup>

In these quotes it is possible to trace two remarkable instances crucial for a description of *λόγος* as relation. First of all, Aygün speaks of *λόγος* as the “limit” of something that is considered in its “inclusivity,” moreover he explicitly refers to it as “medium.” From these premises, it is possible to conclude that *λόγος* here names a sort of relation that, *through* the *gathering* of what is articulated by it, provides at the same time a sort of *unity*. *Λόγος* unites what is different, in such a way that, in this joining together, what is gathered is preserved in its own entirety. In doing so, in this structural relation, one can find meaning or meaning can in-form.<sup>412</sup> In effect, in Aygün’s words, what is this mediation if not a *sudden relation* involving the elements of such relation at an *ontological level* without dissolving them into the same relation? Aygün also refers to the limits of this entailed relation. Entailed relation, and here I would suggest that these limits are the structural constraints traceable at every ontological

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<sup>410</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 98.

<sup>411</sup> *Ibi*, p. 101 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>412</sup> It might be the case to consider here the double connotation of the English word “mean” which, similarly to the Greek *λόγος*, both is used to refer to “significance” and “medium.”

level, boundaries delimited by the *λόγος* of each being. Sachs, for his part, provides support for my suggestion by locating those bounds not only in a living being:

“[...] we may notice that being-at-work-staying-itself [*entelecheia*] is not a mere synonym for life. It is *an intelligible structure that might apply to things other than animals and plants*. [...] So the *structure* that matches up with that of a living thing is also found apart from living things. It may also be found in particular activities within living things.”<sup>413</sup>

Moving from a translation (and, consequently, from an interpretation) of *ἐντελέχεια* as “being-at-work-staying-itself,” such considerations open the possibility of conceiving of something as an entity, as *οὐσία* — concrete and intelligible in a way that would be different from that of a single object. For example, even a *πόλις*, where there is a structural unity, that is, a *formal* disposition, together with material elements, which in this specific case are humans, but we would also include architectural structures or natural features: *εἶδος* and *ὑλη*. These are all constituents of *οὐσία*, as Aristotle ultimately describes it:

“τριχῶς γὰρ λεγομένης τῆς οὐσίας, καθάπερ εἶπομεν, ὧν τὸ μὲν εἶδος, τὸ δὲ ὑλη, τὸ δὲ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν τούτων δ’ ἡ μὲν δύναμις, τὸ δὲ εἶδος ἐντελέχεια,”<sup>414</sup>

translated as

“For thinghood is meant in three ways, as we said, of which one way is as form, one as material, and one as what is made of both, while of these the material is potency and the form is being-at-work-staying-itself.”<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Sachs, Joe, “Recognizing the Soul,” cit., p. 10 [my italics].

<sup>414</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 78 (414a15 - 18).

<sup>415</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle’s On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., p. 87.

Returning to our starting point, i.e., the importance of *αἴσθησις* for knowledge and consequently its relationship to *λόγος*, we are now in a position to move further, recognizing, with Aristotle, that mere isolated sensation is not enough: in fact, to establish any kind of *ἐπιστήμη* it is not only a single experience, but a certain repetition and frequency, dealing with what surrounds us multiple times, in various ways and situations, that is necessary. Thus, in this dealing with, “the perception of universals”<sup>416</sup> is forged. Our participation with the world, that is to say the ontological relations we are involved in, the occurring of what is, is the condition for intuiting with *νοῦς*, which allows for the grasping of the *εἶδος* of things. This *εἶδος* is indeed “another way of saying *logos*, insofar as form is the disclosure of something «held together» (*suneches*), something which has been «gathered into a certain relation» (*legein*) by nature in such a way that its limits (*horoi*) are continuous.”<sup>417</sup> It seems, once again, that *λόγος* indicates both the setting of “limits” and, at the same time, their interconnections, crossing the boundaries but also maintaining structures. *Λόγος*, depending on which plane of its manifestation is engaged, always suggests unity in diversity, a tension wherein various dynamics display themselves and result in form, sensation or knowledge.<sup>418</sup> One of the types of knowledge in which *λόγος* assumes a fundamental role is definition, which might be conceived as a “logical disclosure.” On this point, Winslow claims:

“[...] this form of logical disclosure, definition, is of the continuity (*sunecheia*, the gathered-togetherness in disclosure that is form [*eidōs*]) of a

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<sup>416</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 20.

<sup>417</sup> Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, cit., p. 66.

<sup>418</sup> In Aristotle appears not to be present, at least in the same terms, of the ontological consideration of *λόγος* of which Heidegger provides his account.

natural being which inscribes itself upon sensuous and intellectual perception.”<sup>419</sup>

Hence, it is evident how *λόγος*, in its discursive aspect, allows man to have the capability to express a descriptive meta-level,<sup>420</sup> which means that one is able to be concerned with entities in a way that presents them even if they are not physically here and now, which is to say, sustained by noetic perception. Winslow proceeds by describing how *λόγος*, *εἶδος* and both forms of perceptions, the aesthetic and the noetic, are connected to one another. Deepening the question further, this passage adds some elements to what Baracchi affirmed in her previous quote: *νοῦς* is suited for receiving forms, which could not be collected if not for experience, situated spatially and temporally. This experience is guaranteed by *αἴσθησις*, while *νοῦς*, since it is without *λόγος*, grasps what is a-temporal, namely the form or rather the element thanks to which every *οὐσία* shows its nature, since form is the *ἀρχή* of every *οὐσία*.<sup>421</sup> However, what is acquired by such a knowledge does not remain unfruitful, as it represents a plural articulation which will be material for human thought:<sup>422</sup> the

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<sup>419</sup> Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, cit., p. 67 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>420</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 116: “In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle’s criterion for dividing the human soul is *logos*: «one part is *alogos*, while the other has [*ekhon*] *logos* » (*NE* I, 13, 1102a29 - 30). *Logos* not only distinguishes the human being from all other animals, it also differentiates the human soul within itself” [author’s emphasis]. *Λόγος* not only distinguishes man from other living beings, *λόγος* discriminates within it as well, allowing man to ascertain his various constituents.

<sup>421</sup> Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, cit., pp. 68 - 69: “Thus, the *archê* rules over the primary activity that preserves and rescues the being of a being. The *archê* provides the ruling activity that holds the being *together* as the being that it is; it provides the continuity (*sunecheia*) which is necessary not only for the being to exist, but even its graspability in thought or perception, insofar as that thing is to be grasped «as» any *one* thing and not a heap” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>422</sup> Winslow, Russell, “On the Life of Thinking,” in *Epoché*, Volume 13, Issue 2 (Spring 2009), p. 310: “*Nous* is the most primordially *open* part of the soul. It can become any intelligible thing that works upon it. If there is such a thing as *primary matter* in Aristotle, from this description it would seem that, rather than some sort of lowly material substrate, *nous*—the highest potency in the cosmos—is a kind of *primary matter*” [author’s emphasis]. Part of this quotation is reported again in few pages.

unmixed and separated *νοῦς* is the factor that maintains unity in human thinking. Sachs claims:

“Every judgement is an external combination of a separated subject and predicate in our discursive thinking, but is simultaneously held together as a unity by the intellect (430b5 - 6). That is why Aristotle says that the contemplative intellect is that by means of which the soul thinks things through and understands (429a23).”<sup>423</sup>

Such *νοῦς* is difficult to locate: Sachs underlines the importance of the contemplative intellect as “the foundation upon which all other thinking proceeds”<sup>424</sup> and for this reason it “must be in us but not of us,”<sup>425</sup> while Winslow says that such peculiarity indicates that its qualifications are not ascribable to a specific organ. Rather, it denotes the openness of the human soul.<sup>426</sup> However, here Winslow does not proceed by clarifying the characteristic of separation of this *νοῦς*, as Aristotle also explicitly defines it.<sup>427</sup> He specifies that at every level *νοῦς* reveals differences from *λόγος*,<sup>428</sup> especially because “unlike *logos* as predication, affirmation, or negation, «nous is not something in relation to something else [*ti kata tinos*]».”<sup>429</sup> One of the reasons that *νοῦς* can be considered without *λόγος*

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<sup>423</sup> Sachs, Joe, “Recognizing the Soul,” cit., p. 32.

<sup>424</sup> *Ibi*, p.34.

<sup>425</sup> *Ibidem*; Sachs adds another important contribution to the discussion, *ibi*, p. 32: “Exclusively discursive thinking that could separate and combine, but could never contemplate anything whole, would be an empty algebra, a formalism that could not be applied to anything. In human thinking, at any rate, the activities of reasoning and contemplation are rarely disentangled;” and *ibi*, p. 34: “If it [the contemplative intellect] were not somehow in us, our thinking would not be what it is; if were wholly within us and subject to our limitations, no thinking would be possible at all. This is the claim made in Book III, Chapter 5.”

<sup>426</sup> Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, cit., p. 56. On the same topic, many times I have pointed out Claudia Baracchi’s position on this, a position that agrees and deepens what claimed by Sachs and Winslow.

<sup>427</sup> Cfr. the previous footnote where the extract from *On the Soul* 430a19 - 20 is quoted.

<sup>428</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 208 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>429</sup> *Ibi*, p. 209, he refers to *On the Soul* 430b26 - 29.

is because it does not express itself through the modality of the latter. However, *νοῦς*, as mentioned, is able to receive forms and to unify thought, that is to say, to (re)unite, thanks to what was received by the comparability with *λόγος*-occurring. Here we should reaffirm the fact that not everything is knowable through *λόγος*-reasoning or through *λόγος*-feature. It is still the case that there is something that remains unsayable.<sup>430</sup> Aristotle states that

“καὶ ὁ θτοσ ὁ νοῦς χωριστὸς καὶ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀμιγῆς τῇ οὐσίᾳ ὧν ἐνεργεῖα. ἀεὶ γὰρ τιμώτερον τὸ ποιῶν τοῦ πάσχοντος καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς ὕλης,”<sup>431</sup>

which is translated as

“This sort of intellect is separate, as well as being without attributes and unmixed, since it is by its thinghood a being-at-work, for what acts is always distinguished in stature above what is acted upon, as a governing source is above the material it works on.”<sup>432</sup>

Some more considerations might be gleaned from these claims. Being separated and without *λόγος*, the active *νοῦς* is unrelated, which means that it is not described *per se* by a structure, nor does it require mediums.<sup>433</sup> While *λόγος* describes relations, and so requires a distance or a separation to show its connections, *νοῦς* is about sameness, i.e., it is both what is perceived and what perceives. *Λόγος* is gatherness, a unity among differences, whereas *νοῦς* is the one itself, without spacing, without mediation. In Aristotle’s words:

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<sup>430</sup> For a detailed analysis of the theme see Baracchi, Claudia, “Aristotele e il *Nous*. Note sulla Trascendenza Indicibile,” cit., pp. 129 - 161.

<sup>431</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 170 (430a18 - 20).

<sup>432</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle’s On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., p. 142.

<sup>433</sup> On this see Winslow, Russell, “On the Life of Thinking,” cit., pp. 299 - 316.



“τὸ δ’ αὐτὸ ἐστὶν ἢ κατ’ ἐνέργειαν ἐπιστήμη τῷ πράγματι· ἢ δὲ κατὰ δύναμιν χρόνῳ προτέρα ἐν τῷ ἐνί, ὅλως δὲ οὐ χρόνῳ· ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὅτε μὲν νοεῖ ὅτε δ’ οὐ νοεῖ. χωρισθεῖς ἐστὶ μόνον τοῦθ’ ὅπερ ἐστὶ, καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἀθάνατον καὶ αἰδῖον (οὐ μνημονεύομεν δέ, ὅτι τοῦτο μὲν ἀπαθές, ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς φθαρτός), καὶ ἄνευ τούτου οὐθὲν νοεῖ,”<sup>434</sup>

which is translated as

“Knowledge, in its being-at-work, is the same as the things it knows, and while knowledge in potency comes first in time in any one knower, in the whole of things it does not take precedence even in time. This does not mean that at one time it thinks but at another time it does not think, but when separated it is just exactly what it is, and this alone is deathless and everlasting (though we have no memory, because this sort of intellect is not acted upon, while the sort that is acted upon is destructible), and without this nothing thinks.”<sup>435</sup>

Winslow presents his account of this argument affirming that

“He [Aristotle] writes that *nous* should not be considered as something «mixed» with the body. However, I would argue this qualification lies not in the fact that *nous* is some extra-terrestrial, metaphysical capacity granted human beings, but rather the qualification is needed because we are unable to locate *nous* within the body: *nous* does not have attributes, it does not have an organ, it does not have a shape, except as the form in potency of what it perceives. *Nous* is the most primordially part of the soul. [...] *nous*—the highest potency in cosmos—is

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<sup>434</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 170 (430a19 - 25).

<sup>435</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., pp. 142 - 143; on the same topic see also *ibi*, p. 145: “Knowledge, in its being-at-work, is the same as the thing it knows, and while knowledge in potency comes first in time in any one knower, in the whole of things it does not take precedence even in time, for all things that come into being have their being from something that is at-work-staying-itself,” cfr. Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 174 (431a1 - 4): “Τὸ δ’ αὐτὸ ἐστὶν ἢ κατ’ ἐνέργειαν ἐπιστήμη τῷ πράγματι· ἢ δὲ κατὰ δύναμιν χρόνῳ προτέρα ἐν τῷ ἐνί, ὅλως δὲ οὐδὲ χρόνῳ· ἐστὶ γὰρ ἐξ ἐντελεχσίας ὄντος πάντα τὰ γινόμενα.”

a kind of *primary matter*. [...] in addition to lacking attributes, or shape, or organs, *nous* lacks a *nature* (429a22). [...] I would argue that it becomes the strictly formal nature of those beings that it intellects or intuit. The nature of being is its *archê*, its principle of motion. As possessing a nature only *in potency*, *nous* betrays an openness toward encounter able beings to become appropriated *by their nature*.”<sup>436</sup>

Because of its peculiar status, *νοῦς* cannot be found in a specific part of our corporeal self. However, according to Winslow, this does not indicate that there is an extra-dimensional side to being human. Rather, it suggests the human being’s openness *in* this dimension where the eidetic features encounter it in such a way that whoever owns *νοῦς* “becomes appropriated” by these eidetic features. In order to fulfil its status, *νοῦς* acts, or better, is acted upon as a sort of “matter” for the forms experienced. Thus, it follows that it has no *λόγος*, but is instead in-formed *by λόγος*, which subsequently operates, because of that in-formed *νοῦς*, as discursive faculty.

While Winslow describes the role of *λόγος* in rational discovery by referring to the etymology of this term and to the *relational* root entailed within it, in my opinion he does not sufficiently underline the gathering power of *λόγος* as form, and so avoids extending this same reading to the other levels in which *λόγος* is involved. If this term has a fundamental meaning that indicates a way of gathering something together, it is also necessary to point out this essential characteristic wherever *λόγος* is present. The immediate consequence of such a perspective also has an influence on human knowledge: rather than a rational discovery, one should speak of a *relational* discovery. What is encountered is always in a relational horizon from which it assumes a certain meaning,<sup>437</sup> which is not given once for all but nonetheless is not relativistic, which is to say that it might both change and also remain pertinent to what happens.

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<sup>436</sup> Winslow, Russell, “On the Life of Thinking,” cit., p. 310 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>437</sup> See the first part on Heidegger’s ontology and the description of *λόγος* in this sense.

Moreover it presents itself as λόγος, i.e., in its being as a result of relational components shaped in a specific form. Furthermore, thinking, in its poietic aspect, is relational, since it connects, ties, and bonds. Hence, relation is the root for interpreting λόγος as reason: as a consequence, the latter is interpreted not as detached calculus which escapes and dominates our way of being, but instead comes to be conceived as the ability to observe relations, understand them, and then think and act relationally. In the context of the human peculiarities, λόγος refers to one's ability to deal with relations on multiple levels.

Despite the discrepancies between λόγος and νοῦς, as suggested by Aygün, for Aristotle

“the human soul is distinguished *neither* by being simply rational, *nor* by having a rational and an irrational part that lay side by side or are mixed indifferently, but by its *inclusion* of an *explicit relation* between its parts, of a realm where they confront one another, where they may well explicitly resist and fight one another, make compromises or come to a consensus.”<sup>438</sup>

Indeed, the discovery carried out by a human being and expressed in logical reasoning is first of all a *relational* experience, lived in the social sphere, such as the political one,<sup>439</sup> but also at a personal level: Aygün, describing the tripartite soul, underlines the inclusion of rational and irrational parts within the human. He claims:

“As distinct from dualistic or monistic conceptions of the human soul, Aristotle's tripartite soul resembles an *agora*.”<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 119 [my emphasis].

<sup>439</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “On the Ontological Primacy of Relationality in Aristotle's Politics and the «Birth» of the Political Animal,” cit..

<sup>440</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 119 [author's emphasis].

An *ἀγορά* where, as Aygün has just argued, those aspects are held in a tension according to a unity where they “make compromises” or “come to a consensus.” The emphasis Aristotle puts on the political environment of the human soul, conceived as an essential element for its *Bildung*, is evident, especially in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.<sup>441</sup> Thus, just as experience is required to derive a “logical” meta-level which then returns to it in order to contextualize and fulfill the same reality with meaning or to modify it, *νοῦς* needs the experiential element and the contents that only it might provide. Moreover, in this case, “falsehood is not possible.”<sup>442</sup> In *On the Soul*, Aristotle asserts:

“ὅτι μὲν οὖν οὐ ταυτόν ἐστι τὸ αισθάνεσθαι καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν, φανερόν· τοῦ μὲν γὰρ πᾶσι μ᾽ ἴστανται, τοῦ δὲ ὀλίγοις τῶν ζώων. ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ τὸ νοεῖν, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶ τὸ ὀρθῶς καὶ τὸ μὴ ὀρθῶς, τὸ μὲν ὀρθῶς φρόνησις καὶ ἐπιστήμη καὶ δόξα ἀληθῆς, τὸ δὲ μὴ ὀρθῶς τὰναντία τούτων· [...]

Ἡ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἀδιαιρέτων νόησις ἐν τούτοις, περὶ ἃ οὐκ ἔστι τὸ ψεῦδος· ἐν οἷσιν δὲ καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ τὸ ἀληθές, σύνθεσις τις ἤδη ὠσημάτων ὡσπερ ἐν ὄντων, καθάπερ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς ἔφη «ἡ πολλῶν μὲν κόρσαι ἀναύχεως ἐβλαστησαν», ἔπειτα συντίσθαι τῇ φιλίᾳ—, οὕτω καὶ ταῦτα κεχωρισμένα συντίθεται, οἷον τὸ ἀσύμμετρον καὶ ἡ διάμετρος, ἂν δὲ γενομένων ἢ ἐσομένων, τὸν χρόνον προσεννῶν καὶ συντιθείς. τὸ γὰρ ψεῦδος ἐν συνθέσει ἀεί· καὶ γὰρ ἂν τὸ λευκόν, τὸ μὴ λευκόν συνέθηκεν. ἐνδέχεται δὲ καὶ διαίρεσιν φάναι πάντα,”<sup>443</sup>

which may be translated as

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<sup>441</sup> Claudia Baracchi extensively highlights and deepens this argument in her *Ethics’s as first philosophy*, or even in more recent publications, as for example *Amicizia*, cit., where she points out the importance of friendship for Aristotle.

<sup>442</sup> On this topic see for example Baracchi, Claudia, “Aristotele e il *Nous*. Note sulla Trascendenza Indicibile,” cit., pp. 143 - 147.

<sup>443</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 156 and p. 170 and 172 (427b6 - 12 and 430a26 - 430b4).

“And neither is thinking the same as perceiving, for in thinking there is what is right and what is not right, right thinking being understanding and knowing and true opinion, and the opposites of these not being right [...].

The thinking of indivisible things is one of those acts in which falsehood is not possible, and where there is falsehood as well as truth there is already some kind of compounding of intelligible things as though they were one—just as Empedocles says «upon the earth, foreheads of many kinds sprouted up without necks» and then were put together by friendship, so too are these separate intelligible things put together, such as incommensurability and the diagonal—and if the thinking of things that have been or are going to be, then one puts them together while additionally thinking the time. For falsehood is always in an act of putting things together, for even in denying that the white is white one puts together not-white with white; or it is also possible to describe all these as acts of dividing.”<sup>444</sup>

Hence, the importance of this brief presentation of the Aristotelian description of the human being is clear: it serves to delineate the passage from ontology to a discursive meta-level. In this context, this level is named “metaphysical” not for its ability to provide and somehow assure an access to the principles, but rather because it allows us to move onwards from itself and to act on reality with *λόγος*, that is to say in a meaningful way. In doing this, relation is consequently thought as a constitutive element not only for ontology, as proposed in the previous chapters, but also for metaphysics.

As we are going to delineate in more depth in the following paragraphs, these considerations show something that has been hidden by the consequences of the principles assumed by modern philosophy:<sup>445</sup> the tangled unity of world, language and reasoning. Even though reality, word and thought can be examined separately, they have to be considered in

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<sup>444</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., pp. 133 - 134 and pp. 143 - 144.

<sup>445</sup> According to an account in which thought and world are somehow separated and there is a sort of discontinuity between them, there is also a distance between language and world, as if they belong to distinct contexts almost incapable of communication.

their interconnections. Shedding light on this interaction once more, we do not intend to avoid recognizing their complexity: far from escaping the difficulties that emerge in considering such a matter, here the aim is to point out that it is not sufficient to observe these phenomena in their own proper isolated appearance. Rather, it is necessary to (re)think them in the richness of their entanglement, so as to consider not only the specificity of each one but also to highlight the multiple, and sometimes unexpected, features of their interconnection.

#### 4. 4. Man as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον: a broader explanation

One of the well-known philosophical definitions of man has been proposed by Aristotle in the *Politics*:<sup>446</sup> he claims that the *ἄνθρωπος* is ζῶον λόγον ἔχον. Usually this expression is translated as declaim that the human is that animal who is provided with language or reason,<sup>447</sup> the one capable of discussion and dialogue, including about oneself.<sup>448</sup> Now we must consider other suggestions in accordance with the elements just introduced. Bearing in mind this Aristotelian phrase as well as his considerations on the soul, Baracchi queries about what it means to have λόγος<sup>449</sup> and proposes to trace the answer in what manifests itself as excellences of λόγος, excellences expressed through human ἦθος. She states:

“[...] *logos* itself emerges as a matter of «having,» as an *ekhein* — to put it more starkly, as a *hexis*, habit. [...] What does it mean to «have» (*ekhein*) *logos*? What does it mean to activate or actualize oneself according to *logos*, if *logos*

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<sup>446</sup> Rackham, Harris, (trans.) *Aristotle. Politics*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944<sup>2</sup>, p. 8: “ἐκ τούτων οὖν φανερόν ὅτι τῶν φύσει ἢ πόλις ἐστί, καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῶον” (1253a2 - 4).

<sup>447</sup> Although it is not our primary purpose in this research, however it is extremely interesting to note that for Greek though language and reason were strictly connected to one another yet.

<sup>448</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “Rizomi Greci. Antichi Tracciati, Sentieri Geo-Psichici, Vie di Terra e di Cielo tra Oriente e Occidente,” in Piero Coppo and Stefania Consigliere (eds.) *Rizomi Greci*, Paderno Dugnano: Edizioni colibrì, 2014, pp. 140 - 141.

<sup>449</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., pp. 110 - 135.

itself must be acquired or stabilized into a habitual shape? How does *logos* belong to a living body, that is, how can an animal, a growing, sentient, and desiring organism «have» *logos*? What is the relation between *logos* and embodiment, animality – *life* itself? What does it mean to enact that mode of animality that «has» *logos*? How is this this peculiar animal that the human being is related to other living beings?”<sup>450</sup>

Having *λόγος* is a matter of “habit.” Hence, it belongs not only to the nature of the human but also to the way in which one acts, how one behaves, strengthening its position or changing it. These questions posed by Baracchi, related to the Aristotelian ethics, are an inspiring indication in this sense.

To return to our present concerns, Aygün, in his volume dedicated to *λόγος*, identifies the capacity for both understanding and relaying non-firsthand experience as the specific qualification of humans. He claims:

“We, humans, indulge in this capacity. We *understand* non-firsthand experience [...], but we can also *relay* it. We relay non-firsthand experience [...], but we do so while *understanding* that of which we never had, do not have, or may never have, a firsthand experience.”<sup>451</sup>

In this way Aygün argues that man is different from other beings because of man’s ability to relay experiences not personally lived. He also identifies the nature of *λόγος* with this characteristic,<sup>452</sup> whose expression finds full deployment in communal life, namely in *πόλις* and ethics, to which he dedicates two chapters in the aforementioned volume. He also affirms that his research on *λόγος* is a research on rationality. However, as stressed before in the case of Winslow, it is possible to suggest the

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<sup>450</sup> *Ibi*, p. 112.

<sup>451</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included*, *Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. xiii [author’s emphasis].

<sup>452</sup> *Ibi*, p. xiv: “[...] when Aristotle famously says that humans are the only animal species having *logos*, he is referring to *this* capacity of understanding and relaying non-firsthand experience along with firsthand experience” [author’s emphasis].

*relational* nature beneath the rational one or to conceive of reason as a relational faculty, in which the attention to structures is observed, experienced and consequently employed to take effect in a relational way in the world, with discourses or actions.<sup>453</sup> Yet it is also Aygün who devotes some effort to the definition of this ancient word, clarifying from the beginning both its wide range of meanings as well as the lack of dedicated and focused justification of its use of it by Aristotle.<sup>454</sup> He also declares that

“[...] all meanings of *logos* in his [Aristotle’s] works refer to a fundamental meaning, namely «relation,» «comprehensiveness,» or «inclusiveness.» More specifically, as suggested by the etymological meaning of *logos* as «gathering,» «laying,» and «collecting,» this «relation» holds its terms together in their difference instead of collapsing one to the other, or keeping them in indifference.”<sup>455</sup>

Baracchi, while discussing the “domain of reason,”<sup>456</sup> reveals its “mobility, aliveness, and irreducibility”<sup>457</sup> in the soul. She also refers to some passages in *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle speaks of *ὀρθὸς λόγος*, i.e., the right reason, which allows us to understand once more the gathering role of *λόγος*. Aristotle states:

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<sup>453</sup> See what just suggested by Baracchi on *λόγος*, its excellences and ethics.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibi*, p. 2: “[...] I noticed how ubiquitous and polysemic the word *logos* was in the Aristotelian *Corpus*. It meant «standard,» «ratio,» «reason,» and «speech,» among other things. As I found no survey of the meanings of *logos* in Aristotle either in his own texts or in his posteriority, I undertook the project myself and devised this book” [author’s emphasis]. He also highlights the unforeseen obstacles of such work, *ibi*, p. xiv: “Thus, specifically, this book is about one of the most important words in all philosophy of science, *logos*, as it was used by one of the greatest figures in these fields: Aristotle.”

<sup>455</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 3 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>456</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 175.

<sup>457</sup> *Ibidem*.



“ἐπεὶ δὲ τυγχάνομεν πρότερον εἰρηκότες ὅτι δεῖ μέσον αἰρεῖσθαι, μὴ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν μηδὲ τὴν ἔλλειψιν, τὸ δὲ μέσον ἐστὶν ὡς ὁ λόγος ὁ ὀρθὸς λέγει, τοῦτο διέλωμεν. [...] μεσοτήτων...οὔτα κατὰ τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον,”<sup>458</sup>

translated by Baracchi

“Since we have stated earlier that one should choose the mean and not the excess or deficiency, and since the mean is such as right reason [λόγος ὁ ὀρθός] declares [λέγει] it to be, let us go over this next. [...] the mean...is in accordance with right reason [κατὰ τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον].”<sup>459</sup>

As a consequence, Baracchi affirms:

“It is *logos* [here conceived as reason] that grasps and reveals the mean, that is the way of actualizing the end (the good, happiness), thus realizing oneself.”<sup>460</sup>

Undoubtedly, as previously observed, the word λόγος was used by Aristotle with the aim of addressing many and various eventualities, such as, for example, reason or speech, among others. What is pivotal to mark in this context is that, even in its connotations, there is still something that the *relational* root of this term may let filter through. As a matter of fact, this emerges from the quote reported above: λόγος as reason “grasps and reveals the mean,” in other words, λόγος gathers. This gathering is what lays *beneath* and *between* the collected elements, producing something which goes even *beyond* them: catching, in a mediated

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<sup>458</sup> Bywater, Ingram, *Aristotle's Ethica Nicomachea*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1894, p. 113 (1138b18-21 and 1138b23-5 ).

<sup>459</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 176; Sachs translates the same passage as follows, Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle. Nicomachean Ethics*, cit., p. 102: “Now since what we said earlier is that one ought to choose the mean, and not the excess or deficiency, and the mean is as right reason says, let us explicate this. [...] the mean [...] is in accord with right reason.”

<sup>460</sup> *Ibidem*.

manner, what is experienced, “actualizing” an aim, focusing on new relations, new constraints, and new meanings.

In order to deepen the analysis of *λόγος* in its relational roots, it might prove fruitful to return to some considerations by Aygün, who continues his etymological inquiry in the following way:

“For each of the various meanings of *logos* names a comprehensive grasp of an unforeseen common ground between seemingly disjunctive terms, an inclusive counterpart to unduly formal versions of the principles of non-contradiction and of the excluded middle. *Logos* refers to a mediation or a synthesis in all of its meanings without exception, and never to anything simple, pure, or immediate.”<sup>461</sup>

Here Aygün emphasizes that *λόγος* should be recognized at each level at which it is considered, that *λόγος* indicates a sort of “comprehensive grasp,” which “includes” various elements in a mediation, representing a “synthesis” between these that through *λόγος* come to act in a cohesive mode. For our purposes, it is important to highlight that even if Aygün stresses the necessity of such an account, there are few examples of a philosophical elaboration of this issue. In this field, in effect, *λόγος* is usually considered for its logical connotation and consequently analyzed in its rational features, while the relational features are forgotten, not only in studies concerning the human being, but also in more theoretically oriented research.<sup>462</sup>

The outcomes of a reflection of this kind contribute to the deduction of some consequences. *Λόγος* was earlier defined as an ontological disclosure, an (un)concealment which occurs in worldly happening. Then, in Aristotle’s *On the Soul*, *λόγος* is the name of a feature that defines man, alongside *αἴσθησις* and *νοῦς*. Finally, Aristotle, in *Politics*, describes the

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<sup>461</sup>Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 21.

<sup>462</sup> Such as, for example, those proposed recently by Adriano Fabris, who focuses his interests on relation but does not engage with *λόγος* in this sense. Shiffman, on the other hand, in his translation of Aristotle’s *On the Soul*, does not even translate the word.

human being as the animal who has *λόγος*. Usually, the philosophical tradition, having translated this Greek term with the Latin '*ratio*', suggests that reason is the distinctive element capable of differentiating the human being from other beings. This means that reasoning, on this reading, is what distinguishes man from the rest of the world. However, when the prior connotation grasped in its etymological root, *λόγος* alludes to a structural relation: hence, man might be described as the only being who is able to experience, recognize and report the dynamical relations which structure the world we live in. Grasping and creating relations is the particular faculty of the human, a faculty also strictly connected with the comprehension or the proposing of new meanings. This interweaving of relations that (un)conceal, these interconnections disposed on multiple levels, is what makes man a unique being.<sup>463</sup> Through *λόγος*, we are able to affect ourselves and the surrounding reality, together with others we might say new things, build new worlds and tell of them, but always starting from that *λόγος* in which we already dwell. Winslow underlines such argument affirming that

“[...] for Aristotle, *logos* shows itself, on the one hand, as surrounding world of dispositions and habits — a surrounding world that pushes individual humans into the repetitions of these habits in such a way that human beings become a kind of offspring of the *prouparchousa gnôsis*. Yet, on the other hand, equiprimordially with this embracing and in-forming horizon, we must grant and give expression to the possibility of a certain transformation that equally defines the human, qua *logos*-having creature, a metabolizing, motive potential inherent in human nature (and derived from the *prouparchousa gnôsis*) that enables a kind of cell-division and splitting-off of an organ of *logos* from the general body of the in-forming *logos* (a self-differentiating power which we shall see is simultaneously undergone and carried out by this very *logos* itself); that

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<sup>463</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., pp. 119 - 143, where Aygün reports on *λόγος* and action.

is, there must be decisiveness, a cutting away from the general to make individual decision and responsibility possible.”<sup>464</sup>

Baracchi, Aygün, and Winslow analyze the many aspects of this issue while delineating Aristotle’s ethics. In particular we see Aygün remarking the Aristotelian path from listening to imitating and learning, focusing in particular on the role of habits,<sup>465</sup> as Baracchi does as well with peculiar attention to its ethical consequences. Aygün quotes some Aristotelian passages from *Metaphysics*<sup>466</sup> and from *Parts of Animals*<sup>467</sup> with the aim of showing how the capacity of hearing sounds was considered fundamental to collecting experience, recalling memories, and consequently learning. On this point, Baracchi affirms that

“Here [in *Posterior Analytics*], [...], Aristotle elaborates on the mnemonic power (*mnēmē*) in terms of the ability to «draw out a *logos* from the retention of such [sensations]» (100a3f.). For certain animals, the formation and formulation of *logos* seems to occur out of (*ek*) the constancy of sensation harbored in the soul and constituting memory. Thanks to the persistence of impression, they can divine, out of the phenomenon, the *logos* at the heart of the phenomenon. Again, as is said in *Metaphysics*, many memories of the same lead to one experience. Here, however, experience seems to be equated with the formation of the universal: the latter seems to give itself immediately alongside

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<sup>464</sup> Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, cit., p. 94: although the quote is quite long, I consider it to be extremely important and clarifying for the argument here exposed since its explicit highlighting the interaction between the two account of *lóγoc* as (un)concealing occurring and as human faculty.

<sup>465</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., especially pp. 119 - 123.

<sup>466</sup> *Ibi*, p. 120: “By nature, then, all animals have sensation; from this, some acquire memory, some do not. Accordingly the former are more intelligent and more capable of learning [*methêtikôtera*] than those that cannot remember. The [animals] that cannot hear sounds [*tôn psophôn akouein*] are intelligent but cannot learn [*aneu tou manthanein*], such as a bee or any other kind of animal that might be such. Whatever animal has this sense besides memory learns [*manthanei*]. (*Metaph.* I, 1, 980a28 - 980b26).”

<sup>467</sup> *Ibidem*: “Among small birds, while singing some utter a different voice than their parents if they have been reared away from the nest and have heard [*akousôsin*] other birds sing. A hen nightingale has before now been seen to teach [*prodidaxousa*] her chick to sing, suggesting that the song does not come by nature as *dialektos* and voice does, but is capable of being sharpened [*plattesthai*]. (*HA* IV, 9, 536b14-18).”

the former, out of the memory of sense impressions — out of the abiding that also lets the *logos* transpire and be grasped. From this level of experiential seizing of the universal would proceed the principles of science and of art.”<sup>468</sup>

Thus, once again, this mirrors the multiplicity of levels in which *λόγος* as relational structured (un)concealing displays itself: listening to, but also paying attention to, the surrounding happenings,<sup>469</sup> the natural and political disclosure appears as a fundamental part of the constitutive growth of the human. *Λόγος* regards the fulfilment of human’s own nature. On the same account, Winslow affirms that *λόγος* most fully at-work<sup>470</sup> reveals the most the unique nature of the human being and, further, observes that having *λόγος* means listening to *λόγος*. However, the outcomes he deduces differ from Aygün’s proposal. Winslow explicitly considers a hierarchical structure of the human soul, where an active and a passive kind of *λόγος* may find its place:

“[...] it [having logos] means that there is a part of the soul that «participates» or «shares» (*metechousa*, 1102b15) in *logos* insofar as it «may obey reason» or rather «may be persuaded by reason» (*epipeittheis*, 1098a5), «like a son listening to his father» (1103a5ff). Thus, he establishes not only a hierarchy of primacy in the soul of the two parts of reason [...] but also these two parts constitute a passive and active *logos*-having part of the soul.”<sup>471</sup>

Winslow takes active *λόγος* to be that element of the human soul commonly translated by the Latin ‘*ratio*’ and the English ‘*reason*,’ however such a topology of *λόγος* may be possible only through a *ἔξις*, namely a habitual disposition that is not innate but rather must be

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<sup>468</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 34. Here she refers to *Posterior Analytics* 100a3 and following and to 100a6 - 9.

<sup>469</sup> And, I would add, even to the differentiated happening *within* us.

<sup>470</sup> Winslow alludes to the *Nicomachean Ethics*: “[here] we are told that *logos* shows itself in its proper sense as «*logos* in activity [*energeia*]» (1098a7),” cfr. Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, cit., p. 93.

<sup>471</sup> *Ibidem*.

achieved by practice and repetition.<sup>472</sup> Hence, what Winslow names ‘passive λόγος’, a more passive attitude, seems to be necessary, as an expression of the openness structuring the human. As a consequence, he underlines the importance of the surrounding environment for this phase, affirming that

“[...] one may only *have logos* through listening, repeating, and obeying the other *logoi* that become articulated around one; only through the passive being-open to the absorption of a *logos* of a surrounding community can one gain a *logos* of one’s own, can one *act* with *logos*. Indeed, for Aristotle, without a surrounding community of *logoi*, the human actually lacks the potential and power to become a human, to become what it is.”<sup>473</sup>

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<sup>472</sup> On this, see for example Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., pp. 61 - 79, where, among other considerations about ethics, she claims: “The ethical treatises may at best offer «navigational instruments,» give instruction, contribute to establish the needed posture to steer «beautifully» through the often raging waters of life [...]. It is this altogether practical substratum that furnishes determinant orientation in action and remains indispensable.

Let us bring these remarks to a conclusion by surmising that imprecision may not be seen as an imperfection. [...] it is *logos*, when alienated from the binds of concrete particulars, which represents a problem, Ethic is imprecise «concerning particulars» just as any other science is. But, unlike the other sciences, ethics recognizes and thematizes this. It understands that it is imprecise *of necessity*, because what is at stake, as in navigation, is to act while considering the *kairos*, the distinctive demand (property) of *this* moment and place. It is imprecise because it broadens the spectrum attention to include all that may concern anyone in any circumstance, but no discourse could adequately circumscribe such a range” [author’s emphasis]; cfr. p. 135: “We observed, in that which is by nature, the priority of potentiality over actuality. In ethical matters, however, we saw how actuality proceeds from actuality (virtue from virtue). No habits are simple by nature. *That* we are capable of developing and acquiring habits is a kind of gift from nature. But the gift does not prescribe *what* those habits should be” [author’s emphasis]; cfr. also *ibi*, p. 171: “We saw how the ethical virtues belong to the desiring «part,» while the intellectual ones belong to the thinking «part.» To actualize oneself *according to logos* entails habituation. But *having logos*, too, is «mostly» (Aristotle says) a matter of habituation, more specifically of learning (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1103a15)” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>473</sup> Winslow, Russell, *Aristotle and Rational Discovery*, cit., p. 94 [author's emphasis].

Our investigation regarding man as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον reveals its intrinsic junction with man as ζῶον πολιτικόν,<sup>474</sup> as is also analyzed by Baracchi, especially in her references to friendship.<sup>475</sup> This peculiar aspect of the political<sup>476</sup> is sustained through arguing that it is because of friendship that the human has the possibility of realizing one's own potential and affirming consequently that "friendship provides the condition and context for the explication of human *dunamis*."<sup>477</sup>

From whatever perspective we attempt to approach the human in its own specificity, while defining its peculiarities compared with other beings, what emerges is its relational disclosure, not only to the experiential world around it but also to oneself. Asking about λόγος is

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<sup>474</sup> See *Politics* I,2, 1253a; cfr. also Aygün Omër, "On Bees and Humans: Phenomenological Explorations of Hearing Sounds, Voices and Speech in Aristotle," 2013, [https://www.academia.edu/2927214/On\\_Bees\\_and\\_Humans\\_Phenomenological\\_Explorations\\_of\\_Hearing\\_Sounds\\_Voices\\_and\\_Speech\\_in\\_Aristotle\\_2013](https://www.academia.edu/2927214/On_Bees_and_Humans_Phenomenological_Explorations_of_Hearing_Sounds_Voices_and_Speech_in_Aristotle_2013), pp. 18 - 19: "Hearing human logos also involves both the «understanding» [...] and the ability to relay [...]. Human *logos* in Aristotle is the capacity for both understanding and relaying: the ability to understand non-first-hand experiences (just as voice hearing, but unlike sound hearing) *as well as* to relay them along with the first-hand experiences (just as sound hearing, but unlike voice hearing). If so, this double ability may well shed light on the translations of logos as «reason» and «speech», *ratio* and *oratio*, as well as specifically human access beyond first-hand experience in historiography, in oracles, in mythology, in the necessary accumulation of information for science, in sophistry and in philosophy. At least we hope that this suggestion may serve as a preface to the all-to-famous passage from the *Politics*: «It is clear why the human being is a political animal in a grater degree [μᾶλλον] than any bee or any gregarious animal. For nature, as we say, does nothing in vain, and among animals the human being alone has *logos*. Voice is indeed a sign [σημείον] of the painful and of the pleasure, and so is possessed by other animals as well (for their nature has developed so far as to have sensation of the painful and pleasant, and to signify [σημαίνειν] these to others), yet *logos* is for showing [δηλοῦν] the advantageous and the harmful, and thus the just and the unjust; for it is peculiar to humans in distinction from the other animals to have the perception of the just, the unjust and the other qualities, and it is community [κοινωνία] in these that makes a household and a city» [author's emphasis]. Here it is of interest to note that Aristotle poses the question of the human as political animal together with the recognition of λόγος as his specific peculiarity.

<sup>475</sup> Cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., pp. 260 - 295.

<sup>476</sup> *Ibi*, p. 263: "This intimates that politics as juridical institution (let alone in its pre-judicial, pre-normative, auroral statum), is not coeval with friendship, but rather precedes it. [...] That politics (and, hence, legality) may be understood not as contemporary or equiprimordial with friendship, but rather as preceding friendship, entails that politics somehow is the condition of friendship. In a way, politics constitutes the environment, the context, whereby friendship becomes possible — friendship, that is, no longer determined by the need or reasons of survival, but perfected, *teleia philia*."

<sup>477</sup> *Ibi*, p. 261.

enquiring and exploring the multiplicity of relations within occurring events. In these last sections, we focused our attention on the specific presence of *λόγος* in characterizing the human soul, while in the following pages, a certain analysis will be considered in its meaning for knowledge as logic.



## Chapter 5. Relation in the *Categories*: λόγος and πρὸς τι

### 5. 1. Considerations on Aristotle's methodology

Before beginning our discussion of the Aristotelian understanding of λόγος and πρὸς τι in connection with relation, it is appropriate to recall some elements that could assist us in reading Aristotle in all of his complexity. The multiplicity of the subjects he broached are attested to by the writings we have inherited: he is often considered a pioneer not only for philosophy, but also for biology, zoology, anthropology, psychology, ethics, and, of course, logic. Because of the many issues he engaged with, and to avoid the risk of confusing the different levels of discussions and so treat Aristotle as though he contradicted himself in some claims, it is crucial to make an effort to understand which methodology he employed in his various investigations. This account is important at least for two reasons: firstly, in order to contextualize the statements of 'the Philosopher', and, secondly, to find there support for the reading of Aristotle. Aristotle's methodology might be described as a "multifocal approach."<sup>478</sup> In this sense, Maurizio Migliori specifies:

"[...] Aristotle, as well as Plato, *owns a perspective of reality qualifiable as complex and pluralistic* and consequently he multiplies the interpretative schemes so to grasp and understand it in its different aspects."<sup>479</sup>

Indeed, the aim of Aristotle is not to build a system of "clear and distinctive ideas," but rather to understand the world in its differences

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<sup>478</sup> This expression, especially applied to Aristotle's approach, has been coined by Elisabetta Cattanei, Arianna Fermani, Maurizio Migliori in the volume they edited and titled *By the Sophists to Aristotle through Plato. The Necessity and Utility of a Multifocal Approach*, Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 2016.

<sup>479</sup> Migliori, Maurizio, "Introduzione Generale," cit., pp. lvii - lviii [author's emphasis, my translation].

and peculiarities.<sup>480</sup> As previously mentioned, this tendency leads to moments of possible contradiction within his thought.<sup>481</sup> This methodological approach might not be easily comprehended by a contemporary philosophical investigation, which often employs a synthesis concerned with providing a theoretical account. On the same argument, Migliori continues:

“The true problem that the contemporary researcher has to deal with is not the nature of the Aristotelian «writings», but rather with the Aristotelian choice to work, for example at the Lyceum, on a magmatic material.”<sup>482</sup>

In other words, Aristotle seems to be more inclined toward a systematic procedure aimed at describing the object of interest, rather than employing his efforts towards the elaboration of a system of knowledge. That is to say that, considering the necessity of contextualizing a topic of interest in a particular writing or essay, it is crucial, for those who write as well as for who read, to be aware that the tableau presented is soaked with shades and multiple perspectives: it is not an aseptic absolute, but rather a more detailed description, which is here preferred to a “higher” theoretical compromise in which, searching for the ultimate principle, everything else is missed. The ‘multifocal approach,’ that Migliori asserts to be typical of ancient thought, focuses on a multiplicity of interpretative schemas through which to read reality.<sup>483</sup> Such a model provides an illustration of a world filled with entities that are intrinsically complex

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<sup>480</sup> *Ibidem*; for similar and proximate arguments see Baracchi, Claudia, “I molti sistemi di Aristotele,” Berti, Enrico, “Esiste un sistema in Aristotele?,” Fermani, Arianna, “Quale «Sistema» e Quale «Sistematicità» in Aristotele?,” and Zanatta, Marcello, “Sistema e Metodi in Aristotele” in *Sistema e Sistematicità in Aristotele*, cit..

<sup>481</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>482</sup> *Ibidem* [my translation].

<sup>483</sup> Bernardini, Marina, “Saggio introduttivo alle *Categorie*,” cit., p. 47: “One of the theoretical and hermeneutic figures to understand the Aristotelian philosophy is the *multifocal approach*, that characteristic paradigm of the ancient period which refuses the logical alternative of the *aut-aut* in favor of a multiplication of the interpretative schemes of reality (*et-et*)” [author’s emphasis, my translation].

and at the same time pivotal for multiple bonds.<sup>484</sup> Hence, reality can be said in many ways, according to the famous Aristotelian phrase. However this does not mean that such an approach leads to a relativistic vision or to open contradictions.<sup>485</sup> The path is narrow and difficult: because it intends to remain in proximity to the complex character of reality, this methodology has an irrevocable constant allusory dimension that guarantees a point of reference.<sup>486</sup>

## 5. 2. Aristotle's *Categories*:<sup>487</sup> a brief introduction

There is wide agreement in Western philosophical commentaries in considering Aristotle as the first thinker committed to the kind of apprehension we usually call 'logic.' Nevertheless, we cannot assume that Aristotle could ever have understood this discipline as we do today. In effect, logic conceived as rational thinking, as a logical reasoning built to reach the truth or a more certain comprehension, was first developed not by Aristotle, but by Stoic thinkers.<sup>488</sup> However, Aristotle does employ the adjective 'λογικός' and the corresponding adverb.<sup>489</sup> It is also full of interest to observe that, when Aristotle lists the different types of

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<sup>484</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>485</sup> Fermani, Arianna, "Saggio Introduttivo ai *Topici*," in M. Migliori (ed.) *Aristotele. Organon*, cit., p. 1096.

<sup>486</sup> These considerations also lead to logical consequences that are going to be examined in detail further.

<sup>487</sup> For the English translation of this work I rely on John Lloyd Ackrill's version, however I am considering the Greek text from August Immanuel Bekker present in the issue edited and translated by Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit.. Ackrill, for the Greek text, refers instead to the version of Lorenzo Minio Paluella, firstly published in 1949 in the Oxford Classical Texts Series.

<sup>488</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, "Introduction: Paths of Inquiry," cit., p. 3: "[...] Aristotle does not speak of «logic» (this will be a Stoic innovation), but addresses his manifold phenomenon of *legein*, of *logos* [...]" [author's emphasis].

<sup>489</sup> Natali, Carlo, *Aristotele*, Milano: Carrocci Editore, 2014, p. 39.

contemplative philosophies,<sup>490</sup> he never mentions logic among them. For this reason, it is remarkable to notice that Aristotle refers to the study of syllogisms as ‘analytics’<sup>491</sup> and what is at work therein is the structure “he regards as common to all reasoning.”<sup>492</sup> In fact,

“according to Aristotle, [it is] not a substantive science, but a part of general culture which everyone should undergo before he studies any science, and which alone will enable him to know for what sorts of proposition he should demand proof and what sorts of proof he should demand for them.”<sup>493</sup>

Analytics should be interpreted as a preliminary step for philosophical and scientific argumentation, which signifies that we should not limit our knowledge to the analysis alone, but rather, through the dialectic method,

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<sup>490</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, cit., p. 110: “Therefore there would be three sorts of contemplative philosophy, the mathematical, the natural and the theological;” for the Greek edition see Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, cit., p. 123: “ὥστε τρεῖς ἂν εἶεν φιλοσοφία θεωρητικά, μαθηματική, φυσική, θεολογική.”

<sup>491</sup> Ross, William David, *Aristotle*, London: Methuen & co LTD, New York: Barnes & Noble INC, 5th edition revisited, 1949, p. 20. Here the author, for example, affirms: “The name logic is unknown to Aristotle, and cannot be traced further back than the time of Cicero. Even then *logica* means not so much logic as dialectic, and Alexandre is the first writer to use *λογική* in the sense of logic. Aristotle’s own name for this branch of knowledge, or at least for the study of reasoning, is «analytics». Primarily this refers to the analysis of reasoning into the figure of syllogism, but we may perhaps extend it to include the analysis of the syllogism into propositions and of the proposition into terms” [author’s emphasis]; Waitz, Theodor, *Aristotelis Organon Graece*, 2 voll., Lipsiae 1844, reprinted by Dubuque: W. C. Brown Co., 1965, vol. II, pp. 293 - 294: “In omnibus Aristotelis scriptis quae ad logicam pertinent hoc premium est et maximum [Analytica Posteriora], ut investigetur et quomodo fiat vera demonstratio et qua ratione per demonstrationem certa quaedam doctrina artificio et via tradenda conficiatur: nam omnia Aristotelis scripta quibus coniunctis Organi nomen inditum est aut argumentandi quandam rationem tradunt aut de iis agunt sine quibus argumentatio fieri omnino nequeat. [...] Quare haud improbabile est quod contendit O. Mielach (Diss. inaug. de nomine Organi Aristotelici Aug. Vindel. 1838), reliquos Aristotelis libros ad logicam pertinentes a parte principali Organi nomen accepisse [...], nihil praeter Analytica ad Organon pertinere. Quem sensum illud vocabulum apud Aristotelem habeat, ex his potissimum locis apparet: 1253 b 28 [...], et quad seq. 1254 a 2 - 17.” Furthermore Giovanni Reale points out: “Analytics (from the Greek *analysis*, meaning *resolution*) explains the method with which, moving from a given conclusion, we indeed resolve it in the premises thanks to which it arises and, then, we ground and validate it” [author’s emphasis, my translation], *Introduzione a Aristotele*, cit., p. 142.

<sup>492</sup> *Ibi*, p. 21.

<sup>493</sup> *Ibi*, p. 20; Ross also specifies: “[...] but he speaks once of «the analytic science» (*Rhetoric*, 1359 b 10).”

we are required to reach a synthesis; furthermore, it must be pointed out that, when analysis is considered in this way, we see that the value of truth is not found in the saying of syllogistic *λόγος*, instead it finds its origin only starting from *λόγος* understood as an event or an occurrence.<sup>494</sup> This also means that it is anachronistic to approach Aristotle's works on *λόγος* with those instruments deriving from contemporary studies in this field<sup>495</sup> and, moreover, discuss them while excluding a contextualization of how at that time the relation between

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<sup>494</sup> On this point, Heidegger presents many accounts, as for example in Sheehan, Thomas, (trans.) *Heidegger. Logic: The Question of truth*, cit., p. 119: "In short, it is a matter of understanding a phenomenon that in itself is both synthesis and separation, one that is prior to linguistic relations of expression and to their attributions and denials, a phenomenon that, on the other hand is what makes it possible that *λόγος* can be true or false, revelatory or covering-over," from the German, Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 21, Logik Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*, cit., p. 141: "Kurz: Ein Phänomen gilt zu fassen, das an ihm selbst Verbinden und Trennen ist und vor sprachlichen Ausdrucksbeziehungen und deren Zuspochen und Albsprechen liegt, und andererseits das ist, was möglich macht, daß der *λόγος* war oder falsch, entdeckend oder verdeckend sein kann;" cfr. also Ross, William David, *Aristotle*, cit., p. 21: "The *Posterior Analytics*, in which he discusses the further characteristics which reasoning must have if it is to be not merely self-consistent but in the full sense scientific. This is emphatically a logic interested not in mere consistency but in truth."

<sup>495</sup> Migliori, Maurizio, "Introduzione generale," cit., p. xi: "[...] even the *Analytics*, that surely have contributed to the birth of this philosophical discipline [i.e., logic] cannot be taken only with logical instruments because, within these writings, logic operating as it will be further [...]. One of the biggest risks during the traditional study of the *Organon* is indeed exactly that to cover the text with questions and attitudes of contemporary logic, forgetting the philosophical context which only allows these works" [my translation].

human, world and language was conceived,<sup>496</sup> or how the human being was understood. This premise is fundamental because, for the Greek culture, there was no absolute distance or separation between the instances just mentioned, they were instead interpreted in a sort of continuity.

The treatise titled *Categories* (*Κατηγορίαι*), divided into fifteen chapters, occupies the first position in the Aristotelian *Corpus*, representing also the first writing collected in the *Organon*.<sup>497</sup> The

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<sup>496</sup> Aronadio, Francesco, "Introduzione," in Aronadio, Francesco, (trans.) *Platone. Cratilo*, Roma - Bari: Laterza, 1996, pp. vii - viii: "Due dati sono da mettere in risalto, se si pone mente al pensiero dei primi presocratici: l'indistinzione fra realtà, verità e parola e la conseguente dipendenza totale dall'ontologia delle concezioni relative al linguaggio. Per quanto riguarda il primo punto, va sottolineato come nella mentalità greca arcaica sopravvivano forme di pensiero tipicamente mitico, per le quali la parola appartiene immediatamente alla cosa e il dire è inteso sempre come evocare, mai come qualcosa di indifferente rispetto alla sfera dei fatti. Fu Guido Calogero a sottolineare come la nascita della logica antica consista in un lento superamento dei condizionamenti imposti da questa mentalità e come ancora le filosofie presocratiche siano costruite sull'implicito presupposto della necessaria congruenza di pensato, o detto, e reale.

Il secondo dato discende necessariamente da ciò: è ovvio che una visione del mondo che non considera il linguaggio come una qualche forma di rapporto con la realtà, ma come parte stessa della realtà (o, forse meglio: *una visione del mondo che non si pone il problema del rapporto con la realtà, perché lo considera come già dato*), non può contemplare una riflessione sul linguaggio se non come corollario di una concezione ontologica: spiegare che cos'è la parola significa, in quest'ottica, descrivere la cosa o illustrare i caratteri per i quali essa è così designata; parlare di meccanismi di funzionamento del linguaggio significa descrivere la struttura del reale" [my emphasis]; translated in English as "Two facts have to be emphasized if one mentions the thought of the first pre-Socratics: the indistinction between reality, truth and word and the resulting total dependence of language-related concepts on ontology. As the first point, it should be noted that in the Greek archaic attitude forms of typically mythical thought survive, for which the word immediately belongs to the thing and the saying is always meant as evoking, never as something indifferent to the sphere of the events. It was Guido Calogero who pointed out that the birth of ancient logic has to be found in a slow overcoming of the constraints imposed by this mentality, and how the pre-philosophical philosophies are still built on the implicit assumption of the necessary congruence of thought, or said, and real.

The second fact necessarily follows from this: it is obvious that a vision of the world that does not consider language as some form of relationship with reality, but as part of reality itself (or, perhaps better: *a vision of the world that does not give rise to the problem of relationship with reality, because it considers it as already given*) can not contemplate a reflection on language except as a corollary of an ontological conception: explaining what the word is means, in this perspective, to describe the thing or to illustrate the characters for which it is so designated; talking about mechanisms of functioning of language signifies describing the structure of the real" [my emphasis, my translation].

<sup>497</sup> For a comment of the disposition of Aristotle's writings in the *Corpus* and on the different interpretations about its organisation see Baracchi, Claudia, "Introduction: Paths of Inquiry," cit., pp. 1 - 15 and Baracchi, Claudia, «I Molti Sistemi di Aristotele» in Luca Grechi (ed.) *Sistema e Sistematicità in Aristotele*, cit..

authenticity of this text has been largely discussed within the philosophical communities, in the past<sup>498</sup> as well as in more recent periods.<sup>499</sup> Furthermore, even the central topic of this essay has been widely debated: in fact, the term ‘category’ itself has undergone many modifications. For instance, before Andronicus, the emphasized connotation referred to predication, that is to say the linguistic act with which one indicates a substance, a quality, a quantity, a relation, a place, a time, a lying, a having, an acting, a suffering: all of these are premises for articulating syllogisms. Beginning with Andronicus, emphasis was instead placed on an interpretation of the categories not as acts of attribution, but rather as what is attributed, or, better, the multiplicity of things indicated by the predicative act where both the significant term and the signification are considered.<sup>500</sup>

We do not, and we cannot, know with any real precision or accuracy the order in which Aristotle worked on and wrote the treatises available to us — indeed, he may have been working on them at the same time. For his part, Andronicus’ disposition seems to reveal a sort of order, but *not* a hierarchy. His account is justified by some passages traceable along the

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<sup>498</sup> Andronicus was convinced that only the first part of the text as we know it was authentic, he believed that the last part was ascribed to Aristotle but not composed by him, while Simplicius considered the *Categories* as truly Aristotelian since some references Aristotle does within other works using the phrase “ten categories.” The principal reason why its authenticity was uncertain is for the great difference between how it is treated here the theory of substance in comparison with the *Metaphysics*; cfr. Bernardini, Marina, “Saggio introduttivo alle *Categorie*,” cit., pp. 8 - 9 and pp. 13 - 22.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>500</sup> cfr. *Ibi*: “The title Κατηγορίαι, once assumed by Alexander of Aphrodisias and by Porphyry, and afterwards become traditional, had lost its “logical” value to assume an ontological connotation, which the Neoplatonic were already interested into, and it was underlined the *status* of those categories as «genres of being»” [author’s emphasis, my translation]; cfr. also *ibi*, pp. 10 - 11 but in particular p. 12: “The ontological aspect is indeed present in the text: Aristotle seems to never separate definitely the linguistic and logical setting from the level of being” [my translation]. About the different titles given to this work cfr. also Shields, Christopher, *Aristotle*, cit, p. 177. On the same argument Smith, Robin, “Logic,” in Barnes, Jonathan, (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 56: “A third interpretation is that the categories are *kinds of predication*: each category gives one possible relationship between predicate and subject. On this view, some predications say of their subject «what it is», others what it is like, others how much it is, and so on. This fits well with the meaning of «category», which is simply the Greek word for predication (*katêgoria*), and it seems a plausible construal of the *Topics* passage” [author’s emphasis].

reasoning presented by Aristotle in some pages from his writings. According to this order, the first compositions, through the analysis of the language and, what for ancient Greek philosophy is the same, of logical thought,<sup>501</sup> deal with the instruments suitable for the formulation of sentences used by *ἐπιστήμη* and applied to the dialectic method.<sup>502</sup> Within the *Categories*, the elements under investigation are those that constitute sentences or that represent those premises needed for syllogisms, so it is possible to conceive of the *Categories* as the *topos* of definitions. Probably, the origin of the doctrine on categories began as an attempt to solve certain difficulties of predication which troubled some of his predecessors:<sup>503</sup>

“Aristotle’s object seems to have been to clear up the question by distinguishing the main types of meaning of the words and phrases that can be combined to make a sentence. And in doing this he arrived at the earliest known classification of the main types of entity involved in the structure of reality.”<sup>504</sup>

The principal topic developed by Aristotle in these pages concerns the various elements composing a sentence, i.e., *λόγος*, but studied in themselves, not in their relation to one another.<sup>505</sup> Aristotle attempts “to determine the most basic groupings into which *ta onta* or «the things that

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<sup>501</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle’s Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit., p. 8: “The bare fact that the «same» texts can be (and have been) heard in such considerably different, if not irreconcilable ways corroborates Aristotle’s insight into the doxic provenance and labile, even paradoxical status of knowledge — that is, of *logical*, discursive articulations, of «argument,» or, which is the same, of reason (*logos*)” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>502</sup> My reference for a detailed study on this specific Aristotelian issue is Bernardini, Marina, “Saggio Introduttivo alle *Categorie*,” cit., pp. 5 - 52 and her doctoral dissertation *Analisi e Commento delle Categorie di Aristotele*, unpublished but available for open access at [http://ecum.unicam.it/368/1/Analisi\\_e\\_commento\\_delle\\_Categorie\\_di\\_Aristotele.pdf](http://ecum.unicam.it/368/1/Analisi_e_commento_delle_Categorie_di_Aristotele.pdf).

<sup>503</sup> Ross, William David, *Aristotle*, cit., p. 23.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>505</sup> This, in fact, will be the pivotal argument in other essays, as for example the *De interpretatione*; cfr. Ross, William David, *Aristotle*, cit., p. 21: “The *Categories* and the *De Interpretatione*, which roughly speaking study the term and the proposition respectively [...]”



are» can be organised.”<sup>506</sup> However, he shows himself to be unwilling to study them as “objective reality,” but rather prefers to exhibit the particular and contextualized appearance of being into language.<sup>507</sup>

As mentioned above, the Greek word *κατηγορία* could be rendered by the English “predicate,” that is to say, that which is predicable of a subject. On this topic, David Ross claims:<sup>508</sup>

“The ordinary meaning of *κατηγορία* is «predicate», [...]. The categories are a list of the widest predicates which are predicable essentially of the various nameable entities, i.e., which tell us what kind of entity at bottom they are.”<sup>509</sup>

In Aristotle, categorization is a sort of “grammar,” a fruitful instrument through which it is possible for us to read and organize reality. Therefore, categories should not be understood as strict, rigid, or pre-fixed schemas set once for all.<sup>510</sup> Indeed, Aristotle himself claims that his intent is not to fashion a completely exhaustive and unique comprehension of the studied

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<sup>506</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “Aristotle on Being,” in *Companion to Ancient Philosophy*, Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2017 (to be published).

<sup>507</sup> *Ibi*, p. tbd; Kirkland, on this account, dialogues with some of the interpreters who interprets the categories only as *linguistic* aspects, that is to say entities related exclusively to the subjective rational experience of human being. Such an interpretation is inspired by the belief of an external and objective reality opposed to him. However, this latter approach is completely extraneous to Aristotle. Nevertheless, Aristotle is saying that language constitutes reality, sustaining on the contrary that “[...] «what is» is understood to appear *necessarily* to us by organising itself according to the structures and forms of articulation in our language [...],” p. tbd. This is the reason why Kirkland affirms: “[...] I would like to suggest only that, although not constituted by language for Aristotle «what is» is nevertheless *not separable from* its manifestation by way of the structures of language,” p. tbd [author’s emphasis].

<sup>508</sup> Barnes, Jonathan, *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 64, pp. 64 - 66: “The *Categories* is concerned with classifying types of predicate («katêgoria» is Aristotle’s word for «predicate»). Consider a particular subject, say Aristotle himself. We can ask various types of question about him: *What* is he? – He is a man, an animal, etc. What are his *qualities*? – He is pale, intelligent, etc. How large is he? – He is five feet ten and ten stone eight. How is he *related* to other things? – He is Nicomachus’ son, Pythias’ husband. *Where* is he? – He is in the Lyceum...Different types of question are answered appropriately by different types of predicate” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>509</sup> Ross, William David, *Aristotle*, cit., p. 23.

<sup>510</sup> Fermani, Arianna, *L’Etica di Aristotele. Il Mondo della Vita Umana*, Brescia: Morcelliana, 2012, p. 16.

object,<sup>511</sup> as if a category was a complete framework for any kind of thing. For example, when he defines words, he does not mean to produce a simplification or to exhaust its meaning, but rather tries to circumscribe a complex area.<sup>512</sup> Alongside these explanations, Aristotle also seems to refer to categories as “the classes of the things that exist,”<sup>513</sup> ways in which what is might be addressed as something. Aristotle, in *Categories* chapter two, claims:

“Τῶν ὄντων τὰ,”<sup>514</sup>

translated as

“Of things there are.”<sup>515</sup>

The same passage will be further discussed later, alongside of a presentation of the meaning of *λόγος* in the framework of this same Aristotelian text,<sup>516</sup> however it is now important to affirm that we no doubt witness a passage from “categories of being” to “classes of predicates:” this indicates the close proximity that, according to him, subsists between categorial expressions and reality; moreover it is the case that qualities, properties, and other predicates actually only appear with substances, namely “ordinary middle-sized physical objects”<sup>517</sup> that “provide the furniture of everyday life.”<sup>518</sup> Predicates, namely categories,

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<sup>511</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>512</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>513</sup> Barnes, Jonathan, *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*, cit., p. 66.

<sup>514</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 14 (1a20).

<sup>515</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 4.

<sup>516</sup> Cfr. paragraph 5. 5..

<sup>517</sup> Barnes, Jonathan, “Metaphysics” in *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, cit., p. 98.

<sup>518</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “Aristotle on Being,” cit., p. tbd.

and things are noticed in multiple ways, hence, if the categories of predicates are available, this means that we also deal with, at least, ten categories of objects.<sup>519</sup> Or, if we understand these categories both as what is said about and the address of it, there are at least ten ways in which we can refer to what it is. Hence, it seems that the aim of Aristotle's work in this text is to "present his meta-ontology by examining the beings (*onta*) that actually exist, the manners in which they exist, and the way in which these are knowable as conceptual units of thought in and through language as «said» or «sayables» (*legomena*)."<sup>520</sup> To further specify this topic, it might be fruitful to address to Aristotle's own words concerning the two, beings (*τὰ ὄντα*) and sayable (*τὰ λεγόμενα*), as he introduces a difference between them in the text at issue. At the beginning of the second chapter, he claims:

“Τῶν λεγομένων τὰ μὲν κατὰ συμπλοκὴν λέγεται, τὰ δ' ἄνευ συμπλοκῆς. τὰ μὲν οὖν κατὰ συμπλοκὴν οἷον ἄνθρωπος τρέχει, ἄνθρωπος νικᾷ· τὰ δ' ἄνευ συμπλοκῆς οἷον ἄνθρωπος, βούς, τρέχει, νικᾷ.

Τῶν ὄντων τὰ μὲν καθ' ὑποκειμένου τινὸς λέγεται, ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ δὲ οὐδενί ἐστιν, οἷον ἄνθρωπος καθ' ὑποκειμένου μὲν λέγεται τοῦ τινὸς ἀνθρώπου, ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ δὲ οὐδενί ἐστι· τὰ δὲ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστι, καθ' ὑποκειμένου δὲ οὐδενὸς λέγεται (ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ δὲ λέγω, ὅ ἐν τινι μὴ ὡς μέρος ὑπάρχον ἀδύνατον χωρὶς εἶναι τοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἐστίν), οἷον ἢ τις γραμματικὴ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστι τῆ ψυχῆ, καθ' ὑποκειμένου δ' οὐδενὸς λέγεται, καὶ τὸ τὶ λευκὸν ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν τῷ σώματι ἐστιν (ἅπαν γὰρ χρῶμα ἐν σώματι), καθ' ὑποκειμένου δὲ οὐδενὸς λέγεται· τὰ δὲ καθ' ὑποκειμένου τε λέγεται καὶ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ἐστίν, οἷον ἢ ἐπιστήμη ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστι τῆ ψυχῆ, καθ' ὑποκειμένου δὲ λέγεται τῆς γραμματικῆς· τὰ δὲ οὔτ' ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ἐστίν οὔτε

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<sup>519</sup> Barnes, Jonathan, *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*, cit., p. 66.

<sup>520</sup> Hood, Pamela M., *Aristotle on the Category of Relation*, Lanham: University Press of America, 2004, p. 4.

καθ' ὑποκειμένου τινὸς λέγεται, οἷον ὁ τις ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ τις ἵππος· οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων οὔτε ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ἐστὶν οὔτε καθ' ὑποκειμένου λέγεται.”<sup>521</sup>

in English

“Of things that are said, some involve combination while others are said without combination. Examples of those involving combination are ‘man runs,’ ‘man wins’; and of those without combination ‘man,’ ‘ox,’ ‘runs,’ ‘wins.’

Of things there are: (a) some are *said of* a subject but are not *in* a subject. For example, man is said of a subject, the individual man, but is not in any subject. (b) Some are in a subject but are not said of any subject. (By ‘in a subject’ I mean what is in something, not as a part, and cannot exist separately from what it is in). For example, the individual knowledge-of-grammar is in a subject, the soul, but it is not said of any subject; and the individual white is in a subject; the body (for all colour is in a body), but is not said of any subject. (c) Some are both said of a subject and in a subject. For example, knowledge is in a subject, the soul, and is also said of a subject, knowledge-of-grammar. (d) Some are neither in a subject nor said of a subject, for example, the individual man or individual horse – for nothing of this sort is either in a subject or says of a subject. Things that are individual and numerically one are, without exception, not said of any subject, but there is nothing to prevent some of them from being in a subject – the individual knowledge-of-grammar is one of the things in a subject.”<sup>522</sup>

Here Aristotle remarks a difference between things that are said and things that are. It seems also that, in these lines, Aristotle already summarizes the principal distinction that occurs between substance and the other categories.<sup>523</sup> In my opinion, he begins to articulate the discussion so to shed immediately light on some problematic aspects of language, that are intended also as problematic aspects of what is. In

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<sup>521</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., pp. 14 - 16 (1a16 - 1b9).

<sup>522</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., pp. 3 - 4 [translator’s emphasis].

<sup>523</sup> This aspect will be discussed more properly in the following paragraphs.

effect, just before presenting such a distinction, he defines homonymous, synonymous, and paronymous referring not only to words but also to thing.<sup>524</sup> Things that are might be addressed in different ways, not only accordingly to their being but also given the human capacity to tell them, to pronounce them, but also to articulate them in a multiplicity of settings. We could also point out that, as well as man is able to do so, at the same time what is said is capable to be addressed in multiple ways. Aristotle first of all begins with things that are said, specifying that they might or might not involve combination. Secondly, he addresses things that are, describing both how they are involved in other things and how they might be said to in respect to other things. It is interesting to notice that the first attribute that Aristotle affirms to be of the things that are concerns actually the fact that they are “said of.” Aristotle clearly begins from things that are said, not from the things that are. It seems that he is concerned to point out that not all the things that are said have a counterpart in reality as well or, at least, that their being is not the same. This is to say that not all the things that are said are in the same way, i.e., they do not have the same way of being. Clearly, Aristotle moves from *λόγος* to describe what is, because even though everything that is is equally said, nevertheless it has not the same status of being. In terms of the discussion developed by Aristotle in this book, this passage highlights the crucial role of *λόγος*, that cannot be intend only as language separate from a community, isolated from others. Studying *λόγος*, investigating the way things are said and the way they are, questioning about them, about their relation is helpful to understand what happens around us, making us more attentive to what is generally said. As a consequence, through this distinctions, it is possible to speak more carefully. At the same time these are criteria to be more aware of what we are said. Hence, the status of the categories appears in its intricate aspect, between ontology and metaphysics. However, it is not the principal aim of this project to

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<sup>524</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., pp. 12 - 14 (1a1 - 1a15); Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 3 [translator’s emphasis].

investigate the status of Aristotle's categories. Instead, my focus is on the role of relation in the context of this writing, the first in which Aristotle attempts a description of *λόγος*.<sup>525</sup>

Before proceeding in this sense, it is necessary to consider that the text here at issue could be seen as divided into three segments,<sup>526</sup> known as *Pre-Praedicamenta*, from the first to the fourth chapter, then *Praedicamenta*, from the fifth to the ninth, and *Post-Praedicamenta*, covering from the tenth chapter to the fifteenth. These titles reflect the Latin name attributed to the entire essay, which actually was the *Praedicamenta*. The first section, *Pre-Praedicamenta*, is where Aristotle presents his semantic definitions, and also suggests a division of beings (*τὰ ὄντα*) into four kinds and eventually listing the ten categories which

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<sup>525</sup> Irwin, Terence, *Aristotle's First Principles*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, pp. 52 - 53: "The items in the categories are beings (*onta*, 1a20), classified according to their relation to a non-linguistic subject (1a20 - b9). Aristotle draws distinctions between words, but they do not reflect ordinary grammatical distinctions. For grammatically similar words may have different functions; some signify an item in just one category, but other grammatically similar words signify its in more than one category. 'Man' and 'musician' are grammatically similar, but 'man' signifies an item in one category, and 'musician' signifies items in two categories—both a substance, a human being, and one of his qualities, musicality.

The different categories correspond to different answers to the 'What is it?' question asked about different things. Aristotle pursues this Socratic question *to a more general level* than it is pursued in any Platonic dialogue (*Top.* 103b27 - 35). He suggests that the categories provide *the most general informative answers* to the Socratic demand for definitions.

In pursuing the Socratic demand Aristotle also restricts it. The most general Socratic question is 'What is a being?', or 'What is to be something?', and *Aristotle refuses to give a single answer to this question*, since he thinks there is no one property to be identified" [my emphasis].

<sup>526</sup> For this analysis I'm referring to an article by Paul Studtmann for the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy and titled "Aristotle's Categories," <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-categories/>; Christopher Shields in his book *Aristotle*, cit., p. 7, suggests to relay on the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* as an online updated resource; he also comments on this treatise, on its structure and arguments, *ibi*, pp. 177 - 228. Cfr. also Sean Kirkland, "Aristotle on Being", cit., p. tbd: "Interpreters usually distinguish three distinct sections within the *Categories*. Chapters 1 - 3 seem introductory, opening with certain complications in the relations between work and being (homonymy, synonymy, and paronymy), then moving to focus on being themselves (*Cat.* 1a20), setting out what is effectively an initial four-category ordering among them and discussing the implications and aspects of that ordering. Chapters 4 - 7, the *Praedicamenta*, either refine or replace the four-category system with a system of ten categories or fundamental kind of being. The third and last section, Chapters 10 - 15, the *Postpraedicamenta*, addresses certain relations among and within these ten basic kinds of being, relations such as opposition, priority, and possession" [author's emphasis]; and Bernardini, Marina, "Saggio Introduttivo alle *Categorie*," pp. 23 - 29, especially p. 28

make up the thematic subject of the following sections. In fact, in the central chapters, Aristotle defines and “discusses in detail the categories: substance (2a12 – 4b19), quantity (4b20 – 6a36), relatives (6a37 – 8b24), and quality (8b25 – 11a39), and provides a cursory treatment of the other categories (11b1 – 14).”<sup>527</sup> Through the last pages, Aristotle relates the various concepts regarding “modes of opposition (11b15 – 14A25), priority and simultaneity (14a26 – 15a13), motion (15a14 – 15b17), and ends with a brief discussion of having (15b18 – 31).”<sup>528</sup>

### 5.3. The concept of relation in the *Categories*

The category that here should occupy our attention to is the one having to do with relation: lingering on its articulation supports the understanding about of how Aristotle means this term in comparison to the definition provided in the context of the present research on *λόγος*.

The chapter dedicated to relatives — *τὰ πρὸς τι* — is the seventh one (6a36 - 8b21): following a first definition of what he means by this term and afterwards presenting some examples, Aristotle develops in depth the details of this category, eventually providing a comparison between relatives and substances. Even this chapter, as a matter of fact, could be interpreted as divided into three distinct moments: at the beginning (6a36 - b14) he presents the first definition of relatives, explaining what we should consider as such (greater, double, usual state, disposition, sensation, science, position and similar); secondly (6b19 - 27), Aristotle lists the pertinent features of relatives (contrariety, more and less, convertibility, simultaneity); the third and last part are about an argumentation concerning relatives and substances, considering the possibility for some substances to be included in such a category: in order to solve some questions regarding this issue, Aristotle offers a second definition for it.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>527</sup> Studtmann, Paul, “Aristotle's *Categories*”, cit..

<sup>528</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>529</sup> Bernardini, Marina, “Saggio Introduttivo alle *Categorie*,” cit., pp. 92 - 93, note 97.

At the beginning of the chapter, Aristotle introduces us to relatives with the following words:

“Πρός τι δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγεται, ὅσα αὐτὰ ἄπερ ἐστὶν ἐτέρων εἶναι λέγεται, ἢ ὁπῶσοῦν ἄλλως πρὸς ἕτερον, οἷον τὸ μείζον τοῦθ’ ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἕτερον λέγεται.”<sup>530</sup>

The translation proposed by Ackrill for this passage is:

“We call *relatives* all such things as are said to be just what they are, *of* or *than* other things, or in some other way *in relation* to something else.”<sup>531</sup>

We can deduce from the incipit and above all from the words chosen by Aristotle, that his purpose in this framework is to investigate those terms which are said in relation to another, “of” or “than.” Hence, relatives are predicated *towards* something, in relation to something else which their being seems to depend on. What man expresses through speech, thanks to categories, *is* there, already present somehow in the world where one lives. Certainly what appears does so in multiple ways: like a kaleidoscopic display, many are the faces through which things open up to us, multiple are the occasions we encounter them. However, these are never completely relativistic, instead there is always reference precisely to one of those appearances, contextualizing the settings we experience them in. Relations are everywhere and at every level, but they are not the same. This is the reason that Aristotle, always careful in his methodological reports, dedicates an entire section of the *Categories* to this important issue, trying to explore every possibility in this sense. However, how should this relation be conceived? What kind of relation are relatives? Thus, how might this category be considered? Paul Studtmann explains:

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<sup>530</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 46 (6a37 - 40).

<sup>531</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 17 [author’s emphasis].



“After quantity, Aristotle discusses the category of relatives, which both interpretively and philosophically raises even more difficulties than his discussion of quantity. A contemporary philosopher might naturally think that this category contains what we would nowadays call «relations». But this would be a mistake. The name for the category is «ta pros ti» (τὰ πρὸς τι), which literally means «things toward something». In other words, Aristotle seems to be classifying not relations but rather things in the world in so far as they are toward something else. [...] Aristotle seems to be focusing on things that are related rather than relations themselves. Indeed, this is evident from the name of the category.”<sup>532</sup>

Studtmann highlights the difference between the Greek τὰ πρὸς τι and how the term ‘relation’ is used in the contemporary language: he explains that this Greek expression indicates not relationships in themselves, or elements gathered together in a structured whole, but rather the items that are mentioned in *reference* to others. He suggests this interpretation on the basis of the words chosen by Aristotle, who indeed does not name this category using any word derived from the etymological root λε/ογ-, instead employing a term indicating the condition to be *towards* or *antecedent, prior* in respect to something else. The prefix ‘προ,’ shared by terms as ‘πρόθεν,’ ‘πρόσθη,’ ‘πρόμος,’ ‘πρότερος,’ suggests a type of relation that is *not inscribed* in a structural involvement but rather as a sort of linear belonging. It seems that τὰ πρὸς τι refer to a designation, not necessarily an arbitrary one but not proper either. A similar position is shared by Pamela M. Hood, who warns:

“The reader [...] should be aware that Aristotle does not have a separate technical word for «relative» and «relation». He uses the term *pros ti* — literally, «toward something» or «in relation to something» — and so it is not always clear exactly what Aristotle has in mind in his discussions. Consequently, we must rely on context to help determine which Aristotle means. Sometimes he

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<sup>532</sup> Studtmann, Paul, “Aristotle's Categories,” cit..

appears to treat relational entities as words, sometimes as metaphysical and linguistic predicates; sometime as logical terms or concrete entities; sometimes as relations.”<sup>533</sup>

Here the difference, as well as the distance, from relation as *λόγος* and relation as *πρός τι* is already understandable: while the former has been described as an *essential* kind of relationship, where the components come to be part of a unitary structure in a precise configuration, the latter is defined as a more arbitrary feature, in which the constraint of the relation might be different from how they present themselves or are defined to be. The relation discussed in this category differs from the relations conceived within the understanding of *λόγος* in that it does not involve what is gathered according to a principle of unity, through which changes occur but remain in a permanent framework.

Marina Bernardini<sup>534</sup> proposes another translation of the passage previously reported, that could help to better understand the first definition of the category here examined:

“We call relatives all those things which, what they are, are said to be of or than others [di altri] or in any other way (*ἢ ὁπωσοῦν ἄλλως*), but always relative to the other.”<sup>535</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> Hood, Pamela M., *Aristotle on the Category of Relation*, cit., p. 16 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>534</sup> The translation is in Italian actually, but I’m going to propose it in English, trying to be as close as possible to the Italian meaning which we need here in order to draw those elements interesting for our work and that she presents to specify some passages.

<sup>535</sup> Bernardini, Marina, *Analisi e Commento delle Categorie di Aristotele*, cit., p. 151: “Si dicono relative tutte quelle cose che, ciò che sono, lo si dicono essere di altre cose o in qualsiasi altro modo (*ἢ ὁπωσοῦν ἄλλως*), ma sempre in relazione ad altro” [my translation]. “Di altre” is the way Bernardini translates the Greek “*πρός ἕτερον*,” for which the Italian “di” already alludes to the semantic constellation of possession and of reference. This is a suggestive example of how translations, through the difficulties that entail, reveal the different worlds that languages are. Here we prefer this translation to the one she proposes in her other work edited by Bompiani, which is characterized by the employment of another lexicon, cfr. Bernardini, Marina, *Categorie*, cit., p. 93. These few terminological differences have significative philosophical relevance.

According to Bernardini, Aristotle needs to add the phrase “ἢ ὁπωσοῦν ἄλλως” because not all relations are expressed by the genitive “of,”<sup>536</sup> for this reason Aristotle lists a few examples to deepen the issue.<sup>537</sup> Such considerations help us to understand this category as the attempt the thinker makes to convey into λόγος — interpreted in this case as speech — those elements that in direct experience always appear only as related to something else. Aristotle’s aim is not to describe structural relations insofar as they are, but instead to reference those entities which always are or are said in a certain way, because relating to another guarantees their existence in a specific context. The expression ‘τὰ πρὸς τι’ is not saying something about λόγος within or among things in an essential way, i.e., belonging to the nature of οὐσία, but is a first attempt to overcome the experience in order to describe it properly with the earliest instruments the *Organon* provides.<sup>538</sup> Thereafter it is possible to speak in a properly metaphysical sense, understanding this adjective as a meta-level which, as separate from contingent aspects, wants to investigate the causes.<sup>539</sup>

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<sup>536</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>537</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 17: “For example, what is larger is called what it is *than* something else (it is called larger than something); and what is double is called what is double is called what it mss *of* something else (it is called double of something); similar with all other such cases. The following, too, and their like, are among relatives: state, condition, perception, knowledge, position. For each of these is called what it is (and not something different) *of* something else. A state is called a state of something, knowledge knowledge of something, position position of something, and the rest similarly. All things then are relative which are called just what they are, *of* or *than* something else. Thus a mountain is called large in relation to something else (the mountain is called large in relation to something); and the others of this kind are in the same way spoken of in relation to something”[author’s emphasis].

<sup>538</sup> Cfr. Hood, Pamela M., *Aristotle on the Category of Relation*, cit., p. 4: “In the *Organon*, Aristotle takes up the study of the elementary units of what exists, how they can be discussed in language, and how to engage in scientific and dialectical reasoning”.

<sup>539</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle’s Metaphysics*, cit., p. 6: “Since it is clear that one must take hold of a knowledge of the causes that originate things (since that is when we say we know each thing, when we think we know its first cause) [...]” see the Greek in Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, cit., p. 7: “Ἐπεὶ δὲ φανερόν ὅτι τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς αἰτίων δεῖ λαβεῖν ἐπιστήμην (τότε γὰρ εἰδέναι φαμὲν ἕκαστον, ὅταν τὴν πρώτην αἰτίαν οἰώμεθα γνωρίζειν)”.

Some interpreters of these Aristotelian chapters understand these initial words as though “for Aristotle things are toward something else insofar as a relational predicate applies to them. Aristotle says: Things are called «relative» if as such they are said to be of something else or to be somehow referred to something else. So, for instance, the greater, as such, is said to be of something else, for it is said to be greater than something (6a36).”<sup>540</sup> According to the perspective here presented, relatives are said in this way only since they are predicated to something different: in other words, they are not defined by a *proper nature*, a proper form or *λόγος*. However, it is necessary to be careful in this sense, inasmuch as it is true without any doubt that Aristotle means this, we should not understand relatives as something absolutely extraneous to one another that is exclusively placed in relation in speech. As we have underlined several times, for Aristotle what is reported in discourse, even in its elementary forms, finds a certain validation starting from sensible experience.<sup>541</sup> Therefore relatives are named as such because they are predicated in this sense, but this does not mean that there are no effective reasons for this relation to be expressed by a predicate even in the simplicity of minimal sentences. Studtmann clarifies:

“This latter fact, namely that in his discussion of relatives Aristotle seems focused on related things rather than relations, places pressure on the easy characterization of the categories that I discussed previously, namely that each category is a distinct type of extra-linguistic entity. If that easy characterization were correct, Aristotle should have countenanced some type of entity corresponding to relatives as a highest kind. But he did not. Hence, it is tempting to shift to an interpretation according to which Aristotle is after all focused on linguistically characterized items (cfr. Cooke). And perhaps he thinks

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<sup>540</sup> Studtmann, Paul, “Aristotle's Categories,” cit.

<sup>541</sup> Jonathan Barnes, for example, in his *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*, cit., p. 64, includes the *Categories* among the ontological Aristotle's writings: “But what things are real? What are the fundamental items with which science must concern itself? That is the question of ontology, and a question to which Aristotle devoted much attention. One of his ontological essays, the *Categories*, is relatively clear; but most of his ontological thought is to be found in the *Metaphysics* [...]”

that the world contains just a few basic types of entity and that different types of predicates apply to the world in virtue of complex semantic relations to just those types of entity.”<sup>542</sup>

On this same topic, Bernardini underlines that, although we can only attempt to deduce the real purpose Aristotle was determined to reach while searching and elaborating these categories, it is undeniable that he directed his attention to what was close to him in this sense: language, namely the words man employs to signify something.<sup>543</sup> She also affirms that, even if the first intention of Aristotle had not been to start from language, he was eventually forced to do so, “because one’s own authentic realization of thought has its condition in the linguistic form, which gathers and shapes the intellectual contents and language, in its turn, is the structure that conveys meanings.”<sup>544</sup> Furthermore this also means that, in a certain sense, the aspects Aristotle was interested in investigating were already present in language, “from the level of belief to the level of science, while the effective structure of the real was operating as cornerstone for comparison.”<sup>545</sup> For instance, while presenting the category of substance, Aristotle claims:

“Τῶν λεγομένων τὰ μὲν κατὰ συμπλοκὴν λέγεται, τὰ δ’ ἄνευ συμπλοκῆς,”<sup>546</sup>

which translated is

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<sup>542</sup> Studtmann, Paul, “Aristotle's Categories,” cit.; the author continues: “As it turns out, many commentators have interpreted him in this way. But their interpretations face their own difficulties. To raise just one, we can ask: what are the basic entities in the world if not just those that fall under the various categories? Perhaps there is a way to answer this question on Aristotle's behalf, but the answer is not clearly contained in his texts.” This point has been already discussed previously.

<sup>543</sup> Bernardini, Marina, *Analisi e Commento delle Categorie di Aristotele*, cit., p. 29.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibidem* [my translation].

<sup>545</sup> Pesce, Domenico, (trans.) *Aristotele. Le Categorie*, Padova: Liviana Editrice, 1967, p. 10.

<sup>546</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 14 (1a16 - 17).

“Of things that are said, some involve combination while others are said without combination.”<sup>547</sup>

Explaining her lexical choices for the translation of this Aristotelian extract, Bernardini affirms that the Greek word *συμπλοκή*, she decided to render as “connection,” is “not indicating whichever type of union, conjunction or composition among words, but precisely that connection that allows one to ascribe truthfulness or untruthfulness of the composed sentence.”<sup>548</sup> This is indeed an issue traceable in all the writings gathered under the title *Organon*, but is even further developed and deepened, especially in the *Analytics*, where Aristotle discusses and defines *λόγος ἀποφαντικός* and syllogisms. What is of interest here is that Aristotle continues to compare the ontological level with the linguistic one.<sup>549</sup> In order to proceed with a linguistic examination, he shows himself to be constantly inspired by everyday experience, without developing it exclusively in its separated aspects. That is to say, without employing *λόγος* as a worldly thing *only*.<sup>550</sup>

Studtmann and Bernardini, within their accounts on relatives and relation, seem to glimpse something that we are able to specify further. Relations are different from situation to situation, thus they express themselves differently and this category, the one identified by *πρός τι*, is an attempt to organize them in a dialogic form. But there is also another point of view: the human being is able to establish new constraints as well, especially through the feature named *λόγος*. In my opinion, this is probably one of the reasons why Aristotle is so thoughtful and prudent while trying to report both these aspects, almost lacking the words to

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<sup>547</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 3 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>548</sup> Bernardini, Marina, *Categorie*, cit., p. 59.

<sup>549</sup> Cfr. Pesce, Domenico, (trans.) *Aristotele. Le Categorie*, cit., p. 26, n. 2.

<sup>550</sup> Once again, the arguments provided in the first part might reveal their importance even in this sense.

fathom them, because of the complexity of the topic itself as well as the difficulty of providing a conceptual framework adjacent to a mutable reality and that at same time grasps some of its most general aspects. On one side it is possible to find relatives whose examples are inspired by pure observations and whose ties seem somehow already present, although external to them; on the other side, man has the ability to establish new constraints in virtue of his freedom<sup>551</sup> and also one's creativity,<sup>552</sup> adding bonds that moreover affect reality as well as one's experience of it.

#### 5. 4. Relatives and substance in the *Categories* for a comparison with *Metaphysics*: from *οὐσία* to *λόγος*

Before moving forward, it is necessary to relate the topic that permits Aristotle to formulate a second definition of relatives, namely the issue of relatives and substance. Firstly, it is incumbent to devote our attention to an important aspect of this topic. One of the reasons that, since ancient times, the *Categories* were not considered to belong to the Aristotelian written production is precisely that the differences observed between what he claims here about *οὐσία* and what is affirmed elsewhere, for example in the *Metaphysics*. These differences could be summed up saying that, in the former essay, Aristotle seems to conceive of substance as the single concrete object we can relate to, while in his most famous work *εἶδος*, the immaterial side of *οὐσία*, appears to be more properly considered as substance.

Within the *Categories*, these are the words he uses to describe how a substance should be conceived:

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<sup>551</sup> Cfr. Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 129, while reasoning about the meaning of *λόγος* within the Aristotelian Ethics, he suggests: "The settling of a positive state [*hexis*] is then an emergence of freedom in the sense of overcoming the exclusiveness of what presents itself initially as contrary options." Hence it is clear that freedom cannot be separated from the setting the human is dwelling in, but on the other hand he is capable to express itself differently from a this external *status quo*.

<sup>552</sup> On a similar argument, even thought understood in an ontological sense, see van der Heiden contribution in the first part of this text.

“Οὐσία δὲ ἐστὶν ἢ κυριώτατά τε καὶ πρῶτως καὶ μάλιστα λεγομένη, ἢ μήτε καθ’ ὑποκειμένον τινὸς λέγεται μήτ’ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ τινὶ ἐστὶν, οἷον ὁ τὶς ἄνθρωπος ἢ ὁ τὶς ἵππος.”<sup>553</sup>

The translation proposed by Ackrill is as follow:

“A substance — that which is called a substance most strictly, primarily and most of all — is that which is neither said of a subject nor in a subject, e.g. the individual man or the individual horse.”<sup>554</sup>

Aristotle describes substance as a particular individual being, which does not refer to or belong to something else. Consequently, substance is considered an autonomous entity, i.e., “an instantiation of a given *eidos* or a «form, species form», of which an individual human being and an individual horse are offered as examples.”<sup>555</sup> If substances are not predicated or attributed to an other, consequently they are subjects of predication and the physical substrate for contingent accidents<sup>556</sup>. Hence, *οὐσία* is the first subject both on the logical level, in that something can be said *of οὐσία*, and also as physical substrate, in that something can be *in οὐσία*. Accordingly, substance has the capacity of being effected by different contraries while maintaining a certain stability:

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<sup>553</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 18 (1b11 - 14).

<sup>554</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 5.

<sup>555</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “Aristotle on Being,” cit., p. tbd [author’s emphasis].

<sup>556</sup> Cfr. Pesce, Domenico, (trans.) *Aristotele. Le Categorie*, cit., p. 35; *ibi*, p. 36: “It is the actual reality that differentiates itself — on one side the static reign of the essences and the unstable happening of accidental qualities on the other” [my translation].



“Μάλιστα δὲ ἴδιον τῆς οὐσίας δοκεῖ εἶναι τὸ ταὐτὸν καὶ ἐν ἀριθμῷ ὄν τῶν ἐναντίων εἶναι δεκτικόν, οἷον ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν ἄλλων οὐκ ἂν ἔχοι τις τὸ τοιοῦτο προενεγκεῖν, ὅσα μὴ εἰσιν οὐσίας,”<sup>557</sup>

translated as

“It seems most distinctive of substance that what is numerically one and at the same is able to receive contraries. In no other case could one bring forward anything, numerically one, which is able to receive contraries.”<sup>558</sup>

Substance, as here defined, is the individual, “numerically one” and subjected to changes, the place for alterations, the location where differences display themselves. Aristotle demonstrates that he is particularly consistent in this definition, claiming that “in no other case” are things recognized and said as one and could “receive contraries.” Probably in contrast with the Platonic perspective, Aristotle affirms that this is being, in the sense of primary reality.<sup>559</sup> Aristotle proceeds further, specifying:

“δεύτεραι δὲ οὐσίαι λέγονται, ἐν οἷς εἶδεσιν αἱ πρώτως οὐσίαι λέγόμεναι ὑπάρχουσι, ταῦτά τε καὶ τὰ τῶν εἰδῶν τούτων γένη, οἷον ὁ τις ἄνθρωπος ἐν εἶδει μὲν ὑπάρχει τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ, γένος δὲ τοῦ εἶδους ἐστὶ τὸ ζῷον· δεύτεραι οὖν αὐταί λέγονται οὐσίαι, οἷον ὁ τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ τὸ ζῷον,”<sup>560</sup>

in Ackrill’s translation

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<sup>557</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 32 (4a10 - 13).

<sup>558</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 11.

<sup>559</sup> Cfr. Pesce, Domenico, (trans.) *Aristotele. Le Categorie*, cit., p. 37, n. 1; he adds also: “If also the universals can be considered as substances, this happens because of the analogy that they show with the individual substances and then only in a derivate and secondary use” [my translation].

<sup>560</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 18 and p. 20 (1b13 - 19).

“The species in which the things primarily called substances are, are called secondary substances, as also are the genera of these species. For example, the individual man belongs in a species, man, and animal is a genus of the species; so these — both man and animal — are called secondary substances.”<sup>561</sup>

In this passage, Aristotle clarifies a distinction between two different kinds of substances: primary and secondary, where the former is represented by the concrete singular being and the latter is instead its proper *εἶδος* — the species form and the genus form.<sup>562</sup> Hence, we should consider that he sets out the above passage with “the experience of beings wherein the term «*ousia*» is the indiscriminate name for something that contains both of these moments.”<sup>563</sup>

As we can surmise by these two extracts, Aristotle mostly presents *οὐσία* by describing what it is not, which is to say by exploring what is neither located nor traceable in a subject. Bernardini notes that,<sup>564</sup> by giving the previously mentioned definition, Aristotle seems to collocate substance in the fourth group of entities presented in the second chapter,<sup>565</sup> and that, therefore, he presupposes the distinction between substance and accidents, so *οὐσία* serves as subject for all the other ones.<sup>566</sup> Given the

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<sup>561</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., pp. 5 - 6 [author’s emphasis].

<sup>562</sup> Cfr. also Hood, Pamela M., *Aristotle on the Category of Relation*, cit., p. 4: “Substance (*ousia*) in the *Categories* includes both concrete individuals and secondary substances such as genera and their species;” *ibi*, p. 112: “Primary substances are the only entities that are not dependent upon other entities in Aristotle’s the meta-ontological framework. Secondary substances are said of other entities and thus have a predicational dependence on those entities as subjects, but they do not inhere in those subjects. Non-substantial entities that are non-relational inhere in other entities and so depend on them for their existence.”

<sup>563</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “Aristotle on Being,” cit., p. tbd. [author’s emphasis].

<sup>564</sup> Bernardini, Marina, “Saggio introduttivo alle *Categorie*,” cit., p. 41.

<sup>565</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 14 and Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 4 (1b3 - 5).

<sup>566</sup> See Hood, Pamela M., *Aristotle on the Category of Relation*, cit., p. 4: “All substances can be subjects, but not all subjects are substance. By «subject» Aristotle means whatever has anything said of it or in it. That is, a subject is that of which anything else is predicated or in which something inheres.”

topic here analyzed, it is crucial to understand what Aristotle means by the term *οὐσία* and why it is usually translated by the word “substance.” While providing an exegetic comment on some passages from the *Categories*, in particular the passage concerning *οὐσία* in 1b11 - 13, Kirkland states:

“[...] insofar as the term ‘ousia’ would have been heard as the neuter singular of the present active participle (‘on,’ genitive ‘ontos’) of ‘einai’ joined with the abstract noun suffix –*ia*, the observation of *ousia*’s ontological primacy amounts to saying something like ‘Being-ness (or be-ity)’ [...].”<sup>567</sup>

Because of its independence with respect to other elements, both on the ontological as well as the discursive side, *οὐσία* is also thought as *ὑποκείμενον*, namely the participle of *ὑπκειμαι* meaning “lying, being underneath” but also “resting,” “remaining” and “being fundament.”<sup>568</sup> Bernardini states:

“All these significantions flew into the Latin terms *subjectum* (derived fro the verb *subicere*, composed by *sub* and *iacere*), *substratus* (from the verb *substernere*, composed by *sub* and *sternere*, «lying underneath») e *sustantia* (from *substare*, «being under»)." <sup>569</sup>

In the context of the *Categories*, substances, as mentioned, are species and genus as well, but dependent on primary *οὐσία*: they are predicable of something since they refer to subjects, in other words, they are said of, but they do not belong to, these subjects. We see here that secondary substances do not exhaust their existence by this reference to concrete singular beings. Bernardini summarizes:

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<sup>567</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “Aristotle on Being,” cit., p. tbd [author’s emphasis].

<sup>568</sup> Bernardini, Marina, “Saggio Introduttivo alle *Categorie*,” cit., p. 42.

<sup>569</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

“The necessary and sufficient condition in order to consider an entity as substance *tout court*, without any further specification, is to not be in a subject; if, then, this is not said of a subject, it will be considered as a primary substance: if, instead, it is predicable of a subject, it will be a secondary substance.”<sup>570</sup>

Bernardini clarifies the condition needed to consider an entity as a substance. Commenting on Aristotle’s claim, she affirms that the “necessary” and “sufficient” condition to be defined as *οὐσία* is to not be part of another subject. Given the description proposed in the fifth chapter, secondary *οὐσία* could be seen as a relative as well: as a matter of fact, being predicated of something else, it could be considered relative to it according to the first definition presented at the beginning of chapter seven. Aristotle questions:<sup>571</sup>

“Ἐχει δὲ ἀπορίαν πότερον οὐδεμία οὐσία τῶν πρὸς τι λέγεται, καθάπερ δοκεῖ, ἢ τοῦτο ἐνδέχεται κατὰ τινος τῶν δευτέρων οὐσιῶν. ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ τῶν πρώτων οὐσιῶν ἀληθές ἐστιν· οὔτε γὰρ τὰ ὅλα οὔτε τὰ μῆπη πρὸς τι λέγεται. ὁ γὰρ τις ἄνθρωπος οὐ λέγεται τινός τις ἄνθρωπος, οὐδὲ ὁ τις βούς τινός τις βούς. ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὰ μῆπη· ἢ γὰρ τις χεῖρ οὐ λέγεται τινός τις χεῖρ ἀλλὰ τινος χεῖρ, καὶ ἢ τις κεφαλὴ οὐ λέγεται τινός τις κεφαλὴ ἀλλὰ τινός κεφαλῆ. ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν δευτέρων, ἐπὶ γε τῶν πλείστων, οἷον ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὐ λέγεται τινός ἄνθρωπος, οὐδὲ ὁ βούς τινός βούς, οὐδὲ τὸ ξύλον τινός ξύλον, ἀλλὰ τινος κτῆμα λέγεται. ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν τοιούτων φανερόν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι τῶν πρὸς τι· ἐπ’ ἐνίων δὲ τῶν δευτέρων οὐσιῶν ἔχει ἀμφισβήτησιν, οἷον ἢ κεφαλὴ τινός λέγεται κεφαλῆ καὶ ἢ χεῖρ τινός λέγεται χεῖρ καὶ ἕκαστω τῶν τοιούτων, ὥστε ταῦτα τῶν πρὸς τι δόξειεν ἂν εἶναι. εἰ μὲν οὖν ἰκανῶς ὁ τῶν πρὸς τι ὀρισμὸς ἀποδέδοται, ἢ τῶν πάνυ χαλεπῶν ἢ τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἐστὶ τὸ δεῖξαι ὡς οὐδεμία οὐσία τῶν πρὸς τι λέγεται· εἰ δὲ μὴ ἰκανῶς, ἀλλ’ ἔστι τὰ πρὸς τι οἷς τὸ εἶναι ταυτὸν ἐστὶ τῷ πρὸς τί πως ἔχειν, ἴσως ἂν ῥηθεῖη τι πρὸς αὐτά. ὁ δὲ πρότερος ὀρισμὸς παρακολουθεῖ

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<sup>570</sup> Bernardini, Marina, *Analisi e Commento delle Categorie di Aristotele*, cit., p. 88 [my translation].

<sup>571</sup> Here I report a quite long passage from the *Categories* (8a13 - 8a34): I consider it necessary to deepen this particular, complex and delicate argument, so important in the entire economy of Aristotle’s thought as well as for the aims of our reasoning.

μὲν πᾶσι τοῖς πρὸς τι, οὐ μὴν ταυτὸν γέ ἐστι τῷ πρὸς τι αὐτοῖς εἶναι τὸ αὐτὰ ἄπερ ἐστὶν ἐτέρων λέγεσθαι,”<sup>572</sup>

translated as

“It is a problem whether (as one would think) *no* substance is spoken as a relative, or whatever this is possible with regard to some secondary substances. In the case of primary substances it is true; neither wholes nor parts are spoken of in relation to anything. An individual man is not called someone’s individual man, nor an individual ox someone’s individual ox. Similarly with parts; an individual hand is not called someone’s individual hand (but someone’s hand), and an individual head is not called someone’s individual head (but someone’s head). Similarly with secondary substances, at any rate most of them. For example, a man is not called someone’s man nor an ox someone’s ox nor a log someone’s log (but it is called someone’s property). With such cases, then, it is obvious that they are not relatives, but with some secondary substances there is room for dispute. For example, a head is called someone’s head and a hand is called someone’s hand, and so on; so that these would seem to be relatives.

Now if the definition of relatives which was given above was adequate, it is either exceedingly difficult or impossible to reach the solution that no substance is spoken of as a relative. But if it was not adequate, and if those things are relatives for which *being is the same as being somehow related to something*, then perhaps some answer may be found. The previous definition does, indeed, apply to all relatives, yet this — their being called what they are, of other things — is not what their being relatives is.”<sup>573</sup>

After presenting the problematic matter of whether any of the secondary substances might be considered part of the relatives, Aristotle proposes some examples: a hand might be said relative to someone, so as to appear

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<sup>572</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 58 and p. 60 (8a14 - 37).

<sup>573</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 22 [author’s emphasis]; Bernardini also notices a correspondence between this passage and a definition within the *Topics*, cfr: *Analisi e commento delle Categorie di Aristotele*, cit., pp. 151 - 2.

as existent in relation to the whole of someone's body; the same situation can occur while discussing the relation between two or more people. However, at the same time, they could be seen as autonomous *οὐσίαι*. Consequently, in order to explain in a more detailed way the independence of substances, Aristotle is forced to formulate a second definition for the category of relatives. Pesce argues that he comes to this consequence because

“The first definition fails in being too broad, it includes all relatives, but goes beyond them.”<sup>574</sup>

In effect, the former depiction is applicable to every relative, but it does not consider that for them, being related to something represents a different condition from *being said of* other things.<sup>575</sup>

It is appropriate, for the aim of the present research, to spend some time on this specific *ἀπορία* which Aristotle is dealing with because, in my opinion, this is an example of the passage from the ontological discussion to the metaphysical description:<sup>576</sup> relatives concern the linguistic category of beings which owe their definition under a certain aspect to other substances. This happens throughout *λόγος*, namely because of our ability to glimpse worldly relations, not only primary structured relations, and report them as a sentence. In doing so, we also create new relations,

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<sup>574</sup> Pesce, Domenico, (trans.) *Aristotele. Le Categorie*, cit., p. 67, n. 35.

<sup>575</sup> Cfr. Bernardini, Marina, *Analisi e Commento delle Categorie di Aristotele*, cit., p. 151; see also Hood, Pamela M., *Aristotle on the Category of Relation*, cit., p. 112: “All relatives are incomplete in that they must have a reference to some entity to be complete. Since according to the *Categories* 7 account of relational being all relatives must have their reciprocating correlative, *L* relatives are linguistically dependent on each other. I use the word ‘linguistic’ here in a broad sense which encompasses the grammatical rules and conventions Aristotle notes in *Categories* 7 for recognizing relatives [...]” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>576</sup> It is interesting to note that Shields, in his work entirely dedicated to Aristotle, introduces the *Categories* in a chapter titled “Aristotle’s early ontology,” but also affirms: “Thus, relative to the rest of the *Organon*, the *Categories* is involved in an inquiry into the basic metaphysical units or atoms which can combine into sources of various sort,” Shields, Christopher, *Aristotle*, cit., p. 177 [my emphasis]. Furthermore, he indicates the paragraph dedicated to the description of the categories employing the following words: “The *Theory of Categories*: Kinds of beings,” see *ibi*, p. 185.

we are able to say something about elements that do not necessarily relate to one another at a first ontological level. Employing the same images proposed by Aristotle, through *λόγος*-language it is possible to refer to something, for example, a head or a hand belonging to someone, predicating it in terms of a relation with another entity. Nevertheless, this relation might not reveal itself as essential in order to *know* something specific of this *οὐσία*. In other words, a hand or a head can *be said of* someone, a man *can be said of* a different one, but they subsist as individual *independent* of the relations that can be *predicated* of them. Moreover, in the Aristotelian text we find these examples:

“Τὴν δὲ γε κεφαλὴν καὶ τὴν χεῖρα καὶ ἕκαστον τῶν τοιούτων, ἅ εἰσιν οὐσίαι, αὐτὸ μὲν ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὠρισμένως ἔστιν εἰδέωαι, πρὸς ὃ δὲ λέγεται, οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον. τίνος γὰρ αὕτη ἢ κεφαλὴ ἢ τίως ἢ χεῖρ, οὐκ ἔστιν εἰδέωαι ὠρισμένως. ὥστε οὐκ ἂν εἴη ταῦτα τῶν πρὸς τι. εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐστὶ ταῦτα τῶν πρὸς τι, ἀληθὲς ἂν εἴη λέγειν ὅτι οὐδεμία οὐσία τῶν πρὸς τι ἐστὶν,”<sup>577</sup>

which in Ackrill’s version is

“But as for a head or a hand or any such substance, it is possible to know it — what it itself is — definitely, without necessarily knowing definitely that in relation to which it is spoken of. For whose this head is, or what whose the hand, it is not necessary to know definitely. So these would not be relatives. And if they are not relatives it would be true to say that no substance is relative.”<sup>578</sup>

From Aristotle’s examples, one can infer that, at every level of reality, what is is characterized by its own *εἶδος*, namely a structural and individual unity which guarantees an autonomous subsistence that is,

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<sup>577</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 62 (8b16 - 24).

<sup>578</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., pp. 23 - 24, cfr. note 1 at page 23 about the translation of the phrase “οὐκ ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστιν εἰδέωαι,” which literally should sound as “[...] it is not *possible* to know definitely” [author’s emphasis].

however, still in a dynamic interaction with the context, can serve as subject.<sup>579</sup> Sachs confirms this intuition:

“Just as the organs of the living body are wholes subordinated to a single comprehensive whole, so too the items of perception are wholes of activity comprehended into the single activity of perceiving them.”<sup>580</sup>

Starting from this perspective, we might understand — in an as of yet unripe way — relation as a metaphysical constitutive element, but still distinct from the definition of relatives proposed in the *Categories* because the predication of ‘τὰ πρὸς τι’ provides an explanation that does not conceive of relation as the dynamic (un)concealing of a unitary and structured entity, which would correspond to the understanding of λόγος previously described. Rather, πρὸς τι comes to describe *external* or, in other words, *inessential* bonds that, through sentences, we are able to relate to items. This leads to the necessity of considering other passages from Aristotle, searching for elements which would deepen what λόγος means for our purposes.

### 5. 5. Λόγος in the context of the *Categories*

Considering our interest in λόγος as relation, it was indispensable to introduce a comparison between relatives, especially in terms of how they are conceived in the discussion at the very beginning of the *Organon*, and of the definition of relation here proposed. This was the main issue of the previous section. Indeed, λόγος is a word that occurs frequently in the *Categories* so, after a detailed study of relatives, it is appropriate to devote some effort to what the term λόγος, the very thread of this conversation, means within the same horizon.

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<sup>579</sup> For our purposes, it might be important to remember that one of the other words for εἶδος is λόγος: while the former is employed to indicate the way in which a οὐσία appears, its formal manifestation (see the etymology of the term, from the verb εἶδεν, ‘see’), the latter points out its structural aspect, displayed in its dynamic and then temporal dimension.

<sup>580</sup> Sachs, Joe, “Recognizing the Soul,” cit., p. 13.



Aygün notes that in the *Categories* there is a “philosophically loaded”<sup>581</sup> use of the term *λόγος* and that is “extensively employed in the text.”<sup>582</sup> It is also true that it appears at the very beginning, in the first sentence,<sup>583</sup> already seen in previous chapters, which Aygün translates as:

“Those whose names only are common, but whose *logos* of being according to this name is different, are called homonyms.”<sup>584</sup>

Because of the presence of the word in this context, Aygün is of the opinion that understanding something more about homonyms may illuminate some sides of *λόγος* as well. Aygün is aware that the immediate consequence for the provided definition means that homonymy may be applied to indicate the relation between a representation and a represented thing, but can also refer to other kinds of relation, for example the one between two entities named in the same way but that are intrinsically different,<sup>585</sup> as well as that between a particular element and its general enunciation,<sup>586</sup> or even between a part and a whole,<sup>587</sup> or again between a species and its genus.<sup>588</sup> Furthermore, in his interpretation, Aygün underlines that Aristotle provides statements according to which, because of the conventional rather than relation between beings and words, “we may call any two beings by the same name and thus make

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<sup>581</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 24.

<sup>582</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>583</sup> This passage has been previously reported at the beginning of the 5th chapter with the aim of introducing an analysis of the passage between *λόγος*-occurring and *λόγος*-language. In that case, I preferred the translation of another author, Ackrill; however, given the importance of Aygün’s account in this section, it is appropriate to refer to his own translation.

<sup>584</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 24.

<sup>585</sup> *Ibidem*, here he refers to *Topics*, 106b6 - 10: “[...] the relation between *leukon* as color («white») and *leukon* as sound («clear»).”

<sup>586</sup> *Ibi*, p. 25, referring to *Metaphysics* 1035b1 - 2.

<sup>587</sup> *Ibidem*, he relays on *Posterior Analytics* 647b18.

<sup>588</sup> *Ibidem*, he alludes to *Topics* 123a27.

them homonyms.”<sup>589</sup> As a consequence, he suggests that “even one being can be «addressed» homonymously as long as it is addressed regardless of what it is *for* it to be, as long as its *logos* of being is disregarded.”<sup>590</sup> He then proceeds to comment on the definition of substance given by Aristotle in the same treatise, to demonstrate that a being possesses something apart from the *λόγος* of its being thanks to which it can be named homonymously.<sup>591</sup> Before proceeding with the considerations proposed by Aygün, I suggest to pause for a while on the debate between conventional and natural language he alludes to. I would like to comment on this reference to homonymy: Aygün affirms that there is a certain aspect of things that eludes its inherent *λόγος*, and, as a result, we are able to proceed in naming it differently, creating homonymous names. However, this also means that there is a certain aspect of things through which we name them properly and in a precise way because of their *λόγος*. The creativity permitted by our disposition, assured by our soul which guarantees the way of being of the human being, could not exist without that (un)concealing attitude that naming something presumes and it implies: a certain *previous relation*. As we are going to discuss further, with language it is possible for man to “let something appear or shine

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<sup>589</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>590</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>591</sup> *Ibidem*.

forth from itself”<sup>592</sup> because of one’s *εἶδος*,<sup>593</sup> for which, again, *λόγος* is another word.

Continuing his argumentation, Aygün summarizes one of the sections from the second chapter of the *Categories*, where Aristotle explains the two criteria he employs to relate on beings and then later study them.<sup>594</sup> Aristotle states:

“Τῶν ὄντων τὰ μὲν καθ’ ὑποκειμένου τινὸς λέγεται, ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ δὲ οὐδενὶ ἐστίν, οἷον ἄνθρωπος καθ’ ὑποκειμένου μὲν λέγεται τοῦ τινὸς ἀνθρώπου, ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ δὲ οὐδενὶ ἐστὶ· τὰ δὲ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστὶ, καθ’ ὑποκειμένου δὲ οὐδενὸς λέγεται (ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ δὲ λέγω, ὃ ἐν τινι μὴ ὡς μέρος ὑπάρχον ἀδύνατον χωρὶς εἶναι τοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἐστίν), οἷον ἢ τις γραμματικὴ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστὶ τῇ ψυχῇ, καθ’ ὑποκειμένου δ’ οὐδενὸς λέγεται, καὶ τὸ τὶ λευκὸν ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν τῷ σώματι ἐστίν (ἅπαν γὰρ χρῶμα ἐν σώματι), καθ’ ὑποκειμένου δὲ οὐδενὸς λέγεται· τὰ δὲ καθ’ ὑποκειμένου τε λέγεται καὶ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ἐστίν, οἷον ἢ ἐπιστήμη ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστὶ τῇ ψυχῇ, καθ’ ὑποκειμένου δὲ λέγεται τῆς γραμματικῆς· τὰ δὲ οὐτ’ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ἐστὶν οὔτε

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<sup>592</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>593</sup> See Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, pp. 170 - 174 (430a26 - 430b32) and Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle’s On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., pp. 143 - 145. On this, cfr. Baracchi, Claudia, “Aristotele e il *Nous*. Note sulla Trascendenza Indicibile,” cit., p. 147: “[...] *De anima* Gamma 6 si orienta altrimenti, interrogandosi innanzitutto sulla natura dell’individuo (in potenza e in atto, e poi secondo quantità e secondo *eidōs*), sulla sua compenetrazione con il divisibile e sulla sua azione insieme determinante e unificante in seno al mondo fenomenico. È in particolare l’uno inteso come configurazione di un tutto formalmente organizzato (*eidōs*), differenziato eppure allo stesso tempo unificato, a far luce sull’interpolazione dell’atemporale nel temporale;” translated in English “[...] *On the Soul* Gamma 6 orients itself differently, questioning first of all the nature of the individual (in potency and in act, and then according to quantity and to *eidōs*), its interpenetration with the divisible and its action together decisive and unifying within the phenomenal world. It is in particular the one meant as configuration of an organized formal whole (*eidōs*), differentiated and yet unified, to shed light on the interpolation of the un-temporal within the temporal” [my translation]. I would like to point out that the words chosen by the Italian philosopher to describe *εἶδος* are very similar to those employed here to describe *λόγος*.

<sup>594</sup> Part of the following chapter was already reported beforehand, in paragraph 5. 2., in order to clarify what Aristotle intends distinguishing between “things that are said” and “things that are.” Differently from the main focus of those pages, in this context we are going to drive our attention to the interpretation of *λόγος* in the overall of the *Categories*.

καθ' ὑποκειμένου τινὸς λέγεται, οἷον ὁ τις ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ τις ἵππος· οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων οὔτε ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ ἐστὶν οὔτε καθ' ὑποκειμένου λέγεται.”<sup>595</sup>

translated as

“Of things there are: (a) some are *said of* a subject but are not *in* any subject. For example, man is said of a subject, the individual man, but is not in any subject. (b) Some are in a subject but are not said of any subject. (By ‘in a subject’ I mean what is in something, not as a part, and cannot exist separately from what it is in). For example, the individual knowledge-of-grammar is in a subject, the soul, but is not said of any subject; and the individual white is in a subject, the body (for all color is in a body), but is not said of any subject. (c) Some are both said of a subject and in a subject. For example, knowledge is in a subject, the soul, and is also said of a subject, knowledge-of-grammar. (d) Some are neither in a subject nor said of a subject, for example, the individual man or individual horse—for nothing of this sort is either in a subject or said of a subject.”<sup>596</sup>

These criteria are firstly being or not being in an underlying thing and secondly being said or not of an underlying entity. He then describes the outcomes of these criteria:

“In order to address a being homonymously, in order to address it while disregarding its *logos* of being, one then may address it merely with respect to that which *is in* it — not, Aristotle emphasizes, as that which is present in something as a part, but as that which cannot be apart from that *in* which it *is*.”<sup>597</sup>

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<sup>595</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 14 (1a20 - 1b6).

<sup>596</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 4.

<sup>597</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 26.

Following this reasoning, what permits one to attribute homonymous names regardless the *λόγος* of a being is its aspect, namely its “most immediate way possible.”<sup>598</sup> indeed, Aygün eventually speaks of “homonymous appearance.”<sup>599</sup> Homonymy addresses beings in their aspects. Thus, it implies a wide variety of attitudes involved in the direct experience of a being, in that ontological disclosure previously mentioned and constantly present in our discussion. Aygün continues his study presenting Aristotle’s explication of synonymy: contrary to homonyms, synonymous terms allude both to their names and their *λόγος* of being. He suggests that, following this definition, it is possible to understand the meaning of *λόγος* in this context, and to justify his conclusion he notes the translation of an extract from the *Categories*. The Greek text says:

“συνώνυμα δὲ λέγεται ὧν τὸ τε ὄνομα κοινὸν καὶ ὁ κατὰ τοῦνομα λόγος τῆς οὐσίας ὁ αὐτός, οἷον ζῶον ὃ τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ βούς. ὁ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ βούς κοινῶ ὀνόματι προσαγορεύεται ζῶον, καὶ ὁ λόγος δὲ τῆς οὐσίας ὁ αὐτός· ἐὰν γὰρ ἀποδιδῶ τις τὸν ἑκατέρου λόγον, τί ἐστὶν αὐτῶν ἑκατέρῳ τὸ ζῶν εἶναι, τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον ἀποδώσει.”<sup>600</sup>

translated as

“Those whose names are common, and whose *logos* of being according to this name are also common, are called synonyms, such as «animal» for both the human being and the ox; for each of these are addressed with the common name «animal» and their *logos* of being is the same. For if one supplies the *logos* of what it is for each to be animal, one will supply the same *logos*.”<sup>601</sup>

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<sup>598</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>599</sup> *Ibidem*: “For this homonymous appearance, for this appearance of that which *is in* an underlying being and yet is not considered in its *logos* of being, I shall use the term «aspect»” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>600</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 12 (1a6 - 12).

<sup>601</sup> *Ibi*, p. 31.

Unlike the homonymous, which presupposes a human association, Aygün underlines that the commonality of synonyms depends on their λόγος of being.<sup>602</sup> Another contrasting factor, a direct consequence of the dissimilar engagement with λόγος, is that it presents a wider variety of homonymous than of synonymous words.<sup>603</sup> Depending on the λόγος of a being and not on the imminence of an experiential pressure, synonymy is more related to that element that remains constant in a being, namely that underlying basis which Aristotle calls ὑποκείμενον.<sup>604</sup>

What Aygün deduces from these two definitions, in accordance with the second and the fifth chapters of this same text, concerns one of the most debated topics in Greek thought: change in stability. Aristotle points out, even in this preliminary work, that he considers a being as “not infinitely indeterminate and determinable as such, but [that] already has determination.”<sup>605</sup> Aygün summarizes Aristotle’s understanding of beings with these words:

“For a being, to be is not to be anything in any way, but *to be something in a certain way.*”<sup>606</sup>

How could homonymy and synonymy announce something about λόγος? Aygün’s answer is that the difference between them, that is to say between “free-floating aspects and beings having a *logos* of being,” reveals what is

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<sup>602</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., pp. 31 - 32: “According to Aristotle’s examples, the difference between homonymy and synonymy is the difference between the way a representation of a human being is an «animal» and the way a human being is an «animal.»”

<sup>603</sup> *Ibi*, p. 31: “Note that the unlimited possibilities of homonymous designations are here suddenly limited by a condition not emerging from language or thought, but from the thing at hand: what it is *for it* to be. Simultaneously, the power of naming the aspects that *are in* an underlying being is limited by that which *is said of it*” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>604</sup> *Ibi*, pp. 30 - 31: Here and in the previous pages, Aygün proposes an interesting comparison between Aristotle and Descartes on the concepts of ὑποκείμενον and *substantia*.

<sup>605</sup> *Ibi*, p. 32.

<sup>606</sup> *Ibidem* [my emphasis].

identified as the standard of the being of a being. This standard is its *λόγος*. In this framework, *λόγος* grasps the temporal and spatial appearance of a being because of its inherent manifoldness. In this context, *λόγος* means “standard” in the sense that through the multiple experience of a being, possible only in a temporal extension, we are able to consider the *gathering expression of that being*. Moreover, human being may also gather that standard appearance and express it in language. We may collect all the multiple appearances of it, inferring both the *ratio*, that is to say the standard measure of its appearing, and the inherent structure thanks to which such presence displays itself as such. In the *Categories* what is considered is *λόγος* understood in the first connotation, i.e., as standard because of the gathering expression of a being in its manifestations. It is actually in the *συλλογισμός* that we may combine together, *σύν*, the various *λογισμός*, that is to say the appearances of *λόγος* as standard through the faculty of *λόγος*. Moreover, in doing this, we contribute in creating the same world in which we dwell and from which first we are taught a language.

In a symmetrical analogy between *ἄνθρωπος* and *κόσμος*, *λόγος*-faculty requires the mediation of time, namely a temporal frequency, as well as *λόγος*-standard. While *νοῦς* is without *λόγος*, the visible configuration of a being that lets it perform in its standard,<sup>607</sup> it is also, like *εἶδος*, atemporal. *Λόγος* is conceived as standard because it connects, *λέγειν*, the multiple manifestations of a same *εἶδος*, reflecting in this way the inner unity of the substance. *Λόγος* witnesses the way in which the permanent aspect of an entity is manifested or shown in its becoming through time, in this way becoming understandable. It is not the purpose of our investigation, but I would like to mention a possible further interesting topic of study, namely the bond between *λόγος* as standard and the two different notions of time in the ancient Greek thought, that is to say *καιρός* and *χρονος*.

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<sup>607</sup> *Ibi*, p. 40: “*Logos* articulates the way in which a being presents one aspect not at the expense of another or of an underlying thing. *Logos* means the standard that articulates the being at hand in the manifold of its aspects” [author’s emphasis].

The consideration presented up to now maintains the intrinsic relational foundation of λόγος, in two aspects: the relation between the openness of a being,<sup>608</sup> a οὐσία that is an ὑποκείμενον, which is translated in its contextual appearances, together with the relation connecting those manifestations captured by the openness of human disposition. In the entirety of such an encounter, the contact between two open λόγοι, there is what it is.

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<sup>608</sup> And so related to other entities in a meaningful horizon — which is how we understand openness here.



## Chapter 6. Considerations on λόγος in *On Interpretation*

### 6. 1. From predicates to sentences: *On Interpretation*

The *Categories* is followed by a second treatise, with which it is usually paired in modern translations: *On Interpretation*,<sup>609</sup> the second text of the *Organon*. In our context, a brief reference to this Aristotelian writing is crucial, since it represents a second passage to the meta-descriptive level of reality. In fact, in this text the bonds articulated within sentences are described. Unlike in the *Categories*, here Aristotle begins to consider “proposition, their theory, analysis and so on for subject.”<sup>610</sup> Moreover, “the distinction between «true» and «false» also naturally finds a place here.”<sup>611</sup> And it is precisely in the premises of such an articulation that we are able to see relation as the principal category for meta-physical understanding. Moving through some important passages, it will be possible to understand something more about λόγος as relation.

As was the case for the *Categories*, numerous controversies about the authenticity of *On Interpretation* have characterized its reception. This controversy has also extended to its contents, its function in comparison to other works belonging to the Aristotelian *Corpus*, and even its title. To begin from this last issue, the Greek title used to name the text is *Περὶ ἑρμηνείας*, and it is a curious fact that this word never appears in this text’s pages.<sup>612</sup> There are four observable sections in the structure of this

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<sup>609</sup> For this text, the references to the Greek version and the English translation are the same as those I adopted for the *Categories*.

<sup>610</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 7.

<sup>611</sup> *Ibidem*; cfr *ibi*, p. 114 “Πρῶτον δεῖ θέσθαι τί ὄνομα καὶ τί ῥῆμα ἔπειτα τί ἐστὶν ἀπόφασις καὶ κατάφασις καὶ ἀπόφανσις καὶ λόγος” (16a1 - 3), which in Ackrill’s translation is: “First we must settle what a name is and what a verb is, and then what a negation, an affirmation, a statement and a sentence are,” in Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 43.

<sup>612</sup> Migliori, Maurizio, “Introduzione Generale”, cit., p. xxxiv: “There is a first curious fact: the word from the Greek title, *hermeneia*, wasn’t employed by Aristotle not only in this work, but also in all the other ones of the *Organon*” [author’s emphasis, my translation]. He adds, *ibidem*: “It concerns not only a late choice, but also less understandable, since it was made by a tradition completely external to the text itself” [my translation].

text: the first chapters (1 - 4) are dedicated to a linguistic reflection, elaborating a study of nouns, verbs and discourse; the second includes two chapters (5 - 6) devoted to affirmative and negative enunciation; third, Aristotle introduces the topic of contradiction and opposition (chapters 7 - 9); and, finally, Aristotle once again recalls the theme of the relation between affirmation and negation (10 - 15).<sup>613</sup> Given these topics, some scholars have suggested that we consider the title not in its hermeneutic character, but rather in naming an essay properly aimed at a detailed study of language.<sup>614</sup>

While retracing what he names the “phenomenology of Being” in the Aristotelian ontology, and trying to notice “the emphasis on *phenomenality* that Aristotle’s terminology seems to announce so clearly,”<sup>615</sup> Sean Kirkland finds interesting that Aristotle employs the term “δηλοῦν” or “making δῆλος” with the intention of indicating any kind of vocalization, human or animal:<sup>616</sup> this word means “making clear, manifest.” Hence, Kirkland argues that

“[...] the privileged or most fully realized mode of language usage for Aristotle, i.e., the making of «statements, propositions,» the affirmations or denials that alone are capable of being true or false, must be understood as one species of this genus, *dêloun* [...]”<sup>617</sup>

He then arrays a relevant *relation* between the two ways of λόγος, the dynamic (un)concealing manifested in the world and the expression of words:

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<sup>613</sup> Cfr. *ibi*, p. xxxvi.

<sup>614</sup> Cfr. *Ibi*, p. xxxv: “[...] inasmuch as this work studies exactly the elements of the language, its structure and the effects deviating from it” [my translation].

<sup>615</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “Aristotle on Being”, cit., p. tbd [author’s emphasis].

<sup>616</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>617</sup> *Ibidem*.

“Making a statement, thus, seems to be understood originally and fundamentally neither as a re-presenting of an externally present and independent reality, nor as the expression and transfer of internal mental content. Rather, given its etymology, making a statement is indeed a particularly powerful kind of *déloun*, for it is a «letting something appear or shine forth from itself.»<sup>618</sup>

To support his claims, Kirkland refers to two passages taken from *On Interpretation*, indeed one of the most discussed pages from the Aristotelian corpus, widely analyzed in order to establish Aristotle’s position on the conventional or non conventional nature of language. Aristotle writes:

“Όνομα μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φωνὴ σημαντικὴ κατὰ συνθήκην ἄνευ χρόνου, ἥς μηδὲν μέρος ἐστὶ σημαντικὸν κεχωρισμένον· ἐν γὰρ τῷ Κάλλιππος τὸ ἵππος οὐδὲν αὐτὸ καθ’ ἑαυτὸ σημαίνει, ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ καλὸς ἵππος. οὐ μὴν οὐδ’ ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς ἀπολοῖς ὀνόμασιν, οὕτως ἔχει καὶ ἐν τοῖς συμπεπλεγμένοις· ἐν ἐκείνοις μὲν γὰρ τὸ μέρος οὐδαμῶς σημαντικόν, ἐν δὲ τούτοις βούλεται μὲν, ἀλλ’ οὐδενὸς κεχωρισμένον, οἷον ἐν τῷ ἐπακτροκέλης τὸ κέλης οὐδὲν σημαίνει καθ’ ἑαυτό. Τὸ δὲ κατὰ συνθήκην, ὅτι φύσει τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐδὲν ἐσιν, ἀλλ’ ὅταν γένηται σύμβολον, ἐπεὶ δηλοῦσί γέ τι καὶ οἱ ἀγράμματοι ψόφοι, οἷον θηρίων, ὧν οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ὄνομα,<sup>619</sup>

translated as

“A *name* is spoken sound significant by convention, without time, none of whose parts is significant in separation. For it ‘Whitfield’ the ‘field’ does not signify anything in its own right, as it does in the phrase ‘white field’. Not that it is the same with complex names as with simple ones: in the latter the part is no way significant, in the former it has some force but is not significant of anything

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<sup>618</sup> *Ibidem* [author’s emphasis].

<sup>619</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 116 (16a20 - 29).

in separation, for example the ‘boat’ in ‘pirate boat’. I say ‘by convention’ because no name is a name naturally but only when it has become a symbol. Even inarticulate noises (of beasts, for instance) do indeed reveal something, yet none of them is a name;”<sup>620</sup>

and

“Ἔστι δὲ λόγος ἅπας μὲν σημαντικός, οὐχ ὡς ὄργανον δέ, ἀλλ’ ὡς προεῖρηται, κατὰ συνθήκην. ἀποφαντικός δὲ οὐ πᾶς, ἀλλ’ ἐν ᾧ τὸ ἀληθεύειν ἢ ψεύδεσθαι ὑπάρχει. οὐκ ἐν ἅπασιν δὲ ὑπάρχει, οἷον ἡ εὐχή λόγος μὲν, ἀλλ’ οὔτε ἀληθὴς οὔτε ψευδής,”<sup>621</sup>

in English

“Every sentence is significant (not as a tool but, as we said, by convention), but not every sentence is a statement-making sentence, but only those in which there is truth or falsity. There is not truth or falsity in all sentences.”<sup>622</sup>

I would like to argue that, even if the Greek word employed is *συνθήκην*, from *συνθήκαι*, the synthetic aspect does not refer to a completely relative or arbitrary act, disconnected with the evidence, or in this case the (un)concealing, of the entity named itself. As revealed by the root of the word, ‘συν,’ found in the word ‘σύμβολον’ as well, convention requires a community of *sharing*, or rather a community that *shares experience*. This is also announced by the Latin translation of this word, namely ‘*conventionem*,’ derived by ‘*conventus*,’ past participle of the verb ‘*convenire*,’ which in English is literally ‘come together’ but also

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<sup>620</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 44.

<sup>621</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 120 (17a1 - 6).

<sup>622</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., pp. 45 - 46.

translated as ‘gather.’<sup>623</sup> The *συνθήκη* could be considered a synthesis of the collective, multiple, and repeated experience of a *κοινῆ* who assembles around entities for a certain period of time, sharing the same places as well. Those timings and places, in multiple (un)concealing movements,<sup>624</sup> give a context in which we can see an arraying of a representative standard of the being involved. To be communicable and explicable to others, this standard has to be established conventionally by whoever is involved in the same experience and by the “object” of such communication, which does not stand merely or neutrally, but expressing its way of being. Hence, in a certain way, even conventional language shows a bond with the nature of beings. On the other hand natural language is not always merely natural because of the necessity of being reported in a lived exposure by free and creative human beings who dwell within a certain spatial-temporal-cultural framework. Consequently, one of the outcomes of the complexity of humans is evident here: its structural openness and adaptability, together with one’s free arbitrary capacity, make, and at the same time impose, an adjoining with the very setting found around the human, the same setting it also lives in.

In the context of *On Interpretation*, this signifies that the specific topics elaborated in the horizon of this text aim at describing how the combination of those elements needed to formulate an affirmative or negative sentence.<sup>625</sup>

## 6. 2. Some problematic aspects of the passage from λόγος as dynamic happening to λόγος as discourse

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<sup>623</sup> Interesting to notice that the English translation for *convenire* deals with the same one used to report the Greek λέγειν.

<sup>624</sup> Cfr. Winslow who, in the volume mentioned as our resource, insists on the close intersection between nature and movement.

<sup>625</sup> See for example chapters 5 - 6, but also 9 - 10, Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., pp. 120 - 125 and 130 - 151; Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., pp. 46 - 47 and 50 - 57.

Immediately after having declared his scope of study, Aristotle begins the first chapter of *On Interpretation* with the following words:

“Ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ. καὶ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ γράμματα πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά, οὐδὲ φωναὶ αἱ αὐταί· ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρῶτως, ταῦτὰ πᾶσι παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὧν ὀνοιώματα, πράγματα ἤδη ταῦτά,”<sup>626</sup>

that is

“Now spoken sounds are symbols of affections in the soul, and written marks symbols of spoken sounds. And just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place sign of — affections of the soul — are the same for all; and what these affections are likeness of — actual things — are also the same.”<sup>627</sup>

The passage reported here poses a very delicate question, because in the final lines Aristotle seems to explain the passages from what impacts the human soul to be then reported firstly through vocal sounds and secondly in written signs. Aristotle also specifies that vocal as well as written expressions are *symbols* (σύμβολα) of the soul’s affections and, if these symbols can be different for all men, it won’t be the same for affections and things themselves, which are the same for anyone. Put differently, Aristotle is tracing the following path:<sup>628</sup>

1. there are things in the world which are experienced by human beings;
2. these realities act on man;
3. affections are similar in everyone;

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<sup>626</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 114 (16a4 - 8).

<sup>627</sup> Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., p. 43.

<sup>628</sup> Cfr. Palpacelli, Lucia, “Saggio Introduttivo al *De Interpretatione*,” in M. Migliori (ed.) *Aristotele. Organon*, cit., p. 163 for a similar scheme.

4. man employs vocal sounds to indicate them;
5. man uses writing activity to refer to these sounds;
6. vocal sounds and writing signs can be different among men.

Aristotle recalls his work on *ψυχή* to deepen the argument and appears to observe a certain linearity within these passages. However, he was almost certainly aware of the difficulties that may occur, what remains interesting for him in this context is to bring forward the consequences of this reasoning.

Though, for contemporary thinkers, the last extract may evoke even more questions regarding the real passage from reality to affections and even about the symbolic aspect of language, we should consider the Greek thought Aristotle lived in if we intend to understand both his interlocutors and also his innovative proposal. He conceived the possibility of affections as being the same for every human because of one's ability to relate with the world owing to its structural form, that is to say one's *ψυχή*. But we are not in a Kantian perspective, where only knowledge of phenomena is guaranteed while the noumena remain elusive to the human intellect:<sup>629</sup> indeed, for Aristotle things, as substances, have a structural form that lets what they are shine through, i.e., they let what it is shine through. All these elements — human structural relationships and the *εἶδος* of objects — are involved in the process of affections and consequently of their expression. Hence there is no possibility of relativism, even if those vocal or written expressions are multiple. *Εἶδος* allows things to display themselves in defined manners, *ψυχή* supports human agency toward

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<sup>629</sup> Cfr. for example Guyer, Paul, Wood, Allen W., (trans.) *Immanuel Kant. Critique of Pure Reason*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 186 - 187: "We ordinarily distinguish quite well between that which is essentially attached to the intuition of appearances, and is valid for every human sense in general, and that which pertains to them only contingently because it is not valid for the relation of sensibility in general but only for a particular situation or organization of this or that sense. And thus one calls the cognition one that represents the object in itself, but the second one only its appearance. This distinction, however, is only empirical. If one stands by it (as commonly happens) and does not regard that empirical intuition as in turn mere appearance (as ought to happen), so that there is nothing to be encountered in that pertains to anything in itself, then our transcendental distinction is lost, and we believe ourselves to cognize things in themselves, though we have nothing to do with anything except appearances anywhere (in the world of sense), even in the deepest research into its object."

them: in this always new and constantly changeable relation. Here the human being finds its freedom and shares its experience together with its knowledge. Experience and knowledge which, in this (un)concealing dynamic, always have to be recalibrated in the light of the new event that always happens, even if only under certain aspects. The here and now aren't always the same. However, as we will have the chance to remark, this does not lead to an absolute relativism. On the contrary, we interact closely with a reality which in this way maintains its independence.

Indeed, Aristotle, in the above cited lines, seems to display “the classical structure that informs phenomenology and remains the great charter of language.”<sup>630</sup> Cassin notices that

“Phenomenology appears very well as a question of transitivity; the phenomenon shows itself in language and lets itself be written and spoken on a double condition: that it «passes» into the soul, and that the soul «passes» into logos,”<sup>631</sup>

consequently

“[...] this double condition constitutes a double problem as well: are we sure that the mediation of the soul does not obscure anything, and in turn, that the mediation of logos does not skew the affections of the soul?”<sup>632</sup>

Cassin deepens these doubts even further, leading to consequences contrary to those we outlined in the previous paragraph and in the latter reflection:

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<sup>630</sup> Cassin, Barbara, “Saying What One Sees, Letting See What One Says,” cit., p. 23. Here the translation proposed by her for the same extract we referred to: “First of all, that which is in the voice is the symbol of the affections of the soul, and that which is written is the symbol of that which is in the voice. And just as the letters are not the same for everyone, so the vocal sounds also are not the same. But the affections of the soul, of which the vocal sounds are first the signs, are the same for everyone, and the things that the affections resemble are likewise the same.”

<sup>631</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>632</sup> *Ibidem*.



“[...] we have to admit then that this phenomenological structure is, always already, and already in Aristotle, covered over and layered in and as the constitution of objectivity. In other words, transitivity in the end is only the guarantee that turns showing into a sign, logos into a judgement, unveiling into correspondence, and the phenomenon into an object.”<sup>633</sup>

Cassin ends with a provocative and inspiring question:

“Is a Greek phenomenology, in spite of being the paradigm of phenomenology, unobtainable?”<sup>634</sup>

However, there is another possible perspective in reading the same lines and so as to understand what Cassin reads as “objectivity.” According to the hylomorphic structure of reality, substances are characterized by an immaterial aspect, called *εἶδος*, and a material one, *ύλη*.<sup>635</sup> Kirkland, in order to better understand this intricate issue, affirms:

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<sup>633</sup> *Ibi*, p. 24.

<sup>634</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>635</sup> Sachs, Joe, *Aristotle. Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 119 - 120: “So now, in a sketch, what thinghood is has been said, that it is what is not in an underlying thing but is that in which everything else is [...] By material I mean that which, in its own right, is not said to be either something or so much or anything else by which being is made definite. For there is something to which each of these is attributed, and of which the being is different from each of the things attributed (for everything else is attributed to thinghood, and it is attributed to the material), so that the last thing is in itself neither something nor so much, nor is it anything else; and it is not even the negations of these, for these too would belong to it as attributes. So for those who examine it from these starting points, thinghood turns out to be material. But this is impossible, for also to be separate and a *this* seem to belong to an independent thing most of all, on account of which the form and what is made out of both would seem to be thinghood more than would the material” [author’s emphasis]; Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, cit., pp. 131 - 132 (1029a7 - 9 and 1029a20 - 1029a30): “νῦν μὲν οὖν τύπων εἴρηται τί ποτ’ ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία, ὅτι τὸ μὴ καθ’ ὑποκειμένου ἀλλὰ καθ’ οὗ τὰ ἄλλα. [...] λέγω δ’ ὑλην ἢ καθ’ αὐτὴν μήτε τι μήτε ποσὸν μήτε ἄλλο μηδὲν λέγεται οἷς ὥριστα τὸ ὄν. ἐστὶ γὰρ τι καθ’ οὗ κατηγορεῖται τούτων ἕκαστον, ᾧ τὸ εἶναι ἕτερον καὶ τῶν κατηγοριῶν ἕκαστη (τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλα τῆς οὐσίας κατηγορεῖται, αὕτη δὲ τῆς ὑλης), ὥστε τὸ ἔσχατον καθ’ αὐτὸ οὔτε τι οὔτε ποσὸν οὔτε ἄλλο οὐδὲν ἐστίν· οὐδὲ δὴ αἱ ἀποφάσεις, καὶ γὰρ αὗται ὑπάρξουσι κατὰ συμβεβηκός. ἐκ μὲν οὖν τούτων θεωροῦσι συμβαίνει οὐσίαν εἶναι τὴν ὑλην· ἀδύνατον δὲ· καὶ γὰρ τὸ χωριστὸν καὶ τὸ τόδε τι ὑπάρχειν δοκεῖ μάλιστα τῇ οὐσίᾳ, διὸ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὸ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν οὐσία δόξειν ἂν μάλλον τῆς ἄλης”.

“In analyzing our experience of what is named «*ousia*,» Aristotle locates as it were a crack in its self-presentation to us, a fissure between its presenting itself in its individual concreteness and its presenting us with a certain *eidos*.”<sup>636</sup>

Addressing Cassin’s claims, it seems that she assumes that, from Aristotle’s point of view, *εἶδος* assures the objectivity that builds knowledge and expresses it in sentences. Indeed, she is extremely precise in insisting on the presence of such an intention in Aristotle’s theories. Nevertheless, *εἶδος* is better understood as the term which encourages us to attempt to elaborate a more in-depth reading. In fact, it derives from the verb *ἰδεῖν*, meaning ‘to see’ and Kirkland points out:

“it [*εἶδος*] is more originally to be understood as the identifiable «look» that something presents, a look not uniquely its own but which it shares with other members of its essential class.”<sup>637</sup>

Because of its *εἶδος*, a substance is understandable in its constant peculiarities, but in the sense that, starting from the way this substance appears because of its form, it is already oriented to be understood in a certain way and under certain aspects. The *εἶδος* is already there in how the substance is oriented in the world, in how it is disposed and consequently in how it could be known. It is in the *encounter* between these dispositions, gathered into a single but always multiple dynamic (un)concealing, that knowledge is possible, that comprehension finds its source. The so-called ‘objectivity’ of a thing, always and already, and already in Aristotle, cannot be considered *neutral*, but rather is located in an occurring *λόγος*, namely into a *hic et nunc*, and, thanks to human *λόγος*, it is communicable, speakable, even expressible in a completely new or creative way, in which the constraints are re-organized.

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<sup>636</sup> Kirkland, Sean, “Aristotle on Being,” cit., p. tbd [author’s emphasis].

<sup>637</sup> *Ibidem*.

Once again we should recall our reflections on the etymology of the word *σύμβολον*, “symbol,” used by Aristotle in the extract from *On Interpretation* here discussed. Deriving from the verb *συμβάλλω*, signifying “putting together,” and composed by *συμ*, namely “with,” “together,” and *βάλλω*, “cast” or “dispose of,” a symbol unifies something, entailing a relation.<sup>638</sup> In this exact context, referring to it means to make explicit an already existent as well as essential bond between substances and their correspondent vocal or written symbols: speaking and composing is the expression of what is experienced from the happening between the human being and other substances, a happening that cannot be reducible only to the two forms involved, that is to say, to the two *εἶδος* that expose themselves, display themselves, (un)conceal themselves.

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<sup>638</sup> Even Heidegger could agree on this point: in his essay entitled *Heidegger e Aristotele*, cit., p. 115, Franco Volpi assures: “While referring to the first chapters of Aristotle’s *De Interpretatione*, Heidegger observes that the semanticity of *logos* is not according to nature (*physei*), but to convention (*kata syntheken*), and it is related to the genesis of a symbol (*hotan genetatai symbolon*). Heidegger conceives «convention» and «genesis of a symbol» not in the common and traditional sense that these expressions have, but rather conceiving them in an essentially ontological sense, namely affirming that the convention generates a symbol means nothing but the common openness of an horizon of understanding about the entity” [author’s emphasis, my translation]. Volpi’s deductions are the result of an analysis of some passages from the course Heidegger held in Freiburg during the winter semester between 1929 and 1930, published under the title *The fundamental concepts of Metaphysics* (Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 29/30, Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt - Endlichkeit - Einsamkeit*, cit., pp. 446 - 7).

Hence, it is not possible to speak of a sort of sterile Aristotelian “objectivity,” unless it is contextualized in this sense.<sup>639</sup>

In the same essay where she presents a reading of phenomenology and the Sophists, also addressing to some Heideggerian insights, Cassin cites various extracts from Aristotle’s *On the Soul*,<sup>640</sup> suggesting that Aristotle was somehow aware of the problematic aspects of personal experience and communication, so that he deepens the topic from multiple perspectives. In the *On the Soul*, for example, he

“stipulates that «the sensation of proper sensible» — the «proper» sensible being «that which cannot be perceived by any other sense» — «is always true».”<sup>641</sup>

Hence Cassin assumes that, as a proper explanation for a proto-phenomenological account regarding Aristotle, “transitivities would go

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<sup>639</sup> On this problematic issue see also Kirkland, Sean, *The Ontology of Socratic Questioning in Plato’s Early Dialogues*, Albany: State of New York University Press, 2012, p. xviii: “I hope to show that Socratic inquiry into the being of virtue does not operate within the parameters of any such *objective ontology*. Once freed of this all-determining bias, what emerges in reading the dialogues is a *peculiarly ancient Greek proto-phenomenologist* at work. [...] this Socratic phenomenology *avant la lettre* is shown to entail notions of Being and self, as what appears in these initial appearances and the one to whom it appears, which are quite removed from the object and subject that still so often set the terms and establish the aims of our philosophical thinking today”; *ibi*, p. xix: “I attempt to concentrate attention on those moments where his great distance from us, his foreignness, can become apparent. This allows us to mark and then wrestle with the radical differences between his worldview and that of the modern, metaphysical, subject-object ordered epoch that continues to draw to a close even today” [author’s emphasis]. Cfr. especially pp. 3 - 31, with particular attention to pp. 17 - 22. In the text the author is presenting a study about the figure of Socrates within the first Platonic dialogues, however we may extend the reasoning also to Aristotle, since he shared with his forerunners the same vision of *κόσμος* where these elements still remain and characterized the Greek thought of that period. For his insights on the specific of Aristotle see Kirkland, Sean, *Dialectic and Proto-Phenomenology in Aristotle’s Topics and Physics*, in «Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy,» Volume 29, Issue 1, 2014, pp. 185 - 213.

<sup>640</sup> Especially 427b11 and 418a11, but also 427b12.

<sup>641</sup> Cassin, Barbara, “Saying What One Sees, Letting See What One Says,” cit., p. 24; cfr. also *ibidem*: “In both sensible and intellectual apprehension, it is impossible to be deceived, to be wrong (περὶ ὃ μὴ ἐνδέχεται ἀπατηθῆναι, *De An.* 418a12, περὶ ταῦτα οὐκ ἔστιν ἀπατηθῆναι, *Met.* IX.10, 1051b31). There is simply an unveiling reception or not, or nothing (ἢ νοεῖν ἢ μὴ, 32).”

without saying.”<sup>642</sup> She also infers some consequences, expressed in the following way:

“But, as soon as the mediation of the soul does not skew anything and transitivity is assured by an apprehension without detour, this truth that is always true risks being without speech, because, as indicated by what immediately follows in *De Anima*, «sensation of the proper sensibles is always true, and belongs to all animals» (427b12). It would therefore be a mute paradise, infraphenomenological as well as infrahuman, one in which it would not be a matter of saying what one sees, but simply of seeing it.”<sup>643</sup>

However, the common element of sensation proper to all animals does not exclude that any animal be characterized by the peculiar faculty to *elaborate* and *express* what is seen. Aristotle claims:

“ἡ μὲν οὖν αἰσθητικὴ φαντασία, ὡσπερ εἴρηται, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ζῴις ἴσχυει, ἡ δὲ βουλευτικὴ ἐν τοῖς λογιστικοῖς πότερον γὰρ πράξει τόδε ἢ τόδε, λογισμοῦ ἤδη ἐστὶν ἔργον· καὶ ἀνάγκη ἐὼς μετρεῖν· τὸ μείζον γὰρ διώκει. ὥστε δύναται ἐν ἐκ πλειόνων φαντασμάτων ποιεῖν. καὶ αἴτιον τοῦτο τοῦ δόξαν μὴ δοκεῖν ἔχειν, ὅτι τὴν ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ οὐ ἔξει, αὕτη δὲ ἐκείνην. διὸ τὸ βοθητικὸν οὐκ ἔχει ἢ ὄρεξις,”<sup>644</sup>

translated as

“So a sensory imagination, as we said, is present in the rest of the animals, while there is a deliberate imagination in those that can reason (for whatever one will act this way or that way is already a job of reasoning, and has to be measured by one criterion, since one is looking for the greater good, and thus is able to make one thing out of a number of images). This is the reason the other animals do

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<sup>642</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>643</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>644</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 192 (434a6 - 13 ).

not seem to have opinion, because they do not have opinion that comes from *reckoning things together*.”<sup>645</sup>

Aristotle himself provides us with the instruments to go beyond this interpretation, in the *Categories*, for example, or in the *On the Soul* as well. In the former treatise a distinction between two kinds of substances is made: primary and secondary. He conceives of primary substance as the concrete entities we deal with in our ordinary experience, while secondary substance is understood as the species. Consequently, in a certain sense, what concerns the species contributes to the definition of a substance and provides us with some of its particularities, but not completely: hence, even if some features are shared by belonging to a species, this would not guarantee their identical instantiation.

Secondarily, it is possible to provide an ontological explanation by considering the *unity* of body and soul presented in the *On the Soul*, where Aristotle mentions the different functions belonging to the three types of soul. At the beginning of the third chapter, in the second book, he claims:

“Τῶν δὲ δυνάμεων τῆς ψυχῆς αἱ λεχθεῖσαι τοῖς μὲν ὑπάρχουσι πάσαι, καθάπερ εἶπομεν, τοῖς δὲ τινὲς αὐτῶν, ἐνίοις δὲ μία μόνη. δυνάμεις δ' εἶπομεν θρεπτικόν, αἰσθητικόν, ὀρεκτικόν, κινητικόν κατὰ τόπον, διανοητικόν. ὑπάρχει δὲ τοῖς μὲν φυτοῖς τὸ θρεπτικόν μόνον, ἑτέροις δὲ τοῦτό τε καὶ τὸ αἰσθητικόν,”<sup>646</sup>

which translated into English is

“Now of the potencies of the soul, all of those that have been mentioned belong to some living things, as we said, while to others some of them belong, and to still others only one. The potencies we are speaking of are those for nutrition,

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<sup>645</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., p. 156 [my emphasis].

<sup>646</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 80 (414a29 - 414b2).

perception, motion with respect to place, and thinking things through. And in plants the nutritive potency alone is present, while other living things is present, while in other living things this is present along with the perceptive.”<sup>647</sup>

Further, Aristotle adds:

“καὶ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν δὲ τὰ μὲν ἔχει τὸ κατὰ τόπον κινητικόν, τὰ δ' οὐκ ἔχει· τελευταῖον δὲ καὶ ἐλάχιστα λογισμὸν καὶ διάνοιαν· οἷς μὲν γὰρ ὑπάρχει λογισμὸς τῶν φθαρτῶν, τούτοις καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ πάντα, οἷς δ' ἐκείνων ἕκαστον, οὐ πᾶσι λογισμὸς, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μὲν οὐδὲ φαντασία, τὰ δὲ ταύτη μόνη ζῶσιν,”<sup>648</sup>

that is to say

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<sup>647</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., p. 88. Cfr. also the version of Shields, Christofer, *Aristotle. De Anima*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 27: “Among the capacity of the soul, all belong to some, to others some of them belong, and still others only one belongs. The capacities we mentioned were: the nutritive faculty, the perceptual faculty, the desiderative faculty, the faculty of motion with respect to place, and the faculty of understanding. The nutritive faculty alone belongs to plants; both this and the perceptual faculty belongs to others;” here another translation proposed by Barnes, Jonathan, *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*, cit., pp. 105 - 106: “Some things possess all the powers of the soul, others some of them, others one only. The powers we mentioned were those of nutrition, of perception, of appetite, of change in place, of thought. Plants possess only the nutritive power. Other things possess both that and the power of perception. And if the power of perception, then that of appetite too. For appetite consists of desire, inclination, and wish; all animals possess at least one of the senses, namely touch; everything which has perception also experiences pleasure and pain, the pleasant and the painful; and everything which experiences those also possesses desire (for desire is appetite for the pleasant) [...]. Some things possess in addition to these the power of locomotion; and others also possess the power of thought and intelligence.” It is interesting the different English words used by Shields and Barnes to report the Greek *δυνάμεισ*, the first one employs «capacity», while the second adopts «power». Hamlyn and Sachs, for instance, propose to translate the same word with the term «potentiality», cfr. Hamlyn, David Walter, *Aristotle. De Anima. Books II and III (with passages from Book I)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993<sup>2</sup>, p. 14: “Of the potentialities of the soul which have been mentioned, some existing things have them all, as we have said, others some of them, and certain of them only one. The potentialities which we mentioned are those for nutrition, sense-perception, desire, movement in respect of place and thought.”

<sup>648</sup> Hett, Walter S., (trans.) *Aristotle On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, cit., p. 84 (415a7 - 12).

“Last and most rare are reasoning and thinking things through; for in those destructible beings in which reasoning is present, all the other potencies are also present, while reasoning is not present in all animals [...].”<sup>649</sup>

For the argument here discussed, this extract is essential to demonstrate how, even in sharing some characteristics with other animals, for example sensibility, the human being is constituted by other characteristics. Moreover, it both receives solicitation and then responds to stimuli with the whole of its being.<sup>650</sup> Aristotle supports his position with multiple examples.<sup>651</sup> Barnes clarifies that

“Thought, in Aristotle’s view, requires imagination and hence perception; so that *any thinking creature must be capable of perceiving*. And perception never exists apart from the first principle of animation, that of nutrition and reproduction. Thus the various powers or faculties of the soul form a *hierarchical system*.”<sup>652</sup>

Indeed, we could see the precise and unique faculties of the human being as the cause for which the sensation of proper sensibles, always true for itself, can be (un)concealed by the human being’s *λόγος*: however here,

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<sup>649</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle’s On the Soul and On Memory and Recollection*, cit., p. 90.

<sup>650</sup> On this topic and on some suggestions about this argument see Bartolini, Elena, *Per Un’Antropologia Sistemica: Studi sul De Anima di Aristotele*, cit..

<sup>651</sup> *Ibidem*: “What holds in the case of the soul is very close to what holds concerning figures: for in the case of both figures and ensouled things, that is prior is always potentially in what follows in a series — for example, the triangle in the square, and the nutritive faculty in the perceptual faculty. One must investigate the reason why they are thus in a series. For the perceptual faculty is not without the nutritive, though the nutritive faculty is separated from the perceptual in parts. Again, without touch, none of the other senses are present, though touch is present without the others [...]” (414b29 - 32), and p. 190: “Aristotle takes care to reject a natural, basically extensional picture, according to which the capacities of the soul are regarded as discrete components, related to one another more or less in the manner of a layer cake. On that view, each capacity is a sort of discrete, self-contained layer, and if the higher layers depend upon the lower, it is only because they rest upon them. They do not interpenetrate in any significant way. Importantly, Aristotle rejects this position by insisting that lower souls are present only potentially (*dunamei*; 414b28) in the higher soul [...]”.

<sup>652</sup> Barnes, Jonathan, *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*, cit., p. 106 [my emphasis].



starting from this ability shared with other animals, man may do something completely different from them, namely *say differently from that always true sensation*.

Cassin, while comparing phenomenology and rhetoric in Aristotle and while sketching the Heideggerian interpretation of Aristotle's phenomenology, also affirms that

"[...] phenomenology can only maintain itself by going beyond itself. If we refuse, we can neither speak nor understand what we see; but «there is only understanding», in an echolalic narcissism of logos."<sup>653</sup>

Surely, phenomenology is useful for its *methodological* contributions to a philosophical investigation. Even Heidegger, for example in *Being and Time*<sup>654</sup> precisely in a paragraph addressed by Cassin,<sup>655</sup> explains that if philosophy aims at understanding the *what* of Being, then phenomenology is not enough, since it regards the *how* of philosophical research. In those pages, Heidegger presents neither a methodology nor an ontology, nor even a metaphysics. Hence, a philosophical proposal that is interested in presenting a perspective through which to open questions about the *what* of Being must go beyond its phenomenological methodology. Indeed, a philosophical proposal requires speculative

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<sup>653</sup> *Ibi*, p. 29.

<sup>654</sup> Macquarrie, John, and Robinson, Edward, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Being and Time*, cit., p. 50: "The expression 'phenomenology' signifies primarily a *methodological conception*. This expression does not characterize the *what* of the objects of philosophical research as subject-matter, but rather the *how* of that research. The more genuinely a methodological concept is worked out and the more comprehensively it determines the principles on which a science is to be conducted, all the more primordially is it rooted in the way we come to terms with the things themselves, and the farther is it removed from what we call «technical devices», though there are many such devices even in the theoretical disciplines;" in German Heidegger, Martin, *Sein und Zeit*, cit., p. 27: "Der Ausdruck »Phänomenologie« bedeutet primär einen *Methodenbegriff*. Er charakterisiert nicht das sachhaltige Was der Gegenstände der philosophischen Forschung, sondern das *Wie* dieser. Je echter ein Methodenbegriff sich auswirkt und je umfassender er den grundsätzlichen Duktus einer Wissenschaft bestimmt, um so ursprünglicher ist er in der Auseinandersetzung mit den Sachen selbst verwurzelt, um so weiter entfernt er sich von dem, was wir einen technischen Handgriff nennen, deren es auch in den theoretischen Disziplinen viele gibt" [author's emphasis].

<sup>655</sup> Cassin, Barbara, "Saying What One Sees, Letting See What One Says," cit., p. 23.

instruments to both overcome the phenomenological method and at the same time justify its employment. This is also a reason for the problematic bond between phenomenon and λόγος-discourse, or in other words, between appearing and saying, the ontological level and a metaphysical description. The transition from the former to the latter needs a method, it requires a philosophical methodology. However this does not necessarily imply the duality Cassin proposes, the incommunicable relation between Echo and Narcissus. A continuity is observable from the phenomenological approach to the possibility of creating new links or bonds — what in Italian we would call *vincoli*<sup>656</sup> — effective in the world thanks to human λόγος. By recalling the definition of man as the ζῷον λογὸν ἐχὼν it is possible to conceive of λογος in these two senses, that is to say as both the observation by the human being of a dynamic occurrence and the ability to turn it into language, but also, through this language, to provide something different, new, unpredictable, and even contrary to what is encountered. From this perspective able to capture apparently irreconcilable element, all these shades of experience are seen gathered in a thought that is able to collect them, underlining their differences as well, but recognized in their specific aspects and connections.

### 6. 3. The meaning of λογος within the framework of *On Interpretation*

While in the *Categories* the meaning of λογος is given as the connotation of standard, in the context of *On Interpretation* it is identifiable with another sense. In effect, in this text the presence of λόγος reveals the potentiality of a being: “if a being is to have an inherent *logos*, it must hold on to potentiality in its very actuality.”<sup>657</sup> In this way, “*logos*

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<sup>656</sup> The Italian word *vincolo* signifies the part that represents the *how* of the relation rather than the relation itself. It further always connotes an obligation or a commitment that constitutes the formal structure of the whole. In our context then, we should always hear ‘bonds’, ‘links’, or ‘constraints’ in this broader sense.

<sup>657</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 62.

will prove itself to be an inherent standard only by means of inherently motivated, that is, natural, motions.”<sup>658</sup>

According to Aygün, in *On Interpretation* Aristotle provides us with some features to deepen the account of λόγος as standard presented previously. The fact that a being might display itself through a standardly aspect means that it possesses the potential to introduce itself in that way and also implies the possibility of the actuality of that aspect. Aygün translates a passage from *On Interpretation* to show how this implicit idea of λόγος works within Aristotle’s treatise. Aristotle claims:

“Φανερόν δὴ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων ὅτι τὸ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ὄν κατ’ ἐνέργειάν ἐστιν, ὥστε εἰ πρότερα τὰ ἀίδια, καὶ ἡ ἐνέργεια δυνάμεως πρότερα. καὶ τὰ μὲν ἄνευ δυνάμεως ἐνέργειαι εἰσιν, οἷον αἱ πρῶται οὐσίαι, τὰ δὲ μετὰ δυνάμεως, ἃ τῆ μὲν φύσει πρότερα τῷ δὲ χρόνῳ ὕστερα, τὰ δὲ οὐδέποτε ἐνέργειαι εἰσιν ἀλλὰ δυνάμεισ μόνον.”<sup>659</sup>

while Aygün translates as follows

“It is clear from what has been said that the necessary is actual, such that if the eternal beings are prior, then actuality also is prior to potentiality; and some are actual without potentiality, such as the first beings, and more are with potentiality; these are prior with respect to nature, but posterior in time; and some are never in actuality, but potentiality only.”<sup>660</sup>

The results derived from Aygün’s account concern the link between the inherent *ὑποκείμενον* and its constantly contextualized expression that

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<sup>658</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>659</sup> Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 170 (23a22 - 27).

<sup>660</sup> *Ibi*, p. 52; Here is another translation of the same passage from Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., pp. 64 - 65: “It is clear from what has been said that what is of necessity is in actuality; so that, if the things which always are are prior, then also actuality is prior to capability. Some things are actualities without capability (like the primary substances), others with capability (and these are prior by nature but posterior in time to the capability); and others are never actualities but only capabilities.”

somehow must be connected with it. This suggests the presence of an element thanks to which a being is not always both actual and potential, but it is instead a being that possesses some potentialities that guarantee the display of its *λόγος* as standard. Here, one of the most important topics of Aristotle's ontology is at issue, i.e., potentiality and actuality. This topic is also deeply analyzed in *Metaphysics* book Θ<sup>661</sup> and might be considered a further elaboration of *τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν*, of being, after presenting the outcomes of his investigation of *οὐσία*. Aygün distinguishes three different concepts of potentiality in the thought of Aristotle: trivial, temporal, and modal. With the phrase “trivial potentiality” he addresses something which is already actually at work.<sup>662</sup> Affirming that a being has the potentiality to do something that it is actually doing is less impactful, because its actuality shows that very potentiality in action. The temporal concept of potentiality, on the other hand, is the one that compares a present actuality with a past situation: “while addressing a present actuality, it is trivial to infer the present possibility and more reasonable to infer a past possibility.”<sup>663</sup> That is to say that a potentiality could be recognized retrospectively and analytically, Aygün says, “without any need for a connection or a *logos*,”<sup>664</sup> because if something is happening in the present, it necessarily previously contained that possibility. The temporal dimension allows us to understand the possibilities of potentiality. The last kind of potentiality is the modal, a potentiality different from the trivial and the temporal because of its connection with the inherent *λόγος* and consequently with the truth or falsity of a sentence, a topic largely discussed within *On Interpretation*, precisely in

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<sup>661</sup> Sachs, Joe, (trans.) *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 167 - 184 and Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, pp. 176 - 194 (1045b27 - 1052a14)

<sup>662</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 52: “While walking I may say a fortiori that I can walk; I may say that it is possible for a white door to be white. All these would be, not untrue, but trivially true. For these trivial statements use the word «can,» but efface its «logos of being,» that is, its distinction and relation to actuality.”

<sup>663</sup> *Ibi*, p. 53.

<sup>664</sup> *Ibidem*.

chapter seven.<sup>665</sup> In Aygün's opinion, this last type of potentiality arises from Aristotle's discussion of the principle of non-contradiction, this is why Aygün claims that

“if it is impossible for an event to be and not to be at the same time in the same respect, and if the true and falsity of a statement concerning the event depends on the event itself (SE 1, 165a6 - 14), then by necessity the statement will either hold true or be false.”<sup>666</sup>

For what concerns statements that affirm hypotheses whose possibility is verifiable only in the future, the role of contingency hidden in this discussion is even clearer: contingency is a modality that may be applied to the case of the thinking through of potentiality and actuality.<sup>667</sup> So considering the inherent condition of *λόγος* as standard, Aygün deduces that “it must show itself neither in an actual being as such, nor in being at a certain time, but in actually being in a certain way,”<sup>668</sup> namely in motion. As a matter of fact,

“[t]he beings that exhibit the inherence of *logos* will then be understandable not in terms of the option of being and nonbeing, but in terms of both *being* and *having a standard*. In a word, these beings will move.”<sup>669</sup>

Motion shows the *λόγος* of a being, displaying its articulation of potentiality and of actuality. Proposing an interesting comparison with Descartes, Aygün underlines that moving beings, unlike *res extensa*, that is defined only by its potentiality, and unlike *res cogitans*, whose

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<sup>665</sup> See Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., pp. 121 - 123 and Ackrill, John Lloyd, (trans.) *Aristotle. Categories and De Interpretatione*, cit., pp. 47 -49.

<sup>666</sup> Aygün, Ömer, *The Middle Included, Logos in Aristotle*, cit., p. 53.

<sup>667</sup> *Ibi*, p. 55.

<sup>668</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>669</sup> *Ibi*, p. 56.

potentiality is trivial or temporal, express their actuality with their potentiality, so “they will exhibit their potentiality modally, *as potentiality*.”<sup>670</sup> The relevant consequence here is that motion is attesting to the inference of λόγος.<sup>671</sup> Λόγος appears as the exhibition of its inner inherence, its εἶδος, not only for any kind of moving being, but also for any natural moving being, which holds within itself the origin of its motion not accidentally.<sup>672</sup> In doing so, λόγος occurs as relationality, because it is present in the actual interaction of something always situated in a contextualized horizon.

Moreover, Aygün also notices that within *On Interpretation* Aristotle presents not only a distinction between the previously mentioned types of potentiality, but also a differentiation within the modal potentiality itself since potentiality for Aristotle is not only the basis for his concept of motion but also for action.<sup>673</sup> To explain this point better, Aygün recalls some extracts from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*:

“Hence, if rhetoric is «concerned with things about which we deliberate,» and if «no one deliberates about things which cannot become, be, or hold otherwise,» and if, as we saw, all dimensions of time are in a way subject to contingency, and therefore some kind of deliberation, then rhetoric is used with respect to all dimensions of time (*Rh.* I, 2, 1357a).”<sup>674</sup>

What is really interesting for the research here proposed is what seems to be a common topic between *Rhetoric* and *On Interpretation*, where Aristotle addresses the necessity of contingency as well as of deliberation while arguing against necessitarianism, the position according to which sentences referring to future episodes are necessarily already true or false

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<sup>670</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>671</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>672</sup> *Ibi*, p. 58.

<sup>673</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>674</sup> *Ibidem*.

in the present. If it was true, he sustains, “it would not be necessary either to deliberate [*bouleuesthai*] or to take pain [*pragmateuesthai*] by saying that «if we will do so and so, then this will be; but if we will not do it, it will not be».”<sup>675</sup>

Hence, potentiality shows itself as a crucial concept in the comprehension of *λόγος* as inherent standard<sup>676</sup> and this is possible to surmise from a reading of the second essay of the *Organon*. Further developments on this theme would include the consequences of such an approach in the context of *Rhetoric*, where the possibility to articulate multiple types of discourses in order to propose new perspectives is widely discussed.

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<sup>675</sup> *Ibidem*; cfr. Cooke, Harold Percy, and Tredennick, Hugh, (trans.) *Aristotle I. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics*, cit., p. 122: “ὥστε οὔτε βουλευέσθαι δέοι ἂν οὔτε πραγματεύεσθαι, ὡς ἐὰν μὲν τοδὶ ποιήσωμεν, ἔσται τοδί, ἐὰν δὲ μὴ τοδί, οὐκ ἔσται τοδί” (9, 18b31 - 33).

<sup>676</sup> *Ibi*, p. 59: “[...] because standard and fact are neither identical (as assumed in the trivial concept of potentiality) nor simply temporally successive (as assumed by the temporal concept of potentiality in necessitarianism). Potentiality grounds human action and deliberation for the very same reason.”

## Conclusion

Starting from a consideration on its etymology, what type of relation is involved in the term ‘λόγος’? Is it possible to interpret λόγος ontologically? And what would the implications of such an interpretation be for metaphysics? What about man as ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, if we recognize the roots of λόγος deep in a relational dynamic?

These questions were the reasons for undertaking this project and, at the same time, they constantly guided our reflection throughout it. Reading Heidegger’s account of λόγος gave us the opportunity to point out the ontological value of relation, starting from *Dasein*’s hermeneutical disposition toward what is and then moving to a broader comprehension of the relations that are expression of Being itself. The examination of Aristotle’s first treatises of the *Organon* helped us to consider the metaphysical implications entailed in λόγος here understood in his essentially relational aspect by highlighting the importance of relations in how we discuss and relay what it is, through categories as well as through sentences that are expression of our open — hermeneutical — disposition. Through our reasoning, it has been possible to trace the fundamental interconnections that characterize the human being: the ζῶον λόγον ἔχον is a *relational animal*, constantly open to itself and to the world that surrounds it. The human being incessantly sees, listens and affects the relational context in which it dwells. The human being, ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, is constituted by relations and open to relations. It owes its life to relations,<sup>677</sup> it dwells relations, it seeks relations, it brings about the world through relations. Such relations are always meaningful, because of their essentially structured bond.

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<sup>677</sup> The expression “*Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος*,” according to the definition of λόγος here proposed, means that *in principio* was a relation that gathered together in a meaningful way. Gathering together in a meaningful and ordered way is giving life. Gathering together something that differs, establishing in-formation where there are differences, bestows life to something new. Or, in other words, life begins when firstly a structured and therefore meaningful relation is established (see Baracchi’s quote from *Amicizia* in the Appendix).



*Structured relations are — they are what it is, they are the way we say what it is.*

Hence, what about our lives if we assume and if we are responsible for *λόγος* as relation? What about the *way* we *speak*? What about *how* we *tell* something? What about the *context* where we *dwell*? What does it all mean for *how* we *stand* in the world?

Recognizing the relational roots of *ζῶον λόγον ἔχον*, *how* do we *embrace* what it is? *How* do we *relate* it? *How* do we decide to *be*?

If, according to those initial positions exposed by Heidegger, *λόγος* is the expression of being in a certain world and if, according to Aristotle, the utmost importance of *λόγος* discloses and participates in defining the human being in its essential features, then, my dissertation also takes on a specific and quite personal character. In fact, writing in a language that was not my native one has been the same as being born in another world where, through words, I was taught new meanings. Therefore, I changed and, with me, this project. Heidegger's exhortation in the 1924's course is not vain:<sup>678</sup> in these pages, through the reading of Heidegger's and Aristotle's accounts on *λόγος*, I tried to make vital the conceptuality of *λόγος* as relation. In this research, *θεωρία* and *πράξις* are together, influencing one another. There is an *ἔθος* in writing in such a way. A way that cannot be separated from the relation that gathers me together with the philosophical community I was blessed enough to find along in this journey.

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<sup>678</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 12: "You have a genuine task to carry out: not of philosophising but rather of becoming *attentive*, from where you are situated, to the conceptuality of science, to really come to *grips* with it, and to pursue it in such a way that the *research fulfillment* of conceptuality becomes *vital*. It is not a matter of studying all of the scientific theories that periodically appear! By paying attention to the proper fulfilment of a specific science, you attain a *legitimate, proper, and serious relation to the matter of your science*. Not in such a way that you can apply Aristotelian concepts, but rather in doing for your science what Aristotle did in his place and in the context of his research, namely, *to see and to determine the matters with the same originality and legitimacy*. I simply have the task of providing the opportunity for Aristotle to put the matter before you" [author's emphasis].

## **Appendix. Λόγος and systems: an ontological comparison**<sup>679</sup>

It is entirely correct and completely in order to say, “You can't do anything with philosophy.” The only mistake is to believe that with this, the judgment concerning philosophy is at an end. For a little epilogue arises in the form of a counterquestion: even if *we* can't do anything with it, may not philosophy in the end do something *with us*, provided that we engage ourselves with it?

M. Heidegger, author's emphasis<sup>680</sup>

“Through our eyes, the universe is perceiving itself. Through our ears, the universe is listening to its harmonies. We are the witnesses through which the universe becomes conscious of its glory, of its magnificence.”

Alan W. Watts

Through the definition of *λόγος* discussed in the previous chapters, the main point I attempted to stress was its relational connotation, where relations are conceived in a structural, unitarian and dynamic way. Because of these features, a comparison with the concept of “system,” pivotal issue in many contemporary fields and often described employing similar terms, is appropriate.

Since its first appearance in the scientific scenery, systemic thought brought from within its considerations an implicit ontology, essentially based on relations, structure, and unity. In his 1968 work, von Bertalanffy defines systems as:

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<sup>679</sup> The outcomes here proposed on *λόγος* and systems' ontology were presented at the AIRS 2017 National Conference, whose proceedings will be published by Springer. This appendix might be interpreted as the ultimate synthesis of this project since, moving from a detailed analysis of *λόγος* as relation, it is now possible to compare this account with other philosophical issues such as, for example, the systemic one, and contribute to a deepening of some topics discussed in the contemporary context. Due to the synthetic character of this appendix, some of the quotations employed henceforth might be already present in previous chapters.

<sup>680</sup> Fried, Gregory, Bolt, Richard (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 13 - 14; Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 14: “Es ist völlig richtig und in der besten Ordnung: »Man kann mit der Philosophie nichts anfangen«. Verkehrt ist nur, zu meinen, damit sei das Urteil über die Philosophie beendet. Es kommt nämlich noch ein kleiner Nachtrag in der Gestalt einer Gegenfrage, ob, wenn schon *wir* mit ihr nichts anfangen können, die Philosophie am Ende nicht *mit uns* etwas anfängt, gesetzt, daß wir uns auf sie einlassen” [author's emphasis].

“[...] sets of elements standing in interaction.”<sup>681</sup>

Nevertheless, while describing the aims of a general system theory and proposing some possible progresses, he does not focus on the implications of such ontological assumptions. Most recently, the Research Group on Systems Thought at the Catholic University in Milan has provided many suggestions on a metaphysical reflection as well as on some ontological explanations of systems.<sup>682</sup> However, few are the inquiries specifically addressed to the importance of those structured relations that are ontologically constitutive of systems.<sup>683</sup> Moreover, even the definition of relation, especially structured relations, is not an object of investigation in spite of its pivotal role in such thought. The principal aim of this appendix is to discuss these points, comparing a systemic ontology with some Greek terms taken up through Heidegger’s interpretation. In such a proposal, incompleteness will be advanced as a constitutive element of this particular ontological perspective.

According to its etymology, ontology is preliminarily a study of what is, it focuses on what is indicated while affirming that there is something, that something *is*. Even though the employment of this term is quite recent, it is usually through ontology that many philosophical concepts from Ancient philosophy are investigated. However, Heidegger warns of the risks of an ontology carried out in a traditional way. In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, he claims:

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<sup>681</sup> von Bertalanffy, Ludwig, *General System Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications*, New York: George Brziller, 1969, p. 55.

<sup>682</sup> See the three volumes edited by Urbani Ulivi, Lucia, (ed.) *Strutture di Mondo. Il Pensiero Sistemico come Specchio di Una Realtà Complessa*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010, 2013, 2015, especially the contributions from Urbani Ulivi, Lucia, Giuliani, Alessandro, Minati, Gianfranco, Vitiello, Giuseppe, Del Giudice, Emilio.

<sup>683</sup> For example, the volume edited by Hooker, Cliff, *Philosophy of Complex Systems*, Oxford - Amsterdam - Waltham: Elsevier, 2011 represents a notable effort in showing the “revolutionary” contribution of systems thought, but it focuses only on sciences and on philosophy of science, without considering other possible implications in Humanities.

“The term «ontology» [...] designates the development of the traditional doctrine of beings into a philosophical discipline and a branch of the philosophical system. But the traditional doctrine is the academic analysis and ordering of what for Plato and Aristotle, and again for Kant, was a question, though to be sure a question that was no longer originary. [...] In this case «ontology» means the effort to put Being into words, and to do so by passing through the question of how it stands with Being [not just with beings as such].”<sup>684</sup>

Even though he highlights what the negative side of a traditional ontology could be, he confirms the possibility of a new one that would really be attentive to Being and not only to beings, as has, from Heidegger’s perspective, happened in the history of Western metaphysics. In the same context, Heidegger continues:

“We ask the question—How does it stand with Being? What is the meaning of Being?—not in order to compose an ontology in the traditional style [...]. The point is to restore the historical *Dasein* of human beings—and this also always means our ownmost future *Dasein*, in the whole of the history that is allotted to us—back to the power of Being that is to be opened up originally.”<sup>685</sup>

Not only is a *different* ontology desirable, but this should also consider the “historical *Dasein*,” which is not thought strictly in its past but rather in its present, where this present is understood as the pivotal intersection between what was and the possibilities of what could be. It is crucial to

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<sup>684</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 46; Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 32

<sup>685</sup> *Ibidem*; Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 32: “Wir fragen die Frage: Wie steht es um das Sein? Welches ist der Sinn von Sein? *nicht*, um eine Ontologie überlieferten Stils aufzustellen oder gar kritisch ihren früheren Versuchen die Fehler vorzurechnen. Es geht um ein ganz Anderes. Es gilt, das geschichtliche *Dasein* des Menschen und d. h. immer unser eigenstes künftiges, im Ganzen der uns bestimmten Geschichte in die Macht des ursprünglich zu eröffnenden Seins zurückzufügen [...]” [author’s emphasis].

notice that here Heidegger presents a connection between *Dasein*, Being, and its originary openness.

The challenge of thinking a new ontology is in asking how it should be. Shall we understand it as wholly knowable and determinable? In other words, will the new ontology needed to describe reality in its shades be considered a completable one or not?

The term “complete” derives from the Latin *completus*, past participle of *complere*, meaning “to fill up,” then employed to indicate “fulfill, finish a task.” Something complete is something accomplished, thus what contributes to a satisfaction, to a balanced state. When something is complete it is more understandable, since its constitutive elements are stable and entirely defined. What is complete is somehow closed, confined. In this sense, is systems ontology a complete ontology?

In *Metaphysics* Z 17, Aristotle, who in this book discusses *οὐσία* meant as the main connotation of being,<sup>686</sup> states

“But then there is what is composed of something in such a way that the whole is one, in the manner not of a heap but of a syllable—and the syllable is not the letters, nor are B plus A the same as the syllable BA [...]; therefore there is something that is the syllable, not only the letters, the vowel and the consonant, but also something else.”<sup>687</sup>

This claim has been usually adopted in comparison with the statement of Anderson, Noble Prize winner for physics in 1977, who attested:

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<sup>686</sup> Sachs, Joe, *Aristotle. Metaphysics*, cit., pp. 117 - 153; Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica* (1028a - 1041b).

<sup>687</sup> *Ibi*, p. 152 and Jaeger, Werner, (ed.) *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, cit., pp. 164 - 165 (1041b11 - 19): “—ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ ἐκ τινος σύνθετον οὕτως ὥστε ἐν εἶναι τὸ πᾶν, [ἂν] μὴ ὡς σωρὸς ἀλλ’ ὡς ἡ συλλαβὴ—ἡ δὲ συλλαβὴ οὐκ ἔστι τὰ στοιχεῖα, οὐδὲ τῷ βα ταὐτὸ τὸ β καὶ α, οὐδ’ ἡ σὰρξ τῦρ καὶ γῆ (διαλυθέντων γὰρ μὲν οὐκέτι ἔστιν, οἶον ἡ σὰρξ καὶ ἡ συλλαβὴ, τὰ δε στοιχεῖα ἔστι, καὶ τὸ τῦν καὶ ἡ γῆ). ἔστιν ἄρα τι ἡ συλλαβὴ, οὐ μόνον τὰ στοιχεῖα τὸ φωνῆεν καὶ ἄφωνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἕτερόν τι, καὶ ἡ σὰρξ οὐ μόνον πῦρ καὶ γῆ ἢ τὸ θερμὸν καὶ ψυχρὸν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἕτερόν τι.”

“More is different.”<sup>688</sup>

Both these quotes aim at highlighting the impossibility of finding, inside the components, those linear consequences of what *is*. Hence, what is deducible, combined with the above considerations on ontology, is that a systemic ontology cannot only be attentive to the single being, or to any kind of thing present in front of us, but rather it should consider the multiple levels through which reality presents itself, the hierarchical structure of that reality.<sup>689</sup> Thus, given the central role of structural relations it seems possible to affirm that systems are based on a certain kind of relational ontology.

Is there in the history of philosophy a concept that describes structures, relations, and their dynamics? Greek thought names it *λόγος*. In this sense, Gregory Bateson speaks about the “pattern which connects”<sup>690</sup> and, following his reasoning, Baracchi suggests a sort of continuity from the concept of system, *σύστημα*, to that of *λόγος*.<sup>691</sup> System here indicates something “connected with itself and cohesive:”<sup>692</sup> systems are characterized by an excess due to the existence of internal and mutual relations among its parts.<sup>693</sup> Thus, it guarantees to the system “a dynamics, through the presence of states, and provides account for the possible complexity of its behavior.”<sup>694</sup> Whereas *λόγος* is usually

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<sup>688</sup> Anderson, Philip W., “More is Different. Broken Symmetry and the Nature of Hierarchical Structure of Science,” in *Science*, New Series, Vol. 177, No. 4047 (Aug. 4, 1972), p. 393.

<sup>689</sup> The adjective «hierarchical» is not adopted here with a connotation of value in which a higher level is ontologically superior to the lower one or vice versa: it only recognizes the presence of a relational structure.

<sup>690</sup> Bateson, Gregory, *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*, New York: E. P. Dutton, 1979, p. 8.

<sup>691</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “The Syntax of Life: Gregory Bateson and the «Platonic View,»” in *Research in Phenomenology* 43 (2013), pp. 204 - 219, see especially pp. 206 - 212.

<sup>692</sup> *Ibi*, p. 206.

<sup>693</sup> Mari, Luca, “Qualche Riflessione sulla Retroazione,” in *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica* 4 (2011), Milano: Vita e Pensiero, p. 586.

<sup>694</sup> *Ibidem* [my translation].

translated as discourse, sentence or reason, but its origin refers to the verb λέγειν meaning “a connection that protects and preserves: linking, gathering, articulating so as to hold the differing together while saving it as such, as differing.”<sup>695</sup> Consequently, Baracchi concludes, λόγος “bespeaks relation, correlation, a fitting together from which arise configurations of meaning, a union that literally makes sense, brings sense forth and lets it be illuminated.”<sup>696</sup> Given these considerations, she underlines a similarity between organisms, i.e., living systems, and discourse and reason:

“This generative arrangement, which is the bearer and locus of sense, equally defines linguistic articulation, the work of rationality, and the organized structures (whether internal or external, whether visible or invisible) of life.”<sup>697</sup>

Hence, structured relationships, ordered and organized, are essential to life itself. Elsewhere, Baracchi concisely states:

“Bestowing order means giving life.”<sup>698</sup>

The world surrounding us presents itself in a way that

“the hanging together of the world is a matter of communing and communications: the world conveys itself to itself, speaks to itself, as it were, pervaded by the ripples of information at once (in)forming and transforming it.”<sup>699</sup>

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<sup>695</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “The Syntax of Life: Gregory Bateson and the «Platonic View,»” cit., p. 211.

<sup>696</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>697</sup> *Ibidem* (italics mine).

<sup>698</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Amicizia*, cit., p. 24 [my translation].

<sup>699</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “The Syntax of Life: Gregory Bateson and the «Platonic View,»” cit., p. 206.

It seems that the specific way in which what is reaches our senses, which is also *our* way of being, is characterized by relations, namely structures, and movement, namely dynamic changing. These two instances are both connotations of the Greek term *λόγος*, which shows itself to be the ordered appearance of being, the in-formed way.<sup>700</sup>

More clearly,

“[...] it is precisely in this pulsating and rippling motility that the world emerges, as the body of the all: one and choral, the fabric of unitary yet vibrant becoming — above all, alive.”<sup>701</sup>

Minati, trying to explain the appearance of independent organisms from the physical point of view, clarifies that such an event is possible thanks to what he calls the rupture of the symmetry,

“[...] considering all auto-organized phenomena as a consequence of the quantum phenomenon of symmetry breaking.”<sup>702</sup>

The symmetry discussed here is one related to those equations describing the dynamic of the system:<sup>703</sup> “when the symmetry is spontaneously broken what is observable is that the state of the system presents a certain

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<sup>700</sup> For a more detailed examination of this issue, see Urbani Ulivi, Lucia, “Approfondimenti Sistemici. Seminari e *Privatissimum*” and Bartolini, Elena, “Lavori Sistemici. Confronti in un *Privatissimum*” both in *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica* 3 (2014), pp. 453 - 465 and pp. 687 - 695.

<sup>701</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “The Syntax of Life: Gregory Bateson and the «Platonic View,»” cit., p. 206.

<sup>702</sup> Minati, Gianfranco, “Sistemi: Origini e Prospettive” in Urbani Ulivi, L. (ed.), *Strutture di Mondo. Il Pensiero Sistemico come Specchio di Una Realtà Complessa*, Bologna: Il Mulino, I (2010), p. 36 [my translation].

<sup>703</sup> Cfr. Vitiello, Giuseppe, “Dissipazione e coerenza nella dinamica cerebrale” in Urbani Ulivi, L. (ed.), *Strutture di Mondo. Il Pensiero Sistemico come Specchio di Una Realtà Complessa*, cit., pp. 111 - 113.



kind of order.”<sup>704</sup> The same concept of information is pivotal here, because, as recalled by Vitiello,

“to the order is associated a higher degree of information [...] which is not present in the case of a symmetrical configuration.”<sup>705</sup>

In systems thought, information is not conceived as a simple message, but rather as the element that literally in-forms, that is to say that allows the emergence of a new structure. If, thanks to new information, the symmetry is broken, the position of every element is not exchangeable: its place is significant for the order of the system, it is crucial to distinguish it from the others.<sup>706</sup> But, if the emergence of a new structure is possible, this would entail that there is the *possibility* for unpredicted configurations. That is to say, there would be the possibility of actualizing new potentialities.

*Φύσις* is the Greek word indicating “the event of *standing forth*, arising from the concealed and thus enabling the concealed to take its stand for the first time.”<sup>707</sup> According to the translation proposed by Heidegger, this Greek term refers to the force through which beings become observable, taken out of the concealment. In the *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, Heidegger exhorts us to consider *φύσει ὄν* as

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<sup>704</sup> *Ibidem* [my translation].

<sup>705</sup> *Ibidem* [my translation].

<sup>706</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>707</sup> Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 16; Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 17: “Φύσις ist das Entstehen, aus dem Verborgenen sich heraus — und dieses so erst in den Stand bringen” [author’s emphasis].

“a being that is what it is from out of itself on the basis of its genuine possibilities,”<sup>708</sup>

The break of the symmetry, through the introduction of information, has as consequences order and life, i.e., *λόγος*. Only starting from an incomplete ontology, in which there is no given order yet, is such an emergence possible. Only where there is power, that is to say no closure or completeness, can boundaries be traced, can order be established, could life be. But, at the same time, once instituted, this order persists. *Φύσις* and *λόγος*: (re)newal and maintenance. *Λόγος* is the here and now display of *φύσις*. *Φύσις* is that unpredicted source of beings' appearances. Both are sides of what is, aspects of Being.<sup>709</sup> As a matter of fact, considering its etymology, one of the ways in which *λόγος* can be understood is to mean “to make manifest,” “to allow to appear.”<sup>710</sup> In this sense “it can only be understood if its essential relation to φύσις is borne in mind.”<sup>711</sup> More clearly: “the power which emerges from concealment must be gathered together, one.”<sup>712</sup>

In this sense, *λόγος*-discourse is founded on *Λόγος*-Being: making something manifest in our human verbal or corporeal expression is

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<sup>708</sup> Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, cit., p. 33; Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., pp. 45 - 46: “[...] ein Seiendes, das von sich selbst her, aufgrund seiner eigenen Möglichkeiten ist, was es ist.”

<sup>709</sup> See Fried, Gregory, Polt, Richard, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics*, cit., p. 15: “*Phusis* is Being itself, by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable,” and p. 145: “*Logos* is constant gathering, the gatheredness of beings that stands in itself, that is, Being;” Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 40, Einführung in die Metaphysik*, cit., p. 139: “*Λόγος* ist die ständige Sammlung, die in sich stehende Gesammeltheit des Seienden, d. h. das Sein.”

<sup>710</sup> Fay, Thomas A., *Heidegger: the Critique of Logic*, cit., p. 95.

<sup>711</sup> *Ibidem*; here there is a clear reference to Heraclitus fragment 50.

<sup>712</sup> For what concerns the relation between *λόγος* and *οὐσία*, see also Heidegger's words in Metcalf, Robert D., Tanzer, Mark B., (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Basic concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 15: “The *λόγος* as *ὀρισμός* addresses beings in their *οὐσία*, in their being there;” Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1919 - 1944, Band 18, Grundbegriffe der Aristotelischen Philosophie*, cit., p. 18: “Der *λόγος* als *ὀρισμός* spricht das Seiende in seiner *οὐσία*, in seinem Dasein an.”

possible due to the previous existence of such a dynamic displaying of *φύσις* into *λόγος*, conceived as the ordered but unpredictable interrelation surrounding us. Hence, language, not only in the specific connotation of speech but also in its wider meaning,<sup>713</sup> is possible because man, defined as *ζῶον λογὸν ἐχὼν*, is the one capable of observing worldly interrelations and is able to interfere with them, changing the constraints or creating new ones. Therefore, as attested by Baracchi,

“In its most basic sense, well exceeding the exercise of the human calculative capacities, rationality is relationality, the meaningful bonding that discloses aspects inaccessible through the examination on unrelated components.”<sup>714</sup>

*Λόγος* is not only reason, if by it what is meant is definite predictable knowledge. It is rather the mediation, the *ratio* as *proportio*, of the multiple and various appearances of beings.

From the premises of such an ontology, I choose two terms to indicate the main consequences for the interpretation of the human in this sense, inspired by the work of Baracchi<sup>715</sup> and Urbani Ulivi:<sup>716</sup> architecture and unicity. If systems ontology is not closed in a sort of completeness, it

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<sup>713</sup> Brogan, Walter A., Warnek, Peter, (trans.) *Martin Heidegger. Aristotle's Metaphysics Θ 1 - 3: On the Essence and Actuality of Force*, cit., p. 103: “[...] this is the structure we call «*language*», speaking; but not understood as vocalizing, rather in the sense of a speaking that says something, means something [...]. *Λόγος* is *discourse*, the gathering laying open, unifying *making something known* [*Kundmachen*]; and indeed above all in the broad sense which also includes pleading, making a request, praying, questioning, wishing, commanding and like;” Heidegger, Martin, *Gesamtausgabe II. Abteilung: Vorlesungen 1923 - 1944, Band 33, Aristoteles, Metaphysik Θ 1 - 3. Von Wesen und Wirklichkeit der Kraft*, cit., pp. 121 - 122: “[Ein solches Sammeln, das nun die Bezüge der Bezogenen und damit diese selbst, also die einzelnen Dinge einsammelt, zugänglich macht und bereithält und so zugleich beherrschen läßt] ist das Gefüge, das wir *>Sprache<* nennen, das Sprechen; aber dieses nicht so sehr verstanden als Verlautbarung, sondern im Sinne das Sprechenden Etwas-sagens, Etwas-meinens [...]. *Λόγος* is die *Rede*, das sammelnde Darlegen, einigende *Kundmachen* von etwas; und zwar in dem weiten Sinne zunächst, der auch das Bitten, die Bittrede, das Gebet, das Fragen, das Wünschen, das Befehlen und dergleichen umfaßt” [author’s emphasis].

<sup>714</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, “The Syntax of Life: Gregory Bateson and the «Platonic View,» cit., p. 211.

<sup>715</sup> Baracchi, Claudia, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, cit..

<sup>716</sup> Urbani Ulivi, Lucia, “La Struttura dell’Umano. Linee di un’Antropologia Sistemica,”cit..

means that through its own agency and freedom, namely its *ἦθος*, the human builds one's own being, becoming a unique individual.

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