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THE ORIGIN OF THE OPPOSITION
πτῶσις ὀρθή (εὐθεῖα) – πτώσεις πλάγιαι (*CASUS RECTUS – CASUS OBLIQUI*) IN THE LINGUISTICS OF ANCIENT GREECE

Abstract

The opposition πτῶσις ὀρθή (εὐθεῖα) / πτώσεις πλάγιαι, which with time began to express the contrast between the nominative and the oblique cases (*casus rectus – casus obliqui*) in the grammatical tradition, first appeared in the Greek reflection on language most probably in the circle of the Stoic doctrine, where it was used to determine the meanings of nouns perceived from the point of view of their constituting elements of the predicative-argumentative structures which formed propositions (ἀξιώματα). What justifies this statement is the fact that in the framework of the Stoic dialectics concepts denoted by terms ὀρθή πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις were unambiguously situated in the sphere of the linguistically expressed content (τὰ σημαινόμενα, τὰ λεκτά) and used consistently in connection with the concept of κατηγόρημα ('predicate'), that is the predicative content expressed by the verb. The analysis of the preserved records demonstrates that the term ὀρθὴ πτῶσις had a meaning of the subjective predicate argument (disregarding the value of the case of the noun which denoted it), whereas πτώσεις πλάγιαι had the meaning of the non-subjective arguments implied by multi-argument predicates. Therefore, in the Stoic dialectics the opposition ὀρθὴ πτῶσις / πλάγιαι πτώσεις reflected the hierarchical differentiation of the status of the content expressed by the nouns perceived as arguments of the predicate within the proposition. These terms gained the meaning of the nominative and the oblique cases, respectively, only in the circle of Hellenistic philologists, whose research and analyses were to a greater extent focused on the formal side of linguistic signs (words). Those scholars used the terminological apparatus of the Stoic school, while introducing there some vital modifications, however. With reference to the issue which interests us here, the modification consisted in the identification of the Stoic ὀρθὴ πτῶσις with its most frequent language exponent, i.e. the noun in the nominative, and following the same principle, of the Stoic πλάγιαι πτώσεις with nouns in the oblique cases. The Hellenistic philological school should probably also be ascribed the introduction of the term εὐθεῖα πτῶσις as a name of the nominative synonymous with ὀρθὴ πτῶσις, as there are no sufficient premises on which to attribute the use of the adjective εὐθύς as an index of that case already to Aristotle.

The distinction between the casus rectus (i.e. nominative) and the oblique cases (i.e. all the remaining ones) is commonly used in traditional and structural linguistics.[1] This distinction was already known to Roman grammarians in Antiquity, the reflex of which is a frequent reference to this division with the help of Latin terms: *casus rectus – casus obliqui*. In turn, Roman grammar was, as is known, largely secondary with regard to Greek grammar. It is thus not surprising that the Latin attributes *rectus* and *obliquus* are calques of Greek words, ὀρθός or εὐθύς (lit. 'straight'), and πλάγιος (lit. 'oblique, transverse'), respectively, which began to be used in the Greek grammatical tradition to express the aforementioned opposition between the casus rectus (nominative) and the oblique cases.

The use of the terms ὀρθός and εὐθύς in the function of determiners of the nominative in the Greek grammatical theory is documented by a well-known Τέχνη γραμματική, attributed to the Alexandrian grammarian Dionysius Thrax (170–90 BC), which contains the most complete exposition of the Greek word grammar. In the chapter characterising the cases (πτώσεις) as one of the morphological features (παρεπόμενα) of words belonging to the class of names (ὀνόματα) we read:

D.T. 31, 5–32, 1: Πτώσεις ὀνομάτων εἰσὶ πέντε· ὀρθή, γενική, δοτική, αἰτιατική, κλητική. Λέγεται δὲ ἡ μὲν ὀρθὴ ὀνομαστικὴ καὶ εὐθεῖα, ἡ δὲ γενικὴ κτητική τε καὶ πατρική, ἡ δὲ δοτικὴ ἐπισταλτική, ἡ δὲ αἰτιατικὴ † κατ' αἰτιατικήν, ἡ δὲ κλητικὴ προσαγορευτική.

"There are five cases of the names: ὀρθή, γενική, δοτική, αἰτιατική, κλητική. The ὀρθή case is also called ὀνομαστική and εὐθεῖα, the γενική case [is also referred to as] κτητική and πατρική, the δοτική case [is also called] ἐπισταλτική, the αἰτιατική case † according to αἰτιατική, whereas κλητική [is also referred to as] προσαγορευτική."

Although the listed and named πτώσεις were not characterised more closely or illustrated with any examples here, it is clear that these are indeed grammatical cases. It results not only from the entirety of the later tradition, unambiguously identifying the πτώσεις mentioned in the above passage with the grammatical cases,[2] but also from the fact that the status of πτώσεις as inflectional cases corresponds with the status of the remaining παρεπόμενα ὀνόματος, which in the text of the Τέχνη identify various other properties of words in this class, including both of their remaining inflectional features, i.e. genders (γένη) and numbers (ἀριθμοί). Besides, in this text πτώσεις were also attributed – as one of the παρεπόμενα – to words belonging to the class of ἄρθρον and ἀντωνυμία (cf. 62, 1 and 5; 64, 1; 67, 3–6), and the exemplification provided

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[1] The vocative is often excluded from this distinction, due to its specific status of an exponent of the element which does not belong to the syntactic structure of the sentence, but fulfils the (impressive) function of an appellative, and thus constitutes a means used for accomplishing certain objectives found at the level of the sending and receiving strategy of speech.

[2] Cf. e.g. Schol. D.T. 230, 21; A.D. Synt. I, 103 (86, 9–10); 104 (87, 6–7).

there does not leave any doubts as to their identification with the grammatical cases.[3]

For the same reasons it is also beyond doubt that the case named (πτῶσις) ὀρθή in the quoted passage is indeed the nominative.[4] Further on in the passage this case was also given two other, secondary, names, of which one is the term (πτῶσις) εὐθεῖα[5] synonymous with (πτῶσις) ὀρθή. With regard to the other (i.e. the oblique) cases the term (πτώσεις) πλάγιαι was in fact not used here, however, the functioning of this term as a determiner of the oblique cases in the Greek grammatical tradition is confirmed both by the scholiasts[6] and the treatises of Apollonius Dyscolus.[7] The indicated terms, in fact similarly as the term πτῶσις itself, were, however, used also in philosophical texts dealing with language questions which preceded the formation of the grammatical tradition in the circles of Hellenistic philologists, and it turns out that the terms discussed in these texts had a definitely different meaning. This particularly concerns the Stoics' texts.

The achievements of the Stoics in the field of Greek linguistics are commonly considered to be very significant, however, at the same time identifying views of the representatives of this school on concrete language issues causes huge interpretation problems. This results mainly from the fact that the linguistic conceptions of the Stoics can be studied only second- or third-handedly because, in principle, no texts which would allow for a direct access have been preserved. The major source of knowledge about the subject are *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laërtius[8] (D.L.), to a smaller extent the scholia to Τέχνη γραμματική by Dionysius Thrax as well as other later works, as e.g. Ammonius' commentary[9] to the *Hermeneutics* by Aristotle. Due to the state of preservation of the Stoic writings it is also impossible to establish what the contribution of particular representatives of this trend to its intellectual output was. It is commonly believed that most of the basic theses and views observed in the Stoic school were formulated by its founder, Zeno of Kitium (ca. 336–264) and Chrysippos of Soloi (ca. 280–205), who consolidated and systematised the Stoic doctrine, conveying it in over 700 books.

A major factor which needs to be taken into consideration while interpreting the Stoic linguistic doctrine is the place of linguistic issues in the general framework of the philosophical exposition accepted by the representatives of this school. As Diogenes Laërtius, following the ἐπιτομή by Diocles Magnes (1st c. BC),[10] certifies (7, 39), the Stoics distinguished three basic branches of

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[3] E.g. 67, 3–4: Πτώσεις πρωτοτύπων [*scil.* ἀντωνυμιῶν] μὲν ὀρθῆς ἐγώ σύ ἴ, γενικῆς ἐμοῦ σποῦ οὖ, δοτικῆς ἐμοί σοί οἷ, αἰτιατικῆς ἐμέ σέ ἕ, κλητικῆς σύ.

[4] See. *supra* footnote 3; cf. also e.g. A.D. Synt. I 137 (112, 17).

[5] See also e.g. A.D. Synt. I, 13 (15, 10); 80 (67, 11); 83 (71, 2); 102 (85, 14); 136 (112, 4).

[6] See e.g. Schol. D.T. 383, 22–36.

[7] See e.g. A.D. Synt. I, 15 (18, 4); 80 (68, 8); 125 (105, 4); 136 (112, 2).

[8] 3rd c. AD

[9] 6th c. AD

[10] In turn, the source of knowledge about the Stoic study of language was for Diocles most probably the lost treatise Περὶ φωνῆς by Diogenes of Babylon (240–150); cf. SVF, III, *Diog. Babyl.* 21, 22.

philosophy, namely, physics, ethics, and logic, and the latter, i.e. logic, was divided into rhetoric and dialectics (D.L. 7, 41). The scope of the Stoic dialectics was reported by Diogenes Laërtius as follows:

D.L. 7, 43–44: Τὴν διαλεκτικὴν διαιρεῖσθαι εἴς τε τὸν περὶ τῶν σημαινομένων καὶ τῆς φωνῆς τόπον· καὶ τὸν μὲν τῶν σημαινομένων εἴς τε τὸν περὶ τῶν φαντασιῶν τόπον καὶ τῶν ἐκ τούτων ὑφισταμένων λεκτῶν ἀξιωμάτων καὶ αὐτοτελῶν καὶ κατηγορημάτων καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων ὀρθῶν καὶ ὑπτίων καὶ γενῶν καὶ εἰδῶν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ λόγων καὶ τρόπων καὶ συλλογισμῶν καὶ τῶν παρὰ τὴν φωνὴν καὶ τὰ πράγματα σοφισμάτων. [...] Εἶναι δὲ τῆς διαλεκτικῆς ἴδιον τόπον καὶ τὸν προειρημένον περὶ αὐτῆς τῆς φωνῆς, ἐν ᾧ δείκνυται ἡ ἐγγράμματος φωνὴ καὶ τίνα τὰ τοῦ λόγου μέρη, καὶ περὶ σολοικισμοῦ καὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ ποιημάτων καὶ ἀμφιβολιῶν καὶ ἐμμελοῦς φωνῆς καὶ περὶ μουσικῆς καὶ περὶ ὅρων κατά τινας καὶ διαιρέσεων καὶ λέξεων.

"[According to the Stoics] dialectics is divided into a part dealing with what is signified [through the medium of language] and a part discussing language alone. The part which concerns what is denoted through language is divided into a section examining images and a part concerning the content of utterances based on them, [i.e.] propositions, and [other] complete [content of utterances] as well as predicates and straight and inverted [content of utterances] similar to them, and also genera and species, and likewise arguments, tropes, syllogisms, and sophisms regarding language or [the denoted] objects. [...] There also exists a separate part of dialectics, the one which was mentioned above, namely a part dealing with language alone, within the framework of which the written language and parts of speech are explained; this part is also concerned with solecisms, barbarisms, poetic language, ambiguities, language melodiousness, music as well as, according to some, with definitions, divisions and style."

The presented list of the subjects taken up within dialectics draws attention to the clear separation of the issues concerning that which is signified by language from the issues relating to language as such, and thus the separation of issues connected with the signified aspect of linguistic signs (i.e. with the denoted content) from the issues connected with the signifying aspect (i.e. the linguistic form). This separation is reflected in the division of dialectics into two principal parts (τόποι), of which one treats περὶ τῶν σημαινομένων (of the signified things), the other, on the other hand, περὶ τῆς φωνῆς (of language alone). We also note that one of the terms analysed by us, i.e. ὀρθός, appears as a determiner of one of the elements constituting the object of studies of the part of dialectics which does not deal with language alone, but with what is signified via language. These elements are the "predicates and the content of the utterances similar to them," out of which some were described precisely as ὀρθά ('straight'), others, on the other hand, as ὕπτια ('inverted'). Another passage quoted below from the text by Diogenes Laërtius throws a little more light on the subject of what these "predicates" are and what their place among the other type of content signified via language is:

D.L. 7, 63[11]: Ἐν δὲ τῷ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ τῶν σημαινομένων τόπῳ τέτακται ὁ περὶ λεκτῶν καὶ αὐτοτελῶν καὶ ἀξιωμάτων καὶ συλλογισμῶν λόγος καὶ ὁ περὶ ἐλλιπῶν τε καὶ κατηγορημάτων καὶ ὀρθῶν καὶ ὑπτίων. Φασὶ δὲ [τὸ] λεκτὸν εἶναι τὸ κατὰ φαντασίαν λογικὴν ὑφιστάμενον. τῶν δὲ λεκτῶν τὰ μὲν λέγουσιν εἶναι αὐτοτελῆ οἱ Στωικοί, τὰ δ᾽ ἐλλιπῆ μὲν οὖν ἐστι τὰ ἀναπάρτιστον ἔχοντα τὴν ἐκφοράν, οἷον Γράφει· ἐπιζητοῦμεν γάρ, «Τίς;» αὐτοτελῆ δ᾽ ἐστὶ τὰ ἀπηρτισμένην ἔχοντα τὴν ἐκφοράν, οἷον Γράφει Σωκράτης. ἐν μὲν οὖν τοῖς ἐλλιπέσι λεκτοῖς τέτακται τὰ κατηγορήματα, ἐν δὲ τοῖς αὐτοτελέσι τὰ ἀξιώματα καὶ οἱ συλλογισμοὶ καὶ τὰ ἐρωτήματα καὶ τὰ πύσματα.

"In the part about objects and about what is signified there is situated the study about the content of utterances, both in terms of the complete type, i.e. propositions and syllogisms, and the content of incomplete utterances, i.e. predicates, both the straight and the inverted ones.

The content of the utterance is said to be that which is based on the mental image. The Stoics claim that some content of utterances is complete, other, revealed in an incomplete way, is defective, as e.g. (*s/he*) *writes*, since we ask 'Who?.' On the other hand, the complete [content of utterances] is that which is revealed in a complete way, as e.g. *Socrates writes*. Thus, the group of incomplete content types covers predicates, whereas among the complete ones there are propositions, syllogisms, questions, and inquiries."

The quoted passage demonstrates that the basic term referring to what is signified (τὰ σημαινόμενα), is τὸ λεκτόν – 'the content of the utterance.' Depending on the degree of its autonomy (completeness) referents of this term are divided into the 'complete content of utterances' (τὰ λεκτὰ αὐτοτελῆ), within which one can find propositions (τὰ ἀξιώματα), syllogisms (οἱ συλλογισμοὶ), questions (τὰ ἐρωτήματα), and inquiries (τὰ πύσματα), and the 'incomplete content of utterances' (τὰ λεκτὰ ἐλλιπῆ), which covers 'straight' (ὀρθά) and 'inverted' (ὕπτια) 'predicates' (τὰ κατηγορήματα).[12] The attached exemplification shows that the exponents of the 'incomplete content of utterances' (τὰ λεκτὰ ἐλλιπῆ), constituted by 'predicates' (τὰ κατηγορήματα), are verbs. And thus the 'predicate' (τὸ κατηγόρημα) is the content expressed by the verb, i.e. the meaning of the verb. In turn, the information concerning the difference between the 'straight predicates' (τὰ ὀρθὰ κατηγορήματα) and the 'inverted predicates' (τὰ ὕπτια κατηγορήματα) can be taken from another passage of Diogenes' work:

D.L. 7, 64–65[13]: Ἔστι δὲ τὸ κατηγόρημα τὸ κατά τινος ἀγορευόμενον ἢ πρᾶγμα συντακτὸν περί τινος ἢ τινῶν, ὡς οἱ περὶ Ἀπολλόδωρόν φασιν, ἢ λεκτὸν ἐλλιπὲς συντακτὸν ὀρθῇ πτώσει πρὸς ἀξιώματος γένεσιν. τῶν δὲ κατηγορημάτων τὰ μέν ἐστι συμβάματα, οἷον τὸ διὰ πέτρας πλεῖν... †. καὶ τὰ μέν ἐστι τῶν κατηγορημάτων ὀρθά, ἃ δ᾽ ὕπτια, ἃ δ᾽

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[11] = SVF, II, 181 (*Diocles Magnes apud Diog. Laërt.* 7, 63).

[12] For more information about the concept of λεκτόν (among others, about its ontological status) see Long (1971).

[13] = SVF, II, 183 (*Diocles Magnes apud Diog. Laërt.* 7, 64).

οὐδέτερα. ὀρθὰ μὲν οὖν ἐστι τὰ συντασσόμενα μιᾷ τῶν πλαγίων πτώσεων πρὸς κατηγορήματος γένεσιν, οἷον Ἀκούει, Ὁρᾷ, Διαλέγεται· ὕπτια δ' ἐστὶ τὰ συντασσόμενα τῷ παθητικῷ μορίῳ, οἷον Ἀκούομαι, Ὁρῶμαι· οὐδέτερα δ' ἐστὶ τὰ μηδετέρως ἔχοντα, οἷον Φρονεῖ. Περιπατεῖ. ἀντιπεπονθότα δέ ἐστιν ἐν τοῖς ὑπτίοις, ἃ ὕπτια ὄντα ἐνεργήματα [δέ] ἐστιν, οἷον Κείρεται· ἐμπεριέχει γὰρ ἑαυτὸν ὁ κειρόμενος. πλάγιαι δὲ πτώσεις εἰσὶ γενικὴ καὶ δοτικὴ καὶ αἰτιατική.

"The predicate is what is stated about somebody / something, or a thing attributed to one or many objects, as Apollodorus' disciples claim, or else the incomplete content of the utterance which should be linked with ὀρθὴ πτῶσις, in order to create a proposition. Some of the predicates are congruent, e.g. *to sail among the rocks…* †. Apart from this, some predicates are straight, others are inverted, still others are neuter. The straight ones are those which combine with one of πλάγιαι πτώσεις for the sake of creating a [complete] predicate, as e.g. (s/he) *hears*, (s/he) *sees*, (s/he) *talks*. The inverted predicates are those which combine with a passive element, as e.g. *I am heard, I am seen*. Neuter predicates are those which do not show any of these features, as e.g. (*s/he*) *thinks*, (s/he) *walks*. Among the inverted predicates reflexive ones are those which, while being inverted, constitute actions, e.g. (*s/he*) *gives himself / herself a haircut*, as the person cutting his or her own hair gets personally engaged in this activity. Πλάγιαι πτώσεις, in turn, are γενική, δοτικὴ and αἰτιατική."

Ignoring for a moment the interpretation of the term συμβάματα ('congruent predicates'), which constitutes an element of Diogenes' discussion partly unpreserved due to the text damage in this place, we note that in the above passage, apart from the 'straight' predicates (ὀρθά) and the 'inverted' ones (ὕπτια), known from the passages quoted earlier, there are also distinguished the 'neuter' predicates (οὐδέτερα) and the 'reflexive' ones (ἀντιπεπονθότα), the latter being a kind of the 'inverted' predicates. Besides, the predicate as such was in one of the definitions quoted above linked with the concept of ὀρθὴ πτῶσις, depicted as an element which, when combined with the predicate, will constitute a proposition. On the other hand, the 'straight' predicate was said to combine with one of πλάγιαι πτώσεις. Thus, the presented definitions demonstrate that the term πτῶσις cannot have the meaning of the grammatical case here as it refers to the linguistically expressed content and not to the form of the linguistic sign (*cf.* Frede 1978: 31–32, Long 1971: 105–106). Since, on the other hand, the linguistically expressed content constituted by πτώσεις creates a proposition when combined with a predicate, it can be concluded that the concept of πτῶσις is in this approach very close to the contemporary concept of the predicative argument. Ὁρθὴ πτῶσις, as has been mentioned, was characterised as the linguistically expressed content which is necessary for making a proposition in combination with the predicate as such, i.e. irrespective of the kind (variant, type) of this predicate, which in turn leads to a conclusion that this concept needs to be recognised as identical with the logical subject of the predication, the object about which the predicate content is stated, i.e. with the argument of the predicate expressed obligatorily (or connoted contextually) in each proposition.

Πτώσεις πλάγιαι were, in turn, presented as the linguistically expressed content which is combined with 'straight' predicates. The examples provided (ἀκούει '(s/he) listens,' ὁρᾷ '(s/he) sees,' διαλέγεται '(s/he) talks)' suggest that it concerns multi-argument predicates, i.e. predicates whose exponents are (at least) two-place verbs.

It is, however, easy to notice that, when understood literally, the definition of the 'straight' predicate given in Diogenes' text contradicts the principles of logic, as it states that the 'straight' predicate gets combined with one of πλάγιαι πτώσεις for the sake of creating a predicate. Thus, it is not difficult to criticise it for the lack of logic which stems from the fact that a certain type of the predicate is characterised as something which, after fulfilling certain conditions, becomes a predicate. In other words, something which only in combination with something else creates a predicate cannot be a predicate itself. However, as a result of its illogical character visible at the level of the wording, the definition suggests that in the system of the Stoic dialectics there additionally must have existed a different type of the linguistically expressed content, i.e. the "defective" predicate, which – in order to become "complete" – requires being supplemented or combined with something else. The presence of this Stoic concept covering the predicative content which is not a full predicate as such is also signalled – outside the quoted passage – in two other places of Diogenes' text. One of them is the already cited passage 7, 43–44, which concerns, among others, "predicates and straight and inverted (content of utterances) similar to them" (κατηγορημάτων καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων ὀρθῶν καὶ ὑπτίων), which allows us to assume that, apart from predicates, the Stoics also identified some types of the utterance content "similar" (ὅμοιοι) to predicates, and within this group they distinguished exactly between the "straight" (ὀρθά) and the "inverted" (ὕπτια) ones. The other place is paragraph 7, 58. It contains a definition of the verb which is described as a "part of speech denoting a non-complex predicate" (ῥῆμα δέ ἐστι μέρος λόγου σημαῖνον ἀσύνθετον κατηγόρημα). By attributing the status of a "non-complex predicate" (ἀσύνθετον κατηγόρημα) to the meaning of the verb this definition implies that in the Stoic dialectics there was too a concept of a "complex predicate," constituted by the meaning of the verb together with some additional element of the linguistically expressed content. Let us add that exactly such a predicative content denoted by verbs which demand a completion is also discussed by Porphyrus[14] in his account of the systematics of the Stoic terms referring to what is stated. It is conveyed by Ammonius in his commentary to Aristotle's *Hermeneutics*. In his account Porphyrus claims that the Stoics described that content with the help of the term ἔλαττον ἢ κατηγόρημα – 'less than a predicate':

Amm. Comm. 44, 33–45,3[15]: καὶ πάλιν ἂν μὲν τὸ τοῦ ὀνόματος

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[14] A Neoplatonic living in the 3rd c. AD; a philosopher, grammarian, commentator, and exegete of philosophical writings.

[15] = SVF, II, 184 (*Porphyrius apud Ammonium in Aristot. de interpr.* p. 44, 19 Busse).

κατηγορούμενον δέηται προσθήκης πτώσεως ὀνόματός τινος πρὸς τὸ ποιῆσαι ἀπόφανσιν, ἔλαττον ἢ κατηγόρημα λέγεται, ὡς ἔχει τὸ *φιλεῖ* καῖ τὸ *εὐνοεῖ*, οἷον *Πλάτων φιλεῖ·* τούτῳ γὰρ προστεθὲν τὸ τινά, οἷον Δίωνα, ποιεῖ ὡρισμένην ἀπόφανσιν τὴν *Πλάτων Δίωνα φιλεῖ.*

"And then, if what is predicated of the name,[16] requires to be completed with an [oblique] case of some [other] name for the sake of making a proposition, it is called 'less than a predicate,' just as in the case of (*s/he*) *loves* and (*s/he*) *favours*, e.g. *Plato loves*; as only after 'whom' is added to it, e.g. *Dion*, a definite proposition is formed, i.e. *Plato loves Dion*."

It can thus be seen, also from the exemplification provided, that Porphyrus' 'less than a predicate' (ἔλαττον ἢ κατηγόρημα) closely corresponds to the 'straight predicate,' identified in passage 7, 64 of *The Lives* by Diogenes, which constitutes an element of the "complex predicate" or a kind of the linguistically expressed content "similar to the predicate." The element of the content with which the 'straight' predicate must be combined for the sake of creating a complete predicate, defined in passage 7, 64 of Diogenes' text as one of πλάγιαι πτώσεις, must, therefore, be recognised as identical with the concept of an additional argument, implied by multi-argument predicates. This conclusion is confirmed by the exemplification of 'straight predicates' provided by Diogenes, which shows that those predicates imply not only an argument identical with the logical subject of the predication (the theme) – obligatory for predicates as such – i.e. ὀρθὴ πτῶσις ((τις) ἀκούει, ὁρᾷ, διαλέγεται– '(who) hears, sees, talks'), but also an additional argument, which constitutes with them the predicative content (the rheme) stated about the subject of predication (ἀκούει, ὁρᾷ (τινα/τι), διαλέγεται (τινι) – 'hears, sees (who / what), talks (with whom)'). Thus, it may be assumed that in the Stoic dialectics the term πλάγιαι πτώσεις denotes the concept of the arguments of a multi-argument predicate which constitute elements of the predicative content (the rheme) stated about the subject of predication, and in this way remains in opposition to the term ὀρθή πτῶσις, which denotes the concept of an argument which is the subject of predication (the theme).

In the aforementioned passage from Diogenes Laërtius (7, 64), apart from the 'straight' predicates additionally distinguished were the 'inverted' predicates (ὕπτια), which also included the 'reflexive' ones (ἀντιπεπονθότα), as well as the 'neuter' ones (οὐδέτερα). The presented characteristics and the examples provided demonstrate that the 'inverted' and the 'reflexive' predicates are estab-

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[16] Porphyrus' claim that something "is predicated about the name" (ὄνομα) and "requires to be completed with an [oblique] case of some [other] name" (δέηται προσθήκης πτώσεως ὀνόματος), does not of course strictly reflect the terminology and the conceptual apparatus of the Stoics, as it is not possible to state something about a name, but only about what this name expresses (means). This inaccuracy results from the fact that Porphyrus, who lived already in the 3rd c. AD, on the one hand uses certain terms in the meanings they acquired in his times, and on the other – similarly to many other later commentators – he ignores the Stoic distinction between the form of the sign and its content. It needs, therefore, to be assumed that the quoted statement conveys a view that something is stated about the content expressed by the noun in the nominative and requires a completion with the content expressed by another noun used in an oblique case.

lished by the predicative content whose exponents are verbs indicating the passive and the reflexive diathesis, respectively. Thus, these predicates also imply more than one argument, however, they differ from the 'straight' predicates in that the exponents of the latter are verbs indicating an active diathesis. The 'neuter' predicates, in turn, just as the 'straight' predicates, are represented by verbs which indicate an active diathesis, however, they differ from the 'straight' ones in that they imply only one argument, i.e. the subject of the predication (ὀρθὴ πτῶσις). Such a conclusion results from the definition of the 'neuter' predicates presented in the discussed passage, which defines them as predicates that do not demonstrate any of the predicate features described earlier (οὐδέτερα δ' ἐστὶ τὰ μηδετέρως ἔχοντα), i.e. the features of the 'straight' and the 'inverted' predicates. It means that the 'neuter' predicates neither connote any other argument (πλάγια πτῶσις) apart from the subject of predication (ὀρθὴ πτῶσις) nor do they combine with the passive element (παθητικὸν μόριον). On the basis of these characteristics and the examples provided (φρονεῖ '(s/he) thinks,' περιπατεῖ '(s/he) walks)' it may thus be assumed that, contrary to the 'straight' and 'inverted' predicates, the 'neuter' ones constitute complete predicates, i.e. predicates which do not require any completion. A confirmation of this is also provided by passage 7, 43–44, which only talks about the 'straight' and the 'inverted' – but not the 'neuter' – content of utterances "similar to predicates." It proves that the 'neuter' predicates do not constitute a type of the content "similar to predicates," but complete predicates, which stand in opposition to Porphyrus' 'less than predicates' (ἔλαττον ἢ κατηγόρημα).

With regard to this there appears a question whether it is possible to identify the sense of the terms ὀρθὴ πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις with the arguments of the predicate, which are denoted by nouns in the nominative and in the oblique cases, respectively. Accepting such a possibility would mean accepting an assumption that within the Stoic doctrine the argument of the subject of predication (ὀρθὴ πτῶσις) is denoted exclusively by the noun in the nominative, whereas arguments which form the predicative content (πλάγιαι πτώσεις), exclusively by nouns in the oblique cases. The preserved records of the Stoic dialectics, however, seem to prove something different. First of all, we mean here the already quoted text by Ammonius, which reports Porphyrus' exposition about the Stoic systematics of predicates. We read there, among others:

Amm. Comm. 44, 23–45, 7[17]: ἂν μὲν οὖν ὀνόματός τι κατηγορηθὲν ἀπόφανσιν ποιῇ, κατηγόρημα καὶ σύμβαμα παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀνομάζεται (σημαίνει γὰρ ἄμφω ταὐτόν), ὡς τὸ *περιπατεῖ*, οἷον *Σωκράτης περιπατεῖ*, ἂν δὲ πτώσεως, παρασύμβαμα, ὡσανεὶ παρακείμενον τῷ συμβάματι καὶ ὃν οἷον παρακατηγόρημα. ὡς ἔχει τὸ *μεταμέλει*, οἷον *Σωκράτει μεταμέλει*. τὸ μὲν γὰρ *μεταμελεῖται* σύμβαμα εἶναι, τὸ δὲ *μεταμέλει* παρασύμβαμα οὐ δυνάμενον ὀνόματι συνταχθὲν ἀπόφανσιν ἐργάσασθαι, οἷον *Σωκράτης μεταμέλει* (οὐδεμία γὰρ τοῦτο ἀπόφανσις), ἀλλ' οὔτε

κλίσιν ἐπιδέξασθαι δυνάμενον, ὡς τὸ *περιπατῶ, περιπατεῖς, περιπατεῖ*
οὔτε συμμετασχηματισθῆναι τοῖς ἀριθμοῖς· ὥσπερ γὰρ λέγομεν *τούτῳ*
μεταμέλει οὕτως καὶ *τούτοις μεταμέλει.* […] ἂν δὲ τὸ τῆς πτώσεως
κατηγορούμενον ἦ τὸ δεόμενον ἑτέρᾳ συνταχθῆναι πλαγίᾳ πτώσει πρὸς
τὸ ποιῆσαι ἀπόφανσιν, ἔλαττον ἢ παρασύμβαμα λέγεται, ὡς ἔχει τὸ
μέλει, οἷον *Σωκράτει Ἀλκιβιάδου μέλει.*

"If something predicated of a name creates a proposition, it is called by them [*scil.* the Stoics] a predicate and a congruent (since both mean the same), as (*s/he*) *walks,* which, for instance, [forms a proposition] *Socrates walks*, however, if [something predicated] of an [oblique] case [of a name forms a proposition, it is called by them] a paracongruent, as if it was situated next to the congruent and constituted a parapredicate, as in (*it*) *is a regret*, [forming], for instance, [a proposition] *It is a regret to Socrates*, since *regrets* constitutes a congruent, whereas (*it*) *is a regret* a paracongruent unable to form a proposition in combination with a name, as e.g. *Socrates is a regret* (as it is not a proposition), and also unable to take any inflection, as e.g. (*I*) *walk,* (*you*) *walk,* (*s/he*) *walks*, or change its form in agreement with the number: for as we say *It is a regret to him* so do we also say *It is* [and not *are*] *a regret to them.* […] And if what is predicated about the [oblique] case [of a name], is something which demands its being combined with another [oblique] case [of a name] in order to form a proposition, it is also described as less than a paracongruent, just as is the case of (*it*) *is a care*, e.g. in *It is a care to Socrates about Alcibiades.*"

The passage quoted above indicates that apart from the division of the predicative content denoted by verbs to be 'predicates' and 'less than predicates,' the division which takes into consideration the criterion of completeness of this content or rather its "sufficiency" for forming (together with the subject of predication) a proposition, the Stoics also introduced a distinction between 'congruents' (συμβάματα) and 'paracongruents' (παρασυμβάματα). The 'congruents' were exemplified by the content given by the verbs περιπατεῖ ('(s/he) walks') and μεταμελεῖται ('regrets'), whereas the 'paracongruents' were illustrated by the content of the verb μεταμέλει ('(it) is a regret'). The verb μεταμέλει is characterised by the fact that it does not open a slot for the nominative form of the noun as an exponent of the subject of predication. This subject is denoted by the nominal phrase in the dative (Σωκράτει μεταμέλει – 'It is a regret to Socrates'), and irrespective of the value of the number and the person taken by it the verb appears only in the third person singular (τούτοις μεταμέλει – 'it is a regret to them,' ἐμοὶ μεταμέλει – 'it is a regret to me'). The terms describing both of the distinguished types of the predicative content, namely σύμβαμα and παρασύμβαμα, are linked with the complex verb συμβαίνειν meaning 'come together,' 'join,' 'agree.' The inability of the exponent of παρασύμβαμα to express the plural and take the values of the 1st and the 2nd person, which Porphyrus emphasised, clearly suggests that it is exactly here that the source of the difference between σύμβαμα and παρασύμβαμα lies. And thus σύμβαμα ('a congruent') would be a predicative content which always "agrees" with the subject of predication in terms of the number and the person

(Σωκράτης περιπατεῖ – 'Socrates walks,' οἱ ἄνθρωποι περιπατοῦσιν – 'people walk,' ἐγὼ περιπατῶ – 'I walk'), and παρασύμβαμα ('a paracongruent') a predicative content which in this respect does not agree with the subject of predication, if this one were to express plurality (e.g. τούτοις μεταμέλει – 'it is a regret to them') or if it assumed the value of the 1ˢᵗ or the 2ⁿᵈ person (e.g. ἐμοὶ μεταμέλει – 'it is a regret to me,' σοὶ μεταμέλει – 'it is a regret to you'). The essence of the 'paracongruent' would then lie in the fact that, within the proposition it co-constituted, alongside the predicative content implying e.g. the concept of singularity (μεταμέλει – '(it) is a regret') there would also appear the subject of the predication implying the concept of plurality (τούτοις – 'to them').

As was mentioned earlier, contrary to the verbal exponent of σύμβαμα, which connotes the exponent of the subject of predication in the nominative, the verbal exponent of παρασύμβαμα connotes the exponent of the subject of predication in the dative. Porphyrus identifies this subject as πτῶσις (without the determiner ὀρθή) and contrasts it with ὄνομα ('a name') as the subject of predication constituted by σύμβαμα. Naturally, in this regard Porphyrus' account is not accurate, as according to the assumptions of the Stoic conceptual and terminological apparatus, within which the opposition between the form and the content of linguistic signs is firmly observed, the term ὄνομα refers to the form of the sign and not to its meaning. Following the more precise account of Diogenes in this case, the subject of predication constituted by any kind of predicate, and thus also by σύμβαμα, is ὀρθὴ πτῶσις (see above, passage 7, 64–65), whose language exponent is ὄνομα ('a name'). The inaccuracy of Porphyrus' account may also be indicated by the last part of the analysed passage, in which the 'less than a paracongruent' (ἔλαττον ἢ παρασύμβαμα) was defined as a predicative content stated about πτῶσις, which "in order to form a proposition needs to be combined with another πτῶσις πλάγια" (τὸ δεόμενον ἑτέρᾳ συνταχθῆναι πλαγίᾳ πτώσει πρὸς τὸ ποιῆσαι ἀπόφανσιν)." The inco-nsistency of the record saying that something stated about πτῶσις requires being juxtaposed with another πτῶσις πλάγια obviously stems from the fact that, erroneously understanding the Stoics' term πτῶσις as an oblique case, Porphyrus altogether does not take into consideration the Stoic concept of ὀρθὴ πτῶσις in his account, and therefore the term πλάγια πτῶσις used by him has a tautological character. Besides, in the aforementioned passage 7, 64–65 of Diogenes' text 'the congruent' (σύμβαμα) is not identified with the predicate as such (as is the case in Porphyrus' account: κατηγόρημα καὶ σύμβαμα παρ᾿ αὐτοῖς ἀνομάζεται (σημαίνει γὰρ ἄμφω ταὐτὸν)), but it is presented as one of the types of predicates (τῶν δὲ κατηγορημάτων τὰ μέν ἐστι συμβάματα, οἶον τὸ διὰ πέτρας πλεῖν...† – "among predicates some are congruents, e.g. *to sail among the rocks*... †"). In this regard it is possible to assume that in the damaged passage of the text the 'paracongruent' (παρασύμβαμα) was men-

tioned[18] as the other type of the predicate, standing in opposition to the 'congruent' (σύμβαμα). And if the 'paracongruent' (παρασύμβαμα) is the other type of the predicate, opposite to the 'congruent' (σύμβαμα), and not some 'quasi-parapredicate,' as Porphyrus would have liked it to be (ὂν οἷον παρακατηγόρημα), then the subject of predication constituted by the 'paracongruent,' just as in the case of all other types of predicate, is also ὀρθὴ πτῶσις (Ἔστι δὲ τὸ κατηγόρημα […] λεκτὸν ἐλλιπὲς συντακτὸν ὀρθῇ πτώσει πρὸς ἀξιώματος γένεσιν – "the predicate is […] the incomplete content of the utterance which should be linked with ὀρθὴ πτῶ in order to create a proposition" – passage 7, 64–65), and not πτῶσις, as in Porphyrus' account.

As was pointed out earlier, the exponent of the 'paracongruent' (παρασύμβαμα) connotes the noun in the oblique case in the function of the exponent of the subject of predication, i.e. in the function of the exponent of the ὀρθὴ πτῶσις (Σωκράτει μεταμέλει – 'It is a regret to Socrates,' τούτοις μεταμέλει – 'It is a regret to them'). And thus it is not possible to identify the Stoic concept of ὀρθὴ πτῶσις even with the meaning (predicative argument) denoted by the noun in the nominative, since it covers the meanings (predicative arguments) also denoted by nouns in the oblique cases (e.g. in dative). This concerns arguments of the subject of predication implied by the predicative content classified as 'paracongruents' (παρασυμβάματα), and also 'less than paracongruents' (ἔλαττον ἢ παρασυμβάματα), which differ from the former in that, for the sake of forming a proposition together with the subject of predication, they must get combined with an additional argument (πλάγια πτῶσισς), e.g. Σωκράτει Ἀλκιβιάδου μέλει – 'It is a care to Socrates about Alcibiades.' And thus 'the less than paracongruents' are the type of predicative content implying more than one argument, denoted by polyvalent verbs which do not open a place for any argument expression in the nominative.

The statement that the concept of ὀρθὴ πτῶσις may be connected with the argumentative content denoted not only by the noun in the nominative, but also by the noun in an oblique case, at the same time excludes the identification of the concept of πλάγιαι πτώσεις with the content expressed by nouns in the oblique cases. The term πλάγιαι πτώσεις refers to additional (non-subjective) arguments of multi-argument predicates which are, indeed, in most cases expressed by nouns in the oblique cases, however, in the case of the predicative content expressed by such verbs as γίγνεται ('becomes'), also the non-subjective argument, and thus πλάγια πτῶσις, is denoted by a noun in the nominative, e.g. Σωκράτης γίγνεται διδάσκαλος – 'Socrates becomes a teacher.'

It may appear that the thesis about the lack of connection between the Stoic concepts of ὀρθὴ πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις and the category of the gram-

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[18] The expression: τῶν δὲ κατηγορημάτων τὰ μέν ἐστι συμβάματα... ("among predicates some are congruents...") opens the space for another element of the presented systematics, introduced by the operator τὰ δέ. The types of predicates enumerated further (after the damaged passage) surely represent another division already within συμβάματα (also possibly ἔλαττον ἢ συμβάματα).

matical case is contradicted by a statement opening passage 7, 65 of the afore-mentioned text by Diogenes: πλάγιαι δὲ πτώσεις εἰσὶ γενικὴ καὶ δοτικὴ καὶ αἰτιατική. All the terms mentioned here correspond precisely to the names of the oblique cases established in the Greek grammatical tradition, which is attested, among others, by the passage from Τέχνη γραμματική attributed to Dionysius Thrax, quoted at the very beginning of this paper. However, it needs to be remembered that within the conceptual apparatus of the Stoic school, which precedes the birth of Greek philology and grammar, the terms ὀρθὴ πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις did not refer to forms of words,[19] but to the content expressed by them, presented as arguments implied by the particular types of predicates.[20] As we attempted to demonstrate earlier, the difference between ὀρθὴ πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις is not linked directly with the case of the noun denoting a given argument, but with the position (rank) of this argument in the structure of the proposition formed together with it by the predicate. The position of the argument denoted by the term ὀρθὴ πτῶσις can be identified with the subject of predication, whereas the position of πλάγιαι πτώσεις with other, non-subjective, arguments implied by the multi-argument predicates. Contrary to the subject of predication, the logical status of the non-subjective arguments is diversified, which results from the multiplicity of ways in which they complete the predicates implying them, as the relationships between particular types of predicates and their non-subjective arguments differ. For instance, the relationship between the predicate διαλέγεται ('(s/he) talks') and its non-subjective argument, i.e. τινί ('with someone'), is certainly different than the relationship between the predicate ὁρᾷ ('(s/he) sees') and the argument τίνα ('someone'). It may thus be assumed that distinguishing these different πλάγιαι πτώσεις, attested in passage 65 of Diogenes' text, reflects the aforementioned variation of the logical status of non-subjective arguments of particular predicates, and not (at least directly) the cases of nouns denoting these arguments. This also seems to be indicated by the accepted terminology, which quite clearly refers to the functions performed by particular πλάγιαι πτώσεις in the structure of the proposition. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the authenticity

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[19] Also the way of using these terms is characteristic in this respect; we mean here the fact that, at least in Diogenes Laërtius' text, there is a reference only to ὀρθὴ πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις, but never to ὀρθῆ πτῶσις ὀνόματος or πλάγιαι πτώσεις ὀνόματος.

[20] The fact that ὀρθὴ πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις represent meanings of nouns perceived as arguments of predicates, and thus that they have a relative character with reference to κατηγόρημα, is also indicated in the Stoic characteristics of parts of speech included in the text by Diogenes Laërtius (7, 58), in which κοινὴ ποιότης (common property) and ἰδία ποιότης (individual property), respectively, but not πτώσεις, were indicated as the proper meanings for προσηγορία (a name) and ὄνομα (a proper name). Κοιναί and ἴδιαι ποιότητες constitute meanings of nouns presented in an absolute way; they gain the status of πτώσεις in the situation in which they are considered in the context of their relationship to κατηγόρημα, together with which they create ἀξίωμα (λεκτὸν αὐτοτελές), and thus in the situation in which they are presented as components of a more complex content structure. In this respect the semantic value of the words constituting προσηγορίαι and ὀνόματα differs from the status of the content denoted by ῥῆμα (the verb), which always has a relative (exocentric) character; hence the verb (ῥῆμα) was defined as a word meaning exactly (ἀσύνθετον) κατηγόρημα.

of the sentence listing the names of particular πλάγιαι πτώσεις tends to be questioned; it is believed that this sentence may not come from the text by Diocles (who was a source for Diogenes), but be an interpolation by Diogenes' himself commenting (anachronistically) on the Stoic theory through the prism of the terminological-conceptual net shaped in the post-Alexandrian era (cf. De Mauro 1965: 176, footnote 33).

And, as it seems, those were the Alexandrian grammarians, who – not showing much understanding for the Stoics' subtle deliberations over the logical status of the referents of linguistic expressions – adapted their terminology, and referred it to the expressions themselves (cf. Frede 1994: 15). In this way πλάγιαι πτώσεις, as they are most frequently, though not exclusively, denoted by nouns in the oblique cases, were identified with the very oblique cases of nouns as such, similarly as ὀρθὴ πτῶσις was for the same reasons[21] identified with the nominative. Additionally, this process also resulted in the fact that almost all the texts constituting the sources of knowledge about the Stoic language doctrine, whose origin, as is known, is fairly late, are marked with a specific error which consists in attributing to the terms used by the Stoics the meanings which they obtained in the grammatical tradition. This error is caused mainly by ignoring the Stoic distinction between terms and concepts referring to the field of meanings (τὰ σημαινόμενα) and those which concerned the domain of signs alone (φωνή) (cf. Frede 1994: 14). A typical example of a text marked with such an error is the account by Porphyrus interpreted above. Unfortunately, this error has also crept into many modern studies in which the Stoics are said to have introduced the concept of the grammatical case to grammar (and even the opposition between the nominative and the oblique cases) only because of the presence of the terms ὀρθὴ πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις in their writings (cf. Pohlenz 1931: 171).

It is worth adding that the analogous process of transferring the Stoic terminology from the sphere of *significatum* to the sphere of *significans* can be observed also in reference to the Stoic concept of ὀρθὸν κατηγόρημα ('straight predicate'). Let us recall that according to passage 7, 64–65 of Diogenes' text quoted above it was a kind of the predicative content denoted by a verb, which, for the sake of creating a complete predicate, requires to be combined with one of the πτώσεις πλάγιαι, as e.g. ἀκούει ('(s/he) hears'), ὁρᾷ ('(s/he) sees'), διαλέγεται ('(s/he) talks'). These are therefore multi-argument predicates. The very examples quoted already show that the distinctive feature of predicates of this type cannot be any morphological (inflectional) feature of the verbs denoting them, and especially a particular value of the category of the voice, as apart from verbs in the active voice (ἀκούει, ὁρᾷ) 'the straight predicates' may also be denoted by verbs in the medio-passive voice (διαλέγεται). Besides, verbs in the active voice may be exponents not only of the 'straight predicates,' but also of the 'neuter' ones (οὐδέτερα), as e.g.. φρονεῖ ('(s/he) thinks'), περιπατεῖ ('(s/he) walks'), i.e. one-argument predicates. Meanwhile, in the Hellenistic

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[21] I.e. due to the fact that in most cases it is denoted by a noun in the nominative.

grammatical tradition the determiner ὀρθός began to be generally used with reference to verbs in the active voice, and thus in reference to the exponents of some part of the Stoic 'straight' and 'neuter' predicates,[22] except that this determiner was already then linked with ῥῆμα ('the verb') and not with the term κατηγόρημα.[23]

As was mentioned earlier, in order to point to the nominative the Greek grammar also used a synonymous determiner εὐθύς alongside with the adjective ὀρθός ('straight') and thus, side by side with the term ὀρθὴ πτῶσις there existed also the term εὐθεῖα πτῶσις. It is documented by the quoted passage from the Τέχνη γραμματική and a number of places in the treatises by Apollonius Dyscolos.[24] The sources preserved do not attest the use of the term εὐθεῖα πτῶσις in the circle of the Stoic linguistic doctrine. The use of the adjective εὐθύς in the function of the nominative determiner is, however, often attributed to Aristotle, and in this context passage 31, 181b 35–182a 6 of his *On sophistical refutations* is cited, since the phrase οὐ δοτέον τὴν λέξιν κατ᾽ εὐθύ appearing there is interpreted as a formulation concerning the use of the noun in the nominative.[25] A careful reading of the aforementioned passage convinces us, however, that such an interpretation is not legitimate:

Arist. Soph. el. XXI, 181b 35–182a 6: Ἐν δὲ τοῖς δι᾽ ὧν δηλοῦται κατηγορουμένοις τοῦτο λεκτέον, ὡς οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ χωρὶς καὶ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τὸ δηλούμενον. Τὸ γὰρ κοῖλον κοινῇ μὲν τὸ αὐτὸ δηλοῖ ἐπὶ τοῦ σιμοῦ καὶ τοῦ ῥοικοῦ, προστιθέμενον δὲ οὐδὲν κωλύει, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν τῇ ῥινὶ τὸ δὲ τῷ σκέλει συμβαίνει· ἔνθα μὲν γὰρ τὸ σιμόν, ἔνθα δὲ τὸ ῥαιβὸν σημαίνει· καὶ οὐδὲν διαφέρει εἰπεῖν ῥὶς σιμὴ ἢ ῥὶς κοίλη. Ἔστι οὐ δοτέον τὴν λέξιν κατ᾽ εὐθύ· ψεῦδος γάρ ἐστιν. Οὐ γάρ ἐστι τὸ σιμὸν ῥὶς κοίλη, ἀλλὰ ῥινὸς τοδί, οἷον πάθος, ὥστ᾽ οὐδὲν ἄτοπον, εἰ ἡ ῥὶς ἡ σιμὴ ῥίς ἐστιν ἔχουσα κοιλότητα ῥινός.

"With regard to terms which are stated about [other] terms by defining them in the character of attributes, it needs to be said that it is not the same what the terms mean in isolation, and what they mean within a phrase [in which they appear as attributes together with the term]. For instance the word 'concave,' understood in a general sense, expresses [always] the same, [i.e. something that can be stated] both in reference to what is snub and what is bandy; however, in

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connection with a concrete subject it may have different meanings, of which one is suitable e.g. for the nose, and the other for legs, as in one case it means 'snubness,' and in the other 'bandyness.' However, the expression: 'a snub nose' does not differ in terms of its content from the expression 'a concave nose.' However, it is not possible to recognise it as an expression equivalent to the one which formulates a given concept directly (i.e. in a non-attributive way), as it would be a manifestation of an erroneous deduction. The 'snubness (of the nose)' is not the same as 'a concave nose,' but a sort of a property of such a nose, so it is nothing inappropriate to claim that the snub nose is a nose possessing a concavity which characterises this nose."

The sense of the reasoning presented in this passage may thus be summed up by the statement that the expression 'a snub nose' (ῥὶς σιμή) does not differ from the content of the phrase 'a concave nose' (ῥὶς κοίλη), however, what does differ is the content of the phrase 'snubness (of the nose)' (τὸ σιμὸν (ῥινός)), which was described exactly as λέξις κατ᾽ εὐθύ. In other words, Aristotle contrasts the phrase 'a snub nose' as an equivalent to the phrase 'a concave nose' with the phrase 'snubness of (the nose)' as non-equivalent to it, describing it as λέξις κατ᾽ εὐθύ. While characterising the expression 'snubness (of the nose)' and at the same time explaining the grounds for its opposition to the expression 'a snub nose,' the term λέξις κατ᾽ εὐθύ cannot, therefore, refer to the case in which this expression is used (i.e. nominative), as both elements of the opposition presented here, i.e. τὸ σιμὸν (ῥινός) and ῥὶς σιμὴ, appear in the nominative. Thus, the expression λέξις κατ᾽ εὐθύ cannot be interpreted as meaning 'the phrase in the nominative,' because the phrase which is contrasted with it (i.e. 'a snub nose' – ῥὶς σιμὴ), also appears in the nominative. And if it is not about the contrast between the phrase in the nominative and the phrase in the oblique case, the term εὐθύ cannot be identified with the nominative. This term, as it stems from the context, should, however, rather be interpreted as referring to a word (a noun) which means a particular feature expressing it "directly" (κατ᾽ εὐθύ) from the logical-semantic point of view, i.e. as a (nominal) designation of this property (τὸ σιμὸν 'snubness') – contrary to the word (an adjective) expressing this property "indirectly," that is attributively, i.e. as an attribute of something (σιμός 'snub'). It appears then that the term εὐθεῖα (πτῶσις) acquired the technical meaning of the name of the nominative only either among the later disciples of Aristotle, or in the circle of the Alexandrian grammarians, and thus became an expression parallel to the synonymous ὀρθὴ (πτῶσις).[26]

To sum up, it may be stated that the opposition ὀρθή πτῶσις / πλάγιαι πτώσεις first appeared in the Greek reflection on language most probably in the circle of the Stoic doctrine, where it constituted an expression of the terminological and conceptual identification of meanings of nouns from the point of view of their constituting elements of predicative-argumentative struc-

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[26] For commentaries of the late ancient and Byzantine grammarians justifying the use of the terms ὀρθή, εὐθεῖα and πτῶσις in reference to the nominative see Thorp (1989: 317–324).

tures which formed propositions (ἀξιώματα).[27] What justifies this statement is the fact that in the framework of the Stoic dialectics concepts denoted by terms ὀρθή πτῶσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις were unambiguously situated in the sphere of the linguistically expressed content (τὰ σημαινόμενα, τὰ λεκτά) and used consistently in connection with the concept of κατηγόρημα ('predicate'), that is the predicative content expressed by the verb. The analysis of the preserved records demonstrates that the term ὀρθὴ πτῶσις had a meaning of the subjective predicate argument (disregarding the value of the case of the noun which denoted it), whereas πτώσεις πλάγιαι had the meaning of the non-subjective arguments implied by multi-argument predicates. Therefore, in the Stoic dialectics the opposition ὀρθὴ πτῶσις / πλάγιαι πτώσεις reflected a hierarchical differentiation of the status of the content expressed by nouns, perceived as arguments of the predicate within the proposition. These terms gained the meaning of the nominative and the oblique cases, respectively, only in the circle of Hellenistic philologists, whose research and analyses were to a greater extent focused on the formal side of linguistic signs (words). Those scholars used the terminological apparatus of the Stoic school while introducing there some vital modifications, however. With reference to the issue which interests us here, the modification consisted in the identification of the Stoic ὀρθὴ πτῶσις with its most frequent language exponent, i.e. the noun in the nominative, and following the same principle, of the Stoic πλάγιαι πτώσεις with nouns in the oblique cases. The Hellenistic philological school should probably also be ascribed the introduction of the term εὐθεῖα πτῶσις as a name of the nominative synonymous with ὀρθὴ πτῶσις, as there are no sufficient premises on which to attribute the use of the adjective εὐθύς as an index of that case already to Aristotle.

Bearing in mind the structuralist model of description of the language syntactic system widely used today, which is based on the concept of predicative-argumentative structures, it is hard to resist the impression that the history of European linguistics has just come a full circle.

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[27] Another passage of the already adduced text by Ammonius (i.e. 42, 30–43, 16 = SVF, II, 164) throws some light on the reasons for which in order to name meanings expressed by nouns, the Stoics made use of such a term as πτῶσις, i.e. a derivative coming from the verb πίπτειν meaning 'to fall.' Namely, it may be deduced from the text that the Stoics perceived this meaning as something that "fell out of the concept existing in soul" (ἀπὸ τοῦ νοήματος τοῦ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ [...] πέπτωκεν), and thus as a specific, external reflex of this concept. In turn, we learn about the expression ὀρθὴ πτῶσις that the Stoics were to link it with "prototypicality" (τὸ ἀρχέτυπον) of reflecting this concept, and thus probably with such a formulation of it which would allow for stating something about it.

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