THE ORIGIN OF THE OPPOSITION
πτώσις ὄρθη (εὐθεία) – πτώσεις πλάγιαι (CASUS RECTUS – CASUS OBLIQUI) IN THE LINGUISTICS OF ANCIENT GREECE

Abstract

The opposition πτώσις ὄρθη (εὐθεία) / 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 (ἀξίωματα). What justifies this statement is the fact that in the framework of the Stoic dialectics concepts denoted by terms ὄρθη πτώσις and πλάγιαι πτώσεις were unambiguously situated in the sphere of the linguistically expressed content (τὰ σημαίνομενα, 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 ὀρθή πτώσις 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 ὀρθή πτώσις / 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 ὀρθή πτώσις 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 εὐθεία πτώσις as a name of the nominative synonymous with ὀρθή πτώσις, as there are no sufficient premises on which to attribute the use of the adjective εὐθεία 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. 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, ὀρθὸς and ἔθθος (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 ὀρθὸς and ἔθθος in the function of determiners of the nominative in the Greek grammatical theory is documented by a well-known Teōchn grammatikhv, 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 (πτωσεῖς) as one of the morphological features (παρεπομενα) of words belonging to the class of names (ὄνοματα) we read:

D.T. 31, 5–32, 1: Πτώσεις ὀνομάτων εἰσὶ πέντε: ὀρθή, γενική, δοτική, αἰτιατική, κλητική. Δέχεται δὲ ἡ μὲν ὀρθή ὀνομαστικὴ καὶ εὐθεία, ἢ δὲ γενικὴ κτητικὴ τε καὶ πατρικὴ, ἢ δὲ δοτικὴ ἐπιστατικὴ, ἢ δὲ αἰτιατικὴ † κατ’ αἰτιατικὴν, ἢ δὲ κλητικὴ προσαγορευτικὴ.

“There are five cases of the names: ὀρθή, γενική, δοτική, αἰτιατική, κλητική. The ὀρθή case is also called ὀνομαστικὴ and εὐθεία, the γενικὴ case [is also referred to as] κτητικὴ and πατρικὴ, the δοτικὴ case [is also called] ἐπιστατικὴ, the αἰτιατικὴ case † according to αἰτιατικὴν, whereas κλητικὴ [is also referred to as] προσαγορευτικὴ.”

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, 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 ἄρθρων 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).
The origin of the opposition \(\pi\tau\omega\varsigma\ \vartheta\eta\ (e\upsilon\theta\varepsilon\iota\alpha) - \pi\tau\omega\sigma\epsilon\varsigma\ \pi\lambda\alpha\gamma\iota\alpha i\alpha\)...

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 \((\pi\tau\omega\sigma\varsigma\) \(\vartheta\eta\) 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 \((\pi\tau\omega\sigma\varsigma\) \(e\upsilon\theta\varepsilon\iota\alpha\)) synonymous with \((\pi\tau\omega\sigma\varsigma\) \(\vartheta\eta\)). With regard to the other (i.e. the oblique) cases the term \((\pi\tau\omega\sigma\epsilon\varsigma\) \(\pi\lambda\alpha\gamma\iota\alpha i\alpha\)) 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 \((\pi\tau\omega\sigma\varsigma\) 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 Citium (ca. 336–264) and Chrysippus 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 *επιτομή* by Diocles Magnes (1\(^{st}\) 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 [καθ. ιντερνομενων] μὲν ἀριθμὸς ἐγώ σύ τι, γενεικὴς ἐμοὶ ὀποί ὄν, διοικής ἐμόι σοι ὃν, αἰτιατικὴς ἐμὲ σὲ ὃ, καλλιτικὴς σῷ.
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 3\(^{rd}\) c. AD
9 3\(^{rd}\) 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 διαιρεῖται εἰς τὸν περὶ τῶν σημαινομένων καὶ τῆς φωνῆς τόπων καὶ τὸν μὲν τῶν σημαινομένων εἰς τὸν περὶ τῶν φαινομένων καὶ τῶν έκ τούτων ωφοσταμένων λεκτών αξιωμάτων καὶ αυτοτελών καὶ κατηγορημάτων καὶ τῶν ὀμοσίων ὀρθῶν καὶ ὑπτίων καὶ γενῶν καὶ εἰδών, ὀμοιώς δὲ καὶ λόγων καὶ τρόπων καὶ συνομολογίων καὶ τῶν παρὰ τὴν φωνήν καὶ τὰ πράγματα σοφισμάτων. [...] Εἶναι δὲ τὴς διαλεκτικῆς ἱδιοὶ τόποι καὶ τῶν προερμήμενων περὶ αὐτῆς τῆς φωνῆς, ἐν ψείδων ἡγχράμματος φωνή καὶ τίνα τὰ τού λόγου μέρη, καὶ περὶ συλλογισμοῦ καὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ καὶ συστήματος καὶ ἀμφιβολίαν καὶ ἐμμελείας φωνῆς καὶ περὶ μουσικῆς καὶ περὶ ὅρων κατὰ τινάς καὶ διαίρεσεως καὶ λέξεως.

"[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 (τόπων), 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 ὑπτια (‘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:
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 (τα σημαίνομενα), is το 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’ (τα λεκτά αὐτοτελή), within which one can find propositions (τα ἀξιώματα), syllogisms (οἱ συλλογισμοί), questions (τα ἔρωτήματα), and inquiries (τα ύπτιςματα), and the ‘incomplete content of utterances’ (τα λεκτὰ ἔλλιπτη), which covers ‘straight’ (ὁρθά) and ‘inverted’ (ὑπτία) ‘predicates’ (τα κατηγορήματα).12 The attached exemplification shows that the exponents of the ‘incomplete content of utterances’ (τα λεκτὰ ἔλλιπτη), constituted by ‘predicates’ (τα 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 ὁρθὰ κατηγορήματα) and the ‘inverted predicates’ (τὰ ὑπτιὰ κατηγορήματα) can be taken from another passage of Diogenes’ work:

D.L. 7, 64–6513: “Εστὶ δὲ τὸ κατηγόρημα τὸ κατὰ τινὸς ἁγορευόμενον ἢ πράγμα συντακτὸν περὶ τινος ἢ τιμῶν, ός οἱ περὶ Ἀπολλόδωρον φανεῖν, ἢ λεκτὸν ἔλλιπτον συντακτὸν ὁρθῆ πτώσει πρὸς ἀξιώματος γένεσιν, τῶν δὲ κατηγορημάτων τὰ μὲν ἔστι συμβάσει, ὡς τὸ δέα πέτρας πλείν... ἢ, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἔστι τῶν κατηγορημάτων ὀρθά, ἢ δ’ ὑπτια, ἢ δ’...
“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 ὀρθή πτώσις, 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 πλάγια πτώσεως 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. Πλάγια πτώσεως, in turn, are genitival, dative and acausative.

Ignoring for a moment the interpretation of the term συμβατά ('congruent predicates'), which constitutes an element of Diogenes’ discussion partly unreserved 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 (ὕπτα), known from the passages quoted earlier, there are also distinguished the ‘neuter’ predicates (οὐδέτερα) and the ‘reflexive’ ones (αὐτοποιήθη), 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 ὀρθή πτώσις, 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 πλάγια πτώσεως. Thus, the presented definitions demonstrate that the term πτώσις 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 πτώσεως creates a proposition when combined with a predicate, it can be concluded that the concept of πτώσις is in this approach very close to the contemporary concept of the predicative argument. ὀρθή πτώσις, 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.
The origin of the opposition Πτώσεις ὀρθῆ (εὐθεία) – Πτώσεις πλάγιαι...

Πτώσεις πλάγιαι were, in turn, presented as the linguistically expressed content which is combined with ‘straight’ predicates. The examples provided (ἀκούει (s/he) listens, ὀρθαί (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” (κατηγορήματων 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” (ὁμοίως) to predicates, and within this group they distinguished exactly between the “straight” (ὁρθαί) and the “inverted” (ὑπτία) 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” (ῥήμα δὲ ἐστὶ μέρος λόγου σημαίνου 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 Porphyryus 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 Porphyryus claims that the Stoics described that content with the help of the term ἔλαττων ἢ κατηγόρημα – “less than a predicate”:

Amm. Comm. 44, 33–45, 315: καὶ πάλιν ἄν μὲν τὸ τοῦ ὁμόματος

14 A Neoplatonic living in the 3rd c. AD; a philosopher, grammarian, commentator, and exegete of philosophical writings.
15 = SVF, II, 184 (Porphyryus apud Ammonium in Aristot. de interpr. p. 44, 19 Busse).
κατηγορούμενον δέηται προσθήκης πτώσεως ὁνόματος τινος πρὸς τὸ παιδεία ἀπόφασιν, ἐλαττού ἢ κατηγορία λέγεται, ὡς ἐξει τὸ φιλεῖν καὶ τὸ ἐλευθερεῖ, ὀνον Πλάτων φιλεῖν τοῦτο γὰρ προστεθὲν τὸ τυά, ὀνον Δίωνα, ποεί ὠρισμένη ἀπόφασιν τὴν Πλάτων Δίων φιλείν.

“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 Porphyry’s ‘less than a predicate’ (ἐλαττούν ἢ κατηγορία) 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 πλάγιας πτώσεως, 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. ὁρθή πτώσις (ὁποτὲ 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 (τινα) – ‘hears, sees (who / what), talks (with whom’). Thus, it may be assumed that in the Stoic dialectics the term πλάγιας πτώσεως 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 ὁρθή πτώσις, 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 (ὑπτία), which also included the ‘reflexive’ ones (ἀρτιπεποθότα), as well as the ‘neuter’ ones (οὐδὲπεραια). The presented characteristics and the examples provided demonstrate that the ‘inverted’ and the ‘reflexive’ predicates are estab-

16 Porphyry’s claim that something “is predicated about the name” (ὁνόμα) and “requires to be completed with an [oblique] case of some [other] name” (δέηται προσθήκης πτώσεως ὁνόματος), 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 Porphyry, 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 predicable 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 (ὁρθή πτώσις). 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 ἐχωντα), i.e. the features of the ‘straight’ and the ‘inverted’ predicates. It means that the ‘neuter’ predicates neither con-note any other argument (πλάγιαι πτώσεις) apart from the subject of predication (ὁρθή πτώσις) nor do they combine with the passive element (παθητικοὶ 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’ (ἐλαττων ἢ κατηγόρημα).

With regard to this there appears a question whether it is possible to identify the sense of the terms ὁρθὴ πτώσις 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 (ὁρθὴ πτώσις) 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: ἄν μὲν οὖν ὁ νόηματος τι κατηγορηθέν ἀπόφασιν ποιή, κατηγόρημα καὶ σύμβαμα παρ’ αὐτοῦ ἀναμένεται (σημαίνει γὰρ ἀμφότερον), ὥσ τὸ περιπατεῖ, οἷον Σωκράτης περιπατεῖ, ἄν δὲ πτώσεως, παρασύμβαμα, ὦσπερ παρακείμενον τῷ συμβάματι καὶ ὅν οἷον παρακατηγόρημα, ὥσ ἔχει τὸ μεταμέλει, οἶον Σωκράτει μεταμέλει, τὸ μὲν γὰρ μεταμελεῖται σύμβαμα εἶναι, τὸ δὲ μεταμέλει παρασύμβαμα οὐ δυνάμενον ὁ νόηματι συνταχθὲν ἀπὸφασίν ἐργάσασθαι, οἶον Σωκράτης μεταμέλει (οὐδεμία γὰρ τούτῳ ἀπόφασισι), ἀλλ’ οὔτε

17 = SVF, 2, 184 (Porphyrias apud Ammonium in Aristot. de interpr. p. 44, 19 Busse).
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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 μεταμέλειται (‘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 (τοῦτος μεταμέλει – ‘it is a regret to them,’ ἐμὸς 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 Porphyry 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.
The origin of the opposition πτώσις ὀρθῆ (εὐθεία) – πτώσεις πλάγιαι...

(Σωκράτης περιπατεῖ – ‘Socrates walks,’ οἱ ἀνθρώποι 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. Porphyry identifies this subject as πτώσις (without the determiner ὀρθῆ) and contrasts it with ὄνομα (‘a name’) as the subject of predication constituted by σύμβαμα. Naturally, in this regard Porphyry’s 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 πτώσις (see above, passage 7, 64–65), whose language exponent is ὄνομα (‘a name’). The inaccuracy of Porphyry’s account may also be indicated by the last part of the analysed passage, in which the ‘less than a paracongruent’ (ἐλαττόν ἢ παρασύμβαμα) was defined as a predicative content stated about πτώσις, which “in order to form a proposition needs to be combined with another πτώσις πλάγια” (τὸ δεόμενον ἐτέρα συνταχθῆκαι πλάγια πτώσει πρὸς τὸ ποιήμα ἀπόφασην).” The inco-nsistency of the record saying that something stated about πτώσις requires being juxtaposed with another πτώσις πλάγια obviously stems from the fact that, erroneously understanding the Stoics’ term πτώσις as an oblique case, Porphyry altogether does not take into consideration the Stoic concept of ὀρθὴ πτώσις in his account, and therefore the term πλάγια πτώσις 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 Porphyry’s account: κατηγόρημα καὶ σύμβαμα παρ’ αὐτὸς ἀνομάζεται (σημαίνει γὰρ ἁμφι ταύτων)), but it is presented as one of the types of predicates (τῶν δὲ κατηγορημάτων τὰ μὲν ἐστι συμβαμάτα, οἷον τὸ δίὰ 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\textsuperscript{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 (διὸ παρακατηγόρημα), then the subject of predications constituted by the ‘paracongruent,’ just as in the case of all other types of predicates, is also ὁ ῶη πτώςις (‘Εστι δὲ τὸ κατηγόρημα [...] λεκτῶν ἐλλιπέως συντακτῶν ὁ ῶη πτώςις πρὸς ἀξιῶματος γένεσιν – “the predicate is [...] the incomplete content of the utterance which should be linked with ὁ ῶη πτώςις in order to create a proposition” – passage 7, 64–65), and not πτώςις, 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 ὁ ῶη πτώςις (Σωκράτης μεταμέλει – ‘It is a regret to Socrates,’ τοῦτοις μεταμέλει – ‘It is a regret to them’). And thus it is not possible to identify the Stoic concept of ὁ ῶη πτώςις 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’ (παρασύμβαμα), and also ‘less than paracongruents’ (ἐλαττών ἢ παρασύμβαμα), 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 πτώςις), e.g. Σωκράτης 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 ὁ ῶη πτώςις 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 πλάγιαι πτώςεις, 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 ὁ ῶη πτώςις and πλάγιαι πτώςεις and the category of the gram-

\textsuperscript{18} The expression: τῶν δὲ κατηγορημάτων τὰ μὲν ἐστὶ σημβάματα... (“among predicates some are congruents...”) opens the space for another element of the presented systematics, introduced by the operator τὰ δὲ. The types of predicates enumerated further (after the damaged passage) surely represent another division already within σημβάματα (also possibly ἐλαττών ἢ σημβάματα).
The origin of the opposition \( \text{πώσις} \) (εὐθεία) – \( \text{πτώσεις} \) πλάγιαι...

matrical case is contradicted by a statement opening passage 7, 65 of the aforementioned text by Diogenes: \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{δὲ} \ \text{πτώσεις} \ \text{εἰσὶ} \ \text{γενικὴ} \ \text{kai} \ \text{δοτικὴ} \ \text{kai} \ \text{αἰτιατικὴ} \). 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 \( \text{ορθὴ} \ \text{πώσις} \) and \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \) 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 \( \text{ορθὴ} \ \text{πώσις} \) and \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \) 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 \( \text{ορθὴ} \ \text{πώσις} \) can be identified with the subject of predication, whereas the position of \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \) 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 \( \text{διαλέγεται} \) (‘(s/he) talks’) and its non-subjective argument, i.e. \( \text{tiv} \) (‘with someone’), is certainly different than the relationship between the predicate \( \text{ορθά} \) (‘(s/he) sees’) and the argument \( \text{tiv} \) (‘someone’). It may thus be assumed that distinguishing these different \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \), 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 \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \) in the structure of the proposition. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the authenticity

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 \( \text{ορθὴ} \ \text{πώσις} \) and \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \), but never to \( \text{ορθὴ} \ \text{πώσις} \ \text{οἰκόματος} \) or \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \ \text{οἰκόματος} \).

20 The fact that \( \text{ορθὴ} \ \text{πώσις} \) and \( \text{πλάγιαι} \ \text{πτώσεις} \) 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 \( \text{koinὴ} \ \text{ποιῶτὴς} \) (common property) and \( \text{iδιὰ} \ \text{ποιῶτης} \) (individual property), respectively, but not \( \text{πτώσεις} \), were indicated as the proper meanings for \( \text{προσεχρίμα} \) (a name) and \( \text{ὁνόμα} \) (a proper name). \( \text{koinὴ} \) and \( \text{iδιὰ} \ \text{ποιῶτης} \) constitute meanings of nouns presented in an absolute way; they gain the status of \( \text{πτώσεις} \) in the situation in which they are considered in the context of their relationship to κατηγόρημα, together with which they create \( \text{αἰσχυλικά} \) (λεκτὴν κάτοπτελεῖς), 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 \( \text{προσεχρίμα} \) and \( \text{ὁνόμα} \) differs from the status of the content denoted by \( \text{ὁμα} \) (the verb), which always has a relative (exocentric) character; hence the verb \( \text{ὁμα} \) was defined as a word meaning exactly (αὐτοθέτειν) 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 ὁρθῇ πτώσις was for the same reasons 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 (τά σημαίνομενα) 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 Porphyrius 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 ὁρθῇ πτώσις 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 ὠφθείν 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. ἁκούει (‘(s/he) hears’), ὁρᾶ (‘(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, ὁρᾶ) ‘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 (φονεῖται), as e.g., φρονεῖ (‘(s/he) thinks’), πεπιστεῖ (‘(s/he) walks’), i.e. one-argument predicates. Meanwhile, in the Hellenistic

21 I.e. due to the fact that in most cases it is denoted by a noun in the nominative.
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grammatical tradition the determiner ὀρθὸς 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, except that this determiner was already then linked with ῥῆμα (‘the verb’) and not with the term κατηγόρημα. As was mentioned earlier, in order to point to the nominative the Greek grammar also used a synonymous determiner ἐθνός alongside with the adjective ὀρθὸς (‘straight’) and thus, side by side with the term ὀρθὸς the term ἐθνός there existed also the term ἐθνεῖα ὀρθῶς. It is documented by the quoted passage from the Τέχνη γραμματική and a number of places in the treatises by Apollonius Dyscolos. The sources preserved do not attest the use of the term ἐθνεῖα ὀρθῶς in the circle of the Stoic linguistic doctrine. The use of the adjective ἐθνός 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 δοσέων τὴν λέξιν κατ’ ἐθνό appearing there is interpreted as a formulation concerning the use of the noun in the nominative. 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: 'Εν δὲ τοῖς δὲ ὄν ἀποκαλοῦνται κατηγορομένους τοῦτο λεκτέον, ὡς οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ χωρὶς καί ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τὸ ἀποκλείον. Τὸ γὰρ κάλλος κοινὴ μὲν τὸ αὐτὸ δηλοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ συμφ. καὶ τοῦ ρουκοῦ, προστιθέμενοι δὲ οὐδὲν καλεῖ, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν τῇ μίν τοῦ δὲ τῷ σκέλει συμβαίνει ἐνθαμεναὶ ἐνθαμεναὶ γὰρ τὸ συμφ., ἐνθαμεναὶ δὲ τῷ ραβδῷ συμβαίνει, καὶ οὐδὲν διαφέρει εἰπεῖν μία σεμὴ ἢ μία κοίλη. Εἰτὶ οὐ δοσέων τὴν λέξιν κατ’ ἐθνός γὰρ ἐστὶν. Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν τὸ συμφ. μίας κοίλης, ἀλλὰ μίν τοῖς ὅλος πάθος, ἀλλὰ οὔθεν ἀποτοῖ: ἐμί ἢ μία σεμὴ μίας ἐστὶν εὑρότα καλότιτι μίνος. “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

22 Following the characteristics presented by Diogenes it may be assumed that the ‘neuter predicates’ (οὐδέτερα) could also be expressed by verbs in the medio-passive voice, as e.g. κείται (‘is lying’), μαίνεται (‘is raging’) or πετείται (‘is flying’).

23 Cf. e.g. Schol. D.T. 548, 35, where the indication of the term ὀρθός as a determiner of the verb in the active voice (being in opposition to the term ὑπός describing the form of the passive voice) is accompanied by the reference to a motivation based on the metaphor of the standing (upright) and the floored wrestler: τὰ ἑργατικὰ ρήματα καλοῦνται δραστικά, καλοῦνται καὶ ὀρθά […] ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς τῶν ὀξύτητων τῶν ὀξύτων ἢ ὑπότων καλομένων.

24 Cf. e.g. A.D. Syn. I. 13 (15, 10); 80 (67, 11); 83 (71, 2); 102 (85, 14); 136 (112, 4).

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’ (μυς σιμη) does not differ from the content of the phrase ‘a concave nose’ (μυς κολη), however, what does differ is the content of the phrase ‘snubness (of the nose)’ as non-equivalent to it, describing it as λεξις κατ’ ευθυ. 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 λεξις κατ’ ευθυ 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. το σιμον (μυς) and μυς σιμη, appear in the nominative. Thus, the expression λεξις κατ’ ευθυ cannot be interpreted as meaning ‘the phrase in the nominative,’ because the phrase which is contrasted with it (i.e. ‘a snub nose’ – μυς σιμη), 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 ευθυ 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’ ευθυ) from the logical-semantic point of view, i.e. as a (nominal) designation of this property (το σιμον ‘snubness’) – contrary to the word (an adjective) expressing this property “indirectly,” that is attributively, i.e. as an attribute of something (σιμος ‘snub’). It appears then that the term ευθυ (πωσις) 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 ὀρθη (πωσις).

To sum up, it may be stated that the opposition ὀρθη πωσις / πλάγια 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 ὀρθη, ευθυ and πωσις in reference to the nominative see Thorp (1989: 317–324).
The origin of the opposition \( \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \quad \vartheta\rho\acute{\eta} (\varepsilon\upsilon\dot{\theta}\varepsilon\iota\alpha) - \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma\u03b1 \ \pi\lambda\acute{\acute{a}}\gamma\iota\alpha i\). What justifies this statement is the fact that in the framework of the Stoic dialectics concepts denoted by terms \( \vartheta\rho\acute{\eta} \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) and \( \pi\lambda\acute{\acute{a}}\gamma\iota\alpha i \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) were unambiguously situated in the sphere of the linguistically expressed content (\( \tau\acute{\acute{a}} \ \sigma\mu\mu\alpha\nu\iota\acute{\acute{a}}\mu\acute{\mu}e\iota\alpha\na, \ \tau\acute{\acute{a}} \ \lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{\acute{a}} \)) and used consistently in connection with the concept of \( \kappa\alpha\tau\gamma\gamma\rho\acute{\omicron}\mu\acute{\omicron}\alpha \) (‘predicate’), that is the predicative content expressed by the verb. The analysis of the preserved records demonstrates that the term \( \vartheta\rho\acute{\eta} \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) had a meaning of the subjective predicate argument (disregarding the value of the case of the noun which denoted it), whereas \( \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma\u03b1 \ \pi\lambda\acute{\acute{a}}\gamma\iota\alpha i \) had the meaning of the non-subjective arguments implied by multi-argument predicates. Therefore, in the Stoic dialectics the opposition \( \vartheta\rho\acute{\eta} \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma / \pi\lambda\acute{\acute{a}}\gamma\iota\alpha i \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) 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 \( \vartheta\rho\acute{\eta} \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) with its most frequent language exponent, i.e. the noun in the nominative, and following the same principle, of the Stoic \( \pi\lambda\acute{\acute{a}}\gamma\iota\alpha i \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) with nouns in the oblique cases. The Hellenistic philological school should probably also be ascribed the introduction of the term \( \varepsilon\upsilon\dot{\theta}\varepsilon\iota\alpha \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) as a name of the nominative synonymous with \( \vartheta\rho\acute{\eta} \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \), as there are no sufficient premises on which to attribute the use of the adjective \( \varepsilon\upsilon\dot{\theta}\varepsilon\iota\alpha \) 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.

References


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 \( \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \), i.e. a derivative coming from the verb \( \pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\acute{\epsilon}\nu\) 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” (\( \acute{\epsilon}p\acute{\epsilon} \ τ\acute{o} \ νο\acute{\mu}ματος \ το\acute{\epsilon} \ τ\acute{\epsilon} \ ψυ\acute{\omicron}\iota \[..] \ \pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\acute{\epsilon}\nu\iota\varsigma \)), and thus as a specific, external reflex of this concept. In turn, we learn about the expression \( \vartheta\rho\acute{\eta} \pi\tau\omega\iota\varsigma \) that the Stoics were to link it with “prototypicality” (\( \acute{\omicron} \ \acute{\omicron}\rho\acute{\epsilon}\acute{\epsilon}\tau\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\sigma\nu\iota\varsigma \)) 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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