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TERMS OF ONTOLOGICAL STRUCTURE, 'IMAGE-MAKING ART' AND HUMAN ACTIVITIES IN PLATO'S *SOPHIST*

When we analyze, translate and interpret Plato's dialogues many problems appear. One of these problems is concerned with terminology of great philosopher's texts. How can we find out exact Georgian translation of terms which have very specific philosophical meaning? If we can't resolve this problem in right way our attempt will provide absolutely false interpretation of Plato and his philosophy. That's why I think that it is necessary to do detailed analyses of each term of each passage and each dialogue. This is the right way. Our goal is to do some kind of analyses of several terms of Plato's *Sophist*, their ancient Greek meaning and their equivalents in Georgian.

The subject of our interest is analyses of the terms which we can divide in three groups according to their semantics. These groups are: 1. terms related to the ontological structure of the dialogue *Sophist*; 2. terms related to the 'image-making art' of Plato's *Sophist*; 3. terms designated various human activities. The analyses of these terms will demonstrate how innovative Plato is in derivation of words and in use of these words.

Terms Related to the Ontological Structure of the Dialogue Sophist

In Plato's *Sophist* we have the following group of terms: εἰμί, τὸ ὄν, τὸ μὴ ὄν, τὰ ὄντα, ὀντώς, οὐσία. The verb εἰμί has several main meanings in Greek: 1. Existence: a) of persons, b) of the real world, c) of circumstances, events; 2. to be the fact of the case; 3. copula connecting the predicate with the subject; 4. copula with the participle to represent the finite verb; 5. after ἄρα to express a fact which is and has always been the same.[1] The other

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[1] Greek-English Lexicon, by H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, Oxford 1961, 487-489.

terms of this sub-group are derivatives from this verb and it is very diffi-
cult to find out the exact equivalents of them in Georgian or in other lan-
guages. Plato's use of the verb εἰμί in this dialogue is very specific and it is
'the being of real world', the exact translation of this word will be 'exis-
tence'.

What about the terms τὸ ὄν and τὸ μὴ ὄν? Both of them are deriva-
tives from the verb εἰμί, the first with positive meaning and the second
with negative one. These two terms form antonymous pair – being and
non-being. These terms haven't had the same meaning and haven't been
easy to understand for ancient Greeks. τὸ ὄν has the several different
meanings: 1. something which abstractly exists; 2. the group of subjects; 3.
the subject which has being[2]. These meanings are the same for the plural
form of this noun - τὰ ὄντα. Besides this term has the meaning of οὐσία in
Plato's works. There are no exact boundaries between the meanings of the
terms τὸ ὄν, τὰ ὄντα, οὐσία in Plato's works. They have a lot of meanings
and they are radically different from each other in various dialogues, pas-
sages and contexts of Plato. But one fact is clear – in any case all of them
form oppositional pair with the term γένεσις – creation, coming into being.

What about the term τὰ ὄντα? In ancient Greek the forms of this type,
namely, neutral plural noun forms have the meaning of collective nouns.
Therefore it is very difficult to translate this word into other languages
and probably into Georgian. That's why we decide to translate it as 'be-
ings' and in this way we gather under this meaning 'all things which exist,
which have being.'

It's a good deal the proper translation of the term οὐσία. In ancient
Greek this term have been used with the following meanings: 1. real es-
tate; 2. substance, essence; 3. true nature; 4. stable being.[3] But in dialogues
of Plato this term has the very narrow and specific technical meaning
which is concerned with the opposition of the word γένεσις. That's why
we think that this term must be translated as 'beingness' or 'beinghood'.

It is very difficult to translate the word ὀντώς. Grammaticaly it is ad-
verbial form from the verb εἰμί and we prefer to translate it with adverb
'truly'. For example, 'τόν ὀντώς σοφιστήν' must be translated as 'truly
sophist'.

One of very interesting terms of our dialogue is γένεσις which had ab-
solutely different meanings in ancient Greek, these are: 1. origin, source; 2.

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[2]   Greek-English Lexicon, 1961, 488.
[3]   Greek-English Lexicon, 1961, 1274.

nativity, geniture; 3. production, generation; 4. creation; 5. generation, age[4]. In Plato's works and namely in the *Sophist* this term is used with the very specific meaning 'coming into being' and is opposition of the term τό ὄν. In other words, something that is generated, that is produced, that needs to be coming into being is opposed to the thing that exists stable.

And finally I want very briefly to pay attention to one of very important terms. The main character of τὸ ὄν is that it possess' some kind of power (κεκτημένον δύναμιν) and that's why it truly exists and everything whatever has being is nothing other than the power (δύναμις).[5] Here we have other interesting term - δύναμις, which has the following main meanings: 1. strength, power, ability; 2. outward power, influence, authority; 3. force for war; 4. means. In this dialogue Plato defines δύναμις as a motive of every being as something which constraint the things to exist. This term can be translated as a 'power' and also as 'energy'. We prefer to translate it as a 'power' which implies in itself 'energy' too.

After this let us to pay attention to one of very interesting terminological group which is related to one of the activities of sophists – image-making art.

Terms Related to the 'Art of Image-Maker'

The dramatic setting of the dialogue gives us the definition of sophist as image-maker. This passage gives us very interesting vocabulary which is related to the essence of imitation. Namely, it is said that the sophist is a maker of images (εἴδωλα), a practitioner of image-making art (εἰδωλοποιίκη). The first division of this art is the following: images may be either likeness (εἰκόνα) or appearances (φάντασμα). These three terms don't appear in one group in other dialogues of Plato.

It is interesting that Plato's discussion of 'image' is itself an image. Plato's argumentation is by analogy and we can see and demonstrate how these three terms are connected with each other and how Plato uses these terms in other dialogues. After this it will be clear for us that the doctrine of *Sophist* is very original and different from other later dialogues of Great philosopher.

Image (εἴδωλον) in *Sophist* is a designation for the product of imitative arts. The original Greek meaning of this term is 'phantasm'. This is the only meaning which we can find out in Homer and Plato also uses this

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[4]   Greek-English Lexicon, 1961, 343.
[5]   See Ambuel D., Image and Paradigm in Plato's *Sophist*, Athens 2007, 115.

term with this meaning.[6] But in Plato more often this term has the meaning of 'vision' and the other words which are derivated from this root. Image is visible but unreal part of being. Frequently this term is used with meaning of copy of something original. In the *Sophist* the works of artists are called εἴδωλα (images). In *Republic* (III 402b) this term is used to define the images in water and in mirror. The further development of this meaning gives us new interpretation – the image is visible depiction of invisible beings. In *Statesman* (286a) it is said that for the greatest and the noblest beings we have no such image. In *Phaedrus* (2501) we have discussion that there is no such image of wisdom (φρόνησις). From these two passages we can conclude that the image is something visible and here we have discussion about the opposition of visible and invisible world.

In other passages the meaning is related to the nature of image. It is something oppositive to the truth, original. In *Gorgias* (436b) Plato calls rhetoric the image of a part of politics.

We can see how different meanings of 'image' in various dialogues of Plato are. We can conclude that despite such differences of the meaning of this term, all of them has one typical point, namely that the image is something which isn't true, isn't origin, isn't real.

Appearance (φάντασμα) is the term which very often in Plato's dialogues has the same meaning as image (εἴδωλον). All meanings of image (εἴδωλον) can be found for appearance (φάντασμα) as well. Very often these two terms are synonyms for Plato. In *Republic* (X, 596a) they are used with the meaning of 'vision'.

If appearance (φάντασμα) has other meaning it is generally related to the imagination, fantasy and mental production. For example once in *Cratylus* (386e) and once in *Timaeus* (46a) it is used with the meaning of 'dream' but in any case it is connected with the essence of 'distance from reality'.

Likeness (εἰκών) is one another term which designates 'image' and is used with this meaning but has other nuance and appears in later divisions of sophist. This term is found in several contexts and its meaning is 'likeness'. Very often it means 'analogy' or 'comparison'[7]. In contexts which are concerned with usage of this term as 'image' the meaning is the same that for εἴδωλον or φάντασμα. But it has other meaning too and it is the product of sculptor or painter or images in water and shadows[8]. But in

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[6]   See Plato, *Republic,* III, 3864; *Ion*, 539a.

[7]   See *Phaedo,* 87d; *Meno,* 80c; *Gorgias,* 571d.

[8]   See *Phaedo,* 99e; *Republic*, VI 509d.

any case this term is in one group with the other two and this group of terms is related with the theory of participation of great forms. And the formation of the group of this semantics is great merit of great philosopher[9].

Terms Designated Various Human Activities

And finally I want to consider terms which designate different human activities, sciences, arts. The most of them are so detailed and devaluated that we see Plato's well-known irony once more, but it is interesting that most of them are products of Plato.

In the *Sophist* there are 78 such terms. First of all it is interesting that Plato designates sophist's activity with the term art (τέχνη) and no practice (τρίβη) or experience (ἐμπειρία). Practice is an ability to produce effects without true knowledge or any systematic method. The relation with sophists is very clear, but Plato uses the term art and says that the sophists have some kind of art. I think that in this dialogue the meaning of τέχνη is not art, it is ability, ability to do something and here is so-called Socratic irony. Let's see which arts possess' the sophists.

Plato derivates the terms of human activities with three different ways: 1. First, it is the type of derivation of abstract nouns with suffix – ική. These are: ἀγωνιστική – the art of contention, ἁλιευτική – the art of angling, ἀνδραποδιστιική – the art of enslavement, ἀπατητική – the art of deception, αὐτοπωλική – the art of selling of own produce, βαλανευτική – the art of bathing, γναφευτική – the art of milling, γραφική – the art of painting, γυμναστική – the art of gymnastics, δημηγορική – the art of orators, διαιρετική – the art of division, διακριτική – the art of separating, διδασκαλική – the art of teaching, δικανική – the art of law, δοξομιμητική – the art of imitation with appearance, δοξοπαιδευτική – the art spurious education, εἰδωλοποιική – the art of image-making, εἰκαστική – the art of producing of likeness, ἐμπορική – the art of merchandising, ἐνυγροθερική – the hunting on water animals, ἐπιδεικτική – the art of demonstration, ἑρκοθερική – the art of hunting with fishnet, ἐρωτική – the art of love, ζωοθερική – the art of hunting animals, ἡδυντική – the art of obsequiousness, ἡμεροθερική – the art of hunting on tame animals, θαυματοποιική – the art of miracles, θερευτική – the art of hunting, ἰατρική – the art of doctoring, ἰδιωθερευτική – the art of hunting for private aims, ἱστορική – the art of science, καπηλική – the art of chandlery, κολυμβητική – the art of swimming,

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9   Ambuel D., *Image and Paradigm in Plato's Sophist,* Athens 2007, 70-74.

κολακική – the art of adulate, κοσμητική – the art of decoration, κτητική – acquisitive art, ληστική – the art of robbing, μαθηματοπωλική – the art of selling of knowledge, μιμητική – the art of imigation, μουσική – the art of music, νομισματοπωλική – the art of interchanging of money, νουθετητική – the art of suggestion, οἰκητική – the art of domestication, ὀρνιθευτική – the art of hunting on birds, παιδευτική – the art of education, πιθανουργική – the art of persuasion, πληκτική – the art of huntinc by kicking, ποιητική – the productive art, προσομιλητική – the art of interrelation, πυρευτική – the art of hunting near fire, σπογγιστική – the art of bath-house attendant, στρατηγική – the art of strategist, τεχνοπωλική – the art of selling different arts, τυραννική – the art of tyranny, φανταστική – the art of production appearances, φθειριστική – the art of liquidation of lice, φυχεμπορική – the art of trading by nourishing soul. The most part of terms are dervated in this way; 2. Second, it is the type of derivation of possessive nouns with suffix – ικός. These are: ἀγκιστρευτικόν – the art of hunting with hooks, ἀγοραστικόν – the art of trading, ἀλλακτικόν – the art of interchanging, ἁμιλλητικόν – the art of competition, ἀμφισβητητικόν – the art of comparison, ἀντιλογικόν – the art of questions and answers, αὐτοποιητικόν – the art of creation, βιαστικόν – the art of violence, δωρητικόν – the art of making presents, δωροφορικόν – the art of receiving presents, ἐριστικόν – the art of eristics, καθαρτικόν – the art of purification, μαθηματικόν – mathematics, μαχητικόν – the art of fighting, μεταβλητικόν – the art of interchanging, μισθαρνητικόν – the art of taking fees, πεζοθηρικόν – the art of hunting on land-animals, χειρωτικόν – the art of procurence, χρηματιστικόν – the art of making money, χρηματοφθορικόν – the art of wasting money; 3. And finally, only one term from 78 is derived with suffix –ία and this is φαρμακοποσία, which we translate as 'the art of producing medicine'.

And finally as a conclusion I want to say that Plato in *Sophist* shows us several and different ways of derivation or usage of philosophical terms: 1. In some cases he demonstrates traditional way, he uses well-known Greek term to designate some elements of his philosophical structure; 2. In other cases he uses some ancient Greek common terms and gives them specific technical meaning; 3. And finally sometimes he derivates new terms for his philosophical structure. As for the further perspective, I think that more detailed analyses of these terms will give us the possibility for new understanding and interpretation of Plato's literary heritage.