

## Theory and History of Ontology

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### Annotated Bibliography on the Concept of Truth in Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy

#### GENERAL STUDIES ON THE HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT OF TRUTH

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2. Allen, Barry. 1993. *Truth in Philosophy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

See in particular *Part One. Historical introduction 1. Classical philosophy of truth* pp. 9-28 ; *2. Modern truth* pp. 29-37, for a brief sketch of the history of theories of truth.

"I begin with a historical introduction. What I call the classical philosophy of truth is an ensemble of four interdependent ideas in ancient philosophy (Greek and Christian) concerning truth's relation to nature, language, being, and the good. Together they define the historical discourse on truth I call onto-logic. The first principle of onto-logic is that the "logical" possibility of sentential truth-value derives from the "ontological" possibility of beings that "are what they are," that have an identity of their own. For onto-logic, truth is true to such beings; it takes its measure from what is, whose nature truth discloses. In Part One, I look at versions of onto-logic first in Greek and Christian sources, then in modern philosophy. But it is not my intention to write the history of Western truth. The historical studies in Part One merely establish some context for the discussion of six philosophers which follows: Nietzsche and William James (Part Two); and Heidegger, Derrida, Wittgenstein, and Foucault (Part Three)."

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Contents: 1. Introduction: Our contemporary intellectual predicament 1; 2. Doing philosophy historically 7; 3. Truth as Divine norm 18; 4. Timeless truth 40; 5. Truth and the Divine Intellect 75; 6. Doing the truth 101; 7. Truth and Judgements 120; 8. The forms fracture 145; 9. Truth as the positive reality of ideas 170; 10. Truth and the new way of ideas 203; 11. Truth in a contingent world 222; 12. The emergence of historicity 251; 13. The True as a historical result 269; 14. Individual existence and the appropriation of truth 292; 15. Truth as a social construct 322; 16. Truth and the analysis of logical form 355; 17. The historicity of truth 395; 18. Truth in action 412; Select bibliography 441; Index 449-463.

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See: *III. Letter Two: Doubt* (on the words for "truth" in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Russian).
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11. Pritzl, Kurt, ed. 2010. *Truth. Studies of a Robust Presence*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press.

Contents: Kurt Pritzl: Introduction 1; 1. Kurt Pritzl: Aristotle's Door 15; 2. Mitchell Miller: A More "Exact Grasp" of the Soul? Tripartition in the *Republic* and Dialectic in the *Philebus* 40; 3. Timothy Noone: Truth, Creation, and Intelligibility in Anselm, Grosseteste, and Bonaventure 102; 4. Jan A. Aertsen: Truth in the Middle Ages: Its Essence and Power in Christian Thought 127; 5. Daniel Garber, Religion and Science, Faith and Reason: Some Pascalian Reflections 147; 6. Sean Dorrance Kelly: On Time and Truth 168; 7. Daniel O. Dahlstrom: The Prevalence of Truth 185; 8. Brian H. Bix: Will versus Reason: Truth in Natural Law, Positive Law, and Legal Theory 208; 9. Robert E. Wood: Art and Truth: From Plato through Nietzsche to Heidegger 232; 10. John Milbank: Truth and Identity: The Thomistic Telescope 277; 11. Susan Haack, Truth and Progress in the Sciences: An Innocent Realist Perspective 310; Bibliography 337; Contributors 357; Index 361-368.

12. Schaerer, René. 1964. "Alétheia. Héritage Antique Et Verité D'aujourd'hui." In *Actes Du Xiiie Congrès Des Sociétés De Philosophie De Langue Française (Bruxelles Et Louvain 22-24 Août 1964. Thème Principal: La Verité, 87-106*. Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts.

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See: *Endnote. The vocabulary of truth: an example* pp. 271-278.
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Reprinted in: Jan Wolenski - *Essays in the history of logic and logical philosophy* - Cracov - Jagiellonian University Press 1999 pp. 139-149.

"Although truth belongs to the family of crucial philosophical categories, writing its general history still remains a serious challenge for historians of philosophy. Also historical accounts of particular truth-theories are rather fragmentary. Since the classical (also called 'the correspondence') theory of truth has become the most popular and influential among all hitherto proposed answers to the philosophical problem of truth, a lack of its written history is specially strange, more than in the case of their various rivals; this theory maintains, roughly speaking, that truth consists in a relation of correspondence (agreement, adequacy or conformity) which holds between so-called bearers of truth (judgements, ideas, thoughts, propositions, statements or sentences) and reality.

This paper presents a sketch of how the gap could be filled with respect to the classical concept of truth (*CCT* for briefly). It is just a sketch which by no means pretends to any completeness. The history of the classical (as well as every other) theory of truth requires taking into account at least four points, namely:  
(A) Statements which have been explicitly intended as definitions (or other explications) of *CCT*.  
(B) Formulations which could be interpreted as definitions (or rather explications) of *CCT* independently

of the intentions of their authors.

(C) The philosophical environment of formulations collected under (A) and (B); it is especially important for cases falling under (B).

(D) Criticism of *CCT* and its defenses against raised objections.

I would like to touch each of (A)-(D) but my principal goal is to contribute to (A) and (B)." p. 139 of the reprint.

## THE CONCEPT OF TRUTH IN ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY

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"Die folgenden Untersuchungen beabsichtigen eine Klärung des Wortgebrauchs von *Lógos* und *Alétheia* in den frühgriechischen Sprachwerken - die philosophischen ausgenommen. Gemäß der Eigenart der Zeugnisse und der entsprechenden zeitlichen Verteilung ist die Darstellung in zwei Abschnitte gegliedert, deren erster den Bereich des frühgriechischen Epos behandelt, der andere die Folgezeit bis zur Mitte des fünften Jahrhunderts etwa. Dabei wird das Wort *Lógos* jeweils vor dein Wort *Alétheia* erörtert, weil es so der innere Zusammenhang beider nachleget." p. 82
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Préface de Paul Veyne.

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Voir en particulier 3.1 La part de la vérité. L' *aletheia* et les autres façons de dire la vérité pp. 165-183

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See Chapter 4: *The wide-open mouth of truth* pp. 60-75

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Chapter 9: *Some Presocratics* 93-106; Chapter 10: *Plato's Truth* 107-122; Chapter 12: *Plato and Heidegger* 127-140.

"The truth of the pre-Socratics is not the truth of integrity, of the monumental wholeness of the text of Homer and Plato. In fact, we now know the monumental Homeric corpus to have its own fragmentariness, not the fragmentation of the Analysts, who wanted to discard parts of the received text as interpolations, but a sedimentation, a complicated series of origins, an unevenness due to its oral composition that prevents it from being what was once considered the seamless, intentional production of an "author." So from the beginning, as we approach the pre-Socratics' work, their aphorisms, bits and pieces recorded in later philosophers, traces of their reputation shaping even in their absence the work of others, we cannot yet-perhaps we can never- achieve a sense of coherence, of systematic development of philosophical ideas, such as is perhaps possible with the works of Kant or Hegel.

I want to approach the notion of truth in the pre-Socratics fragmentarily, then, by looking at truth in the fragmentary remains of the work of Herakleitos and Parmenides, two radically different thinkers. I have not attempted here to present an encyclopedic survey of all occurrences of *alêtheia* in Homer, Hesiod, all the pre-Socratics. Rather, I want to give a sense of a cultural paradigm, of the ways in which the word *alêtheia* works within a semantic field, in its contrasts, for example, with other words for truth, and as it fits into a cultural and social field of seeking out the genuine, the true. Herakleitos seems to offer a suggestive and idiosyncratic notion of truth that has certain affinities with the dialogical practices of the later democracy, while Parmenides' sense of truth is more compatible with the traditions of epic and of the consultation of oracles." p. 96

"Plato returns to the pre-classical notion of the *basanos* as a proof of loyalty and truth; but even more importantly, he presents both a paradigm of truth as recollection, the recalling of time -- buried truth -- and a paradigm of the production of truth through the *elegkhos*, the philosophical conversation, a version of truth as dialectic, as process, as the making of a truth in time, between people, not as the revelation of something lost in the past but as the production of something in the present. This latter element seems to me the trace of the democratic in Plato, a trace that may be represented only to be disavowed within the larger corpus of Plato's arguments." p. 107

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- Chapter 2: Protagora's *Aletheia* - pp. 8-29.
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Tome I. Présentation générale. Le vrai et le faux dans les épopées homériques.

"Ce livre est la première partie d'une thèse de doctorat d'État qui a été soutenue le 11 mai 1974 en Sorbonne" (Avant-propos).

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"Ce livre forme un ensemble avec la première partie d'une thèse de doctorat d'État soutenue à la Sorbonne en 1974 et parue en 1976." (Avant-Propos).

"L'analyse lexicale de la conception et de l'expression du vrai et du faux fait apparaître, dans l' *Illiade* et dans l' *Odyssée*, l'existence d'un système ancien, qui repose sur des énoncés subjectifs se révélant conformes au réel objectif (familles d' *etéos*, *etmos*, et *etétumos*, d' *atrekéos* et de *ypertés*) ou procédant de l'invention de pures fictions ( *pseudos*, *pseudomai*).

Indépendamment de lui, l' *alethein* ancienne correspond à une révélation véridique prenant la forme d'un *non-voilé-dévoilant*.

Avec des prodromes déjà perceptibles chez Homère, la mutation de la psychologie de la connaissance tend progressivement à conduire à voir dans la vérité, dont le faux devient une déformation, le réel objectif connu, convenablement interprété par l'intelligence et fidèlement transmis.

Les catégories du faux et du vrai qui apparaissent alors relèvent dans le lexique de *pseudos* et d' *aletheia*, le terme, compatible, dès l'origine, avec la démarche décrite (un contenu objectif est communiqué), étant pourvu de nouvelles valeurs sémantiques. L'évolution est lente et considérable. Elle se fait par une série d'étapes successives.

D'Hésiode au Ve siècle, traits anciens et caractères nouveaux coexistent, mais petit à petit ceux-ci éliminent ceux-là. Un équilibre relatif est encore perceptible chez Hésiode, mais rapidement notions et mots archaïques s'effacent au profit de ce que représentent *alethés* et *aletheia*, *pseudos* et *pseudomai*, ainsi que les termes qui leur sont apparentés, tandis que se développent parallèlement des concepts et des vocables nouveaux. Ils entrent dans les structures évoluées de la cognition et de la communication du *vrai* et du *faux* telles que *alethés* et *aletheia*, *pseudos* et *pseudomai* en montrent l'existence et la nature.

C'est l'histoire de cette évolution majeure, considérée comme formant un ensemble cohérent, que décrit le présent livre, dans la continuité de l'apport homérique, sur le fondement d'une étude sémantique menée à partir d'une analyse des textes littéraires, rédigés en vers ou non, d'Hésiode à la fin de l'âge archaïque et

avant la grande floraison de la prose classique.

Le critère permettant d'opposer *archaïque* et *classique* est celui que fournit, au moins en ce qui concerne l'attique, la disparition de l'usage vivant des concepts les plus anciens et de leurs supports linguistiques." (Présentation Générale).

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41. Luther, Wilhelm. 1935. "*Wahrheit*" Und "*Lüge*" Im Ältesten Griechentum. Leipzig: Verlag Robert Noske.
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"This work is a study of the archaic phenomenology of Homer. Particular attention is paid to linguistic

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Also the author critically examines contemporary readings of Homer including those of Heidegger, Foucault, and Derrida."
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- "This paper aims to outline the course of 'truth' in Plato's and Aristotle's works, where it begins as the veridical reading of *einai*, and ends as a function of *logos*. In Plato's Socratic dialogues truth has no methodological implications. The dialogues on the theory of forms sustain the polysemy of being, using truth as a means of establishing the consistency of arguments *Phaedo* 100a). The difficult coexistence of truth with infallibility ( *Theaetetus* 152a-179c) leads to its emergence as a *poion* of *logos* ( *Sophist* 263b). Aristotle's *De interpretatione* 1-6 points to a correspondence theory of truth, showing that only by affirming or denying *logos* is true or false."
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- "II. In the context of the Bacchic mysteries, the bone tablets from Pontic Olbia open up space for theological meditation, documenting with direct sources from the mid-fifth century B.C. the belief in immortality seen darkly in the mania, the disembodiment of the concept of the soul, and an idea of truth so strong that it cannot be attributed only to a religion which defines itself in respect to others. Thus a new tessera can be added to the comprehension of the relation between Orphic thought and the initiation rites in which the first philosophy takes root."
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"In the modern world truth is a fundamental intellectual and moral virtue. Courts of law demand, in a famous phrase, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; statesmen must appear to be devoted to the truth; scholarly work is judged first on its truth and only thereafter for other qualities. The historian, for example, seeks to say true things, and hopes to guarantee the reputation of his work by amassing verified, precise detail, the hallmark of which is the learned footnote.

Recently I have been investigating the origins of this attitude along with other aspects of the incipient historical spirit, during the archaic period of Greek history (700-500 B.C.). (1) To my surprise there seems to have been only limited consideration of what the Greeks in this era generally meant by truth'. Correspondingly, the fact that their ideas of truth often differed markedly from modern concepts has not been stressed, even though early Greek views on the matter had a lasting influence not only on ancient historiography but also on classical thought. The following remarks are intended as a sketch of the evidence which may hopefully encourage more intensive discussion; my intent, let me be clear, is to suggest how varied were the meanings of truth at the time, not to analyze their relations to modern epistemological theories.

A cynic, indeed, might argue that here as elsewhere, the Greeks were simply more honest; for truth only slowly became a conscious, abstract virtue in Greek civilization, and never gained that unquestioned priority which we theoretically assign to it today. While Homer assessed the reality of events and distinguished true statements from prevarications, the words which he and other early Greeks used to express these ideas initially lacked the absolute quality implicit in the modern truth ' and lie '. In time the verbal distinctions became theoretical and general; otherwise history and philosophy could scarcely have emerged. Yet thinkers had a cankering fear that only the gods could really know the truth, and rarely felt passionately the need for truth.

By 400 B.C. - the boundary of this essay - two modes of establishing verity, the speculative and the empirical, had emerged, but so too had conscious intellectual scepticism; only thereafter did epistemological analysis begin to develop. Perhaps even more devastating in its effects, as regards the mastery of the ideal of truth, was the emphasis upon form as a mode of evaluating the truth of a work." (1) Chester G. Starr, *The Awakening of the Greek Historical Spirit* (New York, 1968).

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"Although this was originally written as a dictionary article, this work is neither merely didactic nor merely a lexicographical survey. With the editor's agreement it entirely replaced the German- language article that it was first designed only to supplement, The article in the German edition had presupposed the dichotomy between "Hebrew" and "Greek" concepts of truth in ways that were open to question in the

light of both semantic theory (not least in the work of James Barr), and actual lexicographical research, which invited fresh evaluation. The inclusion of the classical and Old Testament backgrounds makes the fallacies of the older approach clearer. (...)

The article, comes from Colin Brown (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, volume 3 (Exeter Paternoster Press, 1978), pp. 874-902, but has been abbreviated in order to omit material that may not bear directly on the argument. The breadth of lexicographical data might seem at times to verge on the tedious, but the argument depends on covering a fair range of specific cases and evidence. The original article concluded with a substantial discussion of modern philosophical theories of truth. This is too lengthy to retain here, but a brief summary has been rewritten for this volume (2004) to demonstrate the role of the argument for the "second horizon" of hermeneutics."

70. Tortorelli Ghidini, Marisa. 1990. " *Alétheia* Nel Pensiero Orfico. I. "Dire La Verità": Sul V. 7 Della Laminetta Di Farsalo." *Filosofia e Teologia* no. 4:73-77.

"I. The Homeric formula 'to tell the truth' involves the idea of starting from beginning and proceeding, point by point, to the end. In the Orphic Pharsalos tablet, that epic formula occurs again but the meaning turns out to be completely modified. According to this religious context 'telling the truth' and 'drinking at the spring of Mnemosyne' are identical: the truth, associated with a cosmic Memory, becomes a fundamental religious virtue. The link between religious and logical truth arises here."

71. Wolenski, Jan. 2005. " *Aletheia* in Greek Thought until Aristotle." *Annals of Pure and Applied Logic* no. 127:339-360.

"This paper investigates the concept of *aletheia* (truth) in ancient philosophy from the pre-Socratics until Aristotle. The meaning of *aletheia* in archaic Greek is taken as the starting point. It is followed by remarks about the concept of truth in the Seven Sages. The author discusses this concept as it appears in views and works of philosophers and historians. A special section is devoted to the epistemological and ontological understanding of truth. On this occasion, influential views of Heidegger are examined. The paper is concluded by a review of various meanings of truth in Aristotle."

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