

The use of *εἶδος* and *ἰδέα* in the presocratic philosophy

O uso de *εἶδος* e *ἰδέα* na filosofia presocrática

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Abstract: In this article I analyse, from a semantic standpoint, the terms *εἶδος* and *ἰδέα* in the Presocratic philosophers. Based on the context in which the terms appear, I quote every fragment in full, so that the terms can be understood². On top of the fragment, in bold, I write the word, whether a verb, adjective, numeral or noun, on which *εἶδος* or *ἰδέα* depends. When the terms *εἶδος* or *ἰδέα* do not refer to any particular word, the quote is not preceded by a heading.

Keywords: Presocratic; use; *εἶδος*; *ἰδέα*.

Xenophanes (570-475 B.C.)

Ἰδέα

γράφω (fr. B 15, Clement. *Strom*, v, 109.3)

ἀλλ' εἰ χεῖρας ἔχον βόες <ἵπποι τ' > ἢ ἔλονται,
ἢ γράψαι χεῖρεσσι καὶ ἔργα τελεῖν ἄπερ ἄνδρες,
ἵπποι μὲν θ' ἵπποισι βόες δέ τε βουσὶν ὁμοίως
καὶ <κε> θεῶν ἰδέας ἔγραφον καὶ σώματ' ἐποίουν
τοιαῦθ' οἷόν περ καὶ τοὶ δέμας εἶχον <ἐκαστοι>³.

When criticizing the anthropomorphism of the contemporary conceptions of the gods, Xenophanes utilizes the expression “θεῶν ἰδέας”. Strictly speaking, these are the forms of graphic representations. Apparently, by way of a hypothesis, the philosopher attempts to show how arbitrary and illusory the anthropomorphic representations of the gods can be. The term *ἰδέα*, as direct object of *ἔγραφον*, joined to *σώματ' ἐποίουν* is a hendiadys⁴. Likewise, since each animal has a different *ἰδέα* about the gods, precisely

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² I only study the B fragments (except from one by Democritus) from the DK edition.

³ “But if cattle and horses or lions had hands, or were able to draw with their hands and do the works that men can do, horses would draw the forms of the gods like horses, and cattle like cattle, and they would make their bodies such as they each had themselves”. Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 169.

⁴ TAYLOR (1911) 253; BERNABÉ (2011) 23.

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because of the adjective *ἑκάστος*, the classificatory use is present in the fragment⁵.

The fragment expresses that which evidently cannot be real: it is the animals which draw the forms of the bodies of their gods or the forms of beings represented in the works of art⁶. Xenophanes not only criticises the conventional representation of the gods, but also conceives a theology that, from the *ἰδέαι* which do not match reality, gives rise to a more abstract notion of divinity, as in another fragment points out that there is one god, greatest among gods and men, in no way similar to mortals neither in body (*δέμας*) nor in thought (B 23).

It is worth mentioning that, through theological reflection, this philosopher addresses for the first time the problem of human knowledge and uses the term *ἰδέα* referring thereto, meaning that, in general, unlike *εἶδος*, the term *ἰδέα* is related to thought. Thus, the term *ἰδέα* appears for the first time within the scope of the Presocratic philosophy in Xenophanes who likely lived by the late 6th or early 5th centuries B.C., and applies to the gods inasmuch as improper fictions that can be represented graphically⁷.

Anaxagoras (500-428 B.C.)

Ἰδέα

παντοῖος (fr. B 4 *Simpl. Ph.* 34.29)

τούτων δὲ οὕτως ἔχόντων χρηὴ δοκεῖν ἐνεῖναι πολλά τε καὶ παντοῖα ἐν
πᾶσι τοῖς συγκρινομένοις καὶ σπέρματα πάντων χρημάτων καὶ ἰδέας
παντοίας ἔχοντα καὶ χροιάς καὶ ἡδονάς⁸.

The fragment refers to the multiplicity of basic components of the existing things. The term *ἰδέα* appears within a context that may be understood

⁵ BERNABÉ (2011) 23.

⁶ Other Xenophanes' fragments continue with the attack upon anthropomorphism (B 34; B 18).

⁷ Herodotus also utilises *εἶδεα* to depict the 'physiognomy' or 'form' of the gods (ὅκοιοί τε τινες τὰ εἶδεα, 2.53).

⁸ "And since these things are so, we must suppose that there are many things of all sorts in everything that is being aggregated, seeds of all things with all sorts of shapes and colours and tastes". Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 378.

as the result of an argument or of what must be supposed (χρῆ δοκεῖν), not as something that can be solely evidenced by way of the sight, which shows the rather more abstract nature of ἰδέα than εἶδος⁹. Now, the ἰδέαι refer to the determined 'shapes' of the seeds, with 'colours' and 'tastes'. In this respect, shapes designate the distinctive characters that allow identifying the things and differentiating them. The σπέρμα's shape stems from the popular notion of something's figure, in this case, the 'seed's shapes'. Consequently, the term ἰδέα should not be understood as a 'simple body' as interpreted by TAYLOR (1911) 250, but as the 'shape of a simple body' (GILLESPIE (1912) 200). Nonetheless, GILLESPIE'S interpretation is not correct either for it is not clear that σπέρματα are 'simple bodies'. What seems to be evident is the classificatory use of the term, since the adjective παντοίας when joined with ἰδέας indicates a repertoire of shapes¹⁰.

The fragment raises the problem of defining what σπέρμα means. One of the most remarkable studies in this regard was made by TEODORSSON (1982). Unlike former works on this term¹¹, TEODORSSON does not begin from the Aristotelian interpretation of the term and considers that it is quite risky to attempt to reach an accurate definition of σπέρματα since at that time no distinction was made between what is material and immaterial or between what is organic and inorganic. Anaxagoras' theory holds that the indetermination of the 'corporeal' and the 'non-corporeal' cannot only be observed in the σπέρματα, but also in the νοῦς which plays a key role in his cosmogony. TEODORSSON (1982) 89-91 inquires whether σπέρματα are discrete units of matter, similar to organic seeds, or if they are conceived differently. According to the extant fragments, no final conclusion can be drawn. If σπέρματα are non-corporeal entities, his theory may have influenced Plato's and Aristotle's concept of 'form'. Consequently, it is likely that Anaxagoras may have continued with an abstract line of thought (which starts with Parmenides) by considering σπέρματα as something which is different than matter. The σπέρματα qualities, such as ἰδέα, χροίη and ἡδονή, suggest that he may have

⁹ BERNABÉ (2011) 25.

¹⁰ BERNABÉ (2011) 25.

¹¹ BAULY (1928); ZAFIROPOULOS (1948); VLASTOS (1950); STRANG (1963); STOKES (1965); SCHWABE (1975); SCHOFIELD (1980).

conceived them as ‘forms’. Seemingly, the σπέρματα combine with the material substances to form perceivable things, and everything in the cosmos has a ‘form’. Nothing in the cosmos can emerge unless it is based on a ‘form’ or ‘model’; otherwise, the structure of the different substances in the correct proportions could not be possible. The ἰδέα somehow makes up the matter, since it appears in the constituent elements, which are the seeds¹².

Empedocles (495-435 B.C.)

Εἶδος

ἄλλος (fr. B 98, *Simpl. Phys.* 32.3)

ἡ δὲ χθὼν τούτοισιν ἴση συνέκυρσε μάλιστα,
 Ἥφαίστῳ τ' ὄμβρῳ τε καὶ αἰθέρι παμφανόωντι,
 Κύπριδος ὀρμισθεῖσα τελείοις ἐν λιμένεσσιν,
 εἴτ' ὀλίγον μείζων εἴτε πλεόνεσσιν ἐλάσσων
 ἐκ τῶν αἰμά τε γέντο καὶ ἄλλης εἶδεα σαρκός¹³.

The fragment is within the context of Empedocles' zoogony where all mixtures favoured by Aphrodite have a εἶδος. The “εἶδεα σαρκός” are the different constituent tissues of flesh. The form of the locution shows the relevance of an adnominal genitive¹⁴, and in that regard, the expression “εἶδεα σαρκός” hides a reality to be defined. TAYLOR (1911) 251 upholds that εἶδεα means ‘substance’, because it is the matter of which flesh is made up, that is, the constituent ‘ultimate bodies’. It seems that GILLESPIE'S (1912) 202 statement is rather more assertive since he points out that this example confirms the classificatory use of the term, precisely because of the use of the adjective ἄλλος. SANDOZ (1971) 40 adds that εἶδος should be understood as ‘species’, since Empedocles carried out a division that introduced the existence of differences in a state of affairs on the basis of a primary observation. The εἶδεα provide useful information for knowledge regarding the nature of these differences.

¹² BERNABÉ (2011) 25.

¹³ “And the earth came together with these in almost equal proportions, with Hephaestus, with moisture and with brilliant aether, and so it anchored in the perfect harbours of Kupris, either a little more of it or less of it with more of the others. From these did blood arise, and the forms of flesh besides”. Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 335.

¹⁴ SANDOZ (1971) 40.

In science nomenclature, in some cases *εἶδος* corresponds to the ‘species’ of something. In point of fact, this text mentions one of the first uses of this term in the sense of ‘subdivision’ of a broader category. Empedocles notices in the four elements the material principle of the formation of the human body and distinguishes ‘types of flesh’ defined by the different mixture of substances¹⁵.

παντοῖος (fr. B 115, *Hippol.* Ref. VII 2)

φνομένους παντοῖα διὰ χρόνου εἶδεα θνητῶν

*ἀργαλέας βιότοις μεταλλάσσοντα κελεύθους*¹⁶.

The notion of form has determined syntactic structures, such as the formula *εἶδος* plus genitive. The form, in its material reality, implies a support, since it is the ‘form of’¹⁷. In this particular case, it refers to the mortal things. The idea of classification is once again noticed, since the term is in plural and agrees with *παντοῖα*. Empedocles refers to the physical bodies which are inhabited by the souls throughout their successive incarnations as *εἶδεα*. In point of fact, the fragment is within the context of the cycle of reincarnations. On the other hand, the verbal adjective *θνητός*, as a complement of *ἰδέα*, can be found in Homer meaning ‘mortal’¹⁸ and opposes to *ἀθάνατος*¹⁹. The verb *φύω*, from which *εἶδος* depends, confirms the sense of a growing body.

Empedocles refers to the daemons that ‘reincarnate’ in mortal and multiple external forms. It is a natural form in which the daemon locks up²⁰. According to Empedocles, men have sprung just as the other things, from the essential elements which make up our body (B 8).

ἀμείβω (fr. B 125, *Clem. Strom.* III 14)

*ἐκ μὲν γὰρ ζῶων ἐτίθει νεκρὰ εἶδε’ ἀμείβω*²¹.

¹⁵ There is a similar syntactic construction in another fragment: *γίνοντ(αι) ἄνθρωποι τε καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνεα θηρῶν* (B 26).

¹⁶ “[...] being born throughout that time in the forms of all manner of mortal things and changing one baleful path of life for another”. Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 352.

¹⁷ SANDOZ (1971) 29.

¹⁸ *Il.* 1.339.

¹⁹ In Aristophanes agrees with *ἰδέα* (*Nub.* 289).

²⁰ BERNABÉ (2013) 99.

²¹ “For from the living he the dead did make, their forms exchanging”. Translation by LEONARD (1908) 58.

It is likely that in this fragment Empedocles refers to transmigration and especially to what causes the bodies to decay. As interpreted by BIGNONE (1916) 467, Strife is the deity with the faculty to cause the bodies to change or that from the living bodies emerge the dead bodies²². The term εἶδος keeps the meaning of ‘external aspect’, although in context it may as well mean ‘body’²³.

γίγνομαι (fr. B 71, *Simpl. De Caelo* 529.28)
 εἰ δέ τί σοι περὶ τῶνδε λιπόξυλος ἔπλετο πίστις,
 πῶς ὕδατος γαίης τε καὶ αἰθέρος ἡελίου τε
 κίρναμένων εἶδη τε γενοίατο χροῖά τε θνητῶν
 τόσσ’, ὅσα νῦν γεγάασι συναρμοσθέντ’ Ἀφροδίτῃ²⁴.

Εἶδη and χροῖά τε θνητῶν depend on the verb γίγνομαι. It is likely that with the same complement εἶδη means ‘forms’ or ‘species’ together with χροῖά. Based on the four elements, Empedocles refers to the external aspect of the beings modelled by Aphrodite who rules this process and determines the matter so that the different beings come into being, and also this deity can be understood as the ‘personification’ of Love and in that sense, it is not so clear that she would act in such a direct manner.

Fragment B 72 complements the information in B 71, since it adds ‘trees and water-bred fishes’. Hence, those who have the forms or bear the forms are not explicitly named in fragment B 71. According to these two fragments, it is understood that εἶδος does not mean ‘form’ but it is the matter that has received the form or the bodies formed from matter, since Empedocles refers to the mixture of elements and living things. BOLLACK (1969) 373 holds that the term εἶδος is related to the outlines delimiting the forms and giving each being their own character since ‘colours’ are the particles that form the surface of things and project an image to our eyes²⁵.

²² Empedocles expresses an idea similar to that expressed by Homer (*Il.* 11.547).

²³ BERNABÉ (2013) 99.

²⁴ “And if belief lack pith, and thou still doubt
 how from the mingling of the elements,
 the Earth and Water, the Ether and the Sun
 so many forms and hues of mortal things
 could thus have being, as have come to be,
 each framed and knit by Aphrodite’s power”. Translation by LEONARD (1908) 40.

²⁵ *Plat. Men.* 76c.

ἐκμάσσω (fr. B 22, *Simpl. Phys.* 160.26)

ὥς δ' αὐτῶς ὅσα κρήσιν ἐπαρκέα μᾶλλον ἔασιν,
ἀλλήλοις ἔστερκται ὁμοιωθέντ' Ἀφροδίτῃ.
ἐχθρὰ δ' ἅ πλεῖστον ἀπ' ἀλλήλων διέχουσι μάλιστα
γέννημι τε κρήσει τε καὶ εἶδεσιν ἐκμάκτοισι,
πάντῃ συγγίνεσθαι ἀήθεα καὶ μάλα λυγρὰ
Νείκεος ἐννεσίησιν, ὅτι σφίσι γένναν ἔοργεν²⁶.

This fragment is within the context of Empedocles' biology. Strictly speaking, it describes the becoming, from the pure and separated elements, through their mingling, until they reach their finished forms. Thus, εἶδος refers to the external aspect. Likewise, the idea of classification is also present since the forms moulded by Aphrodite differ²⁷. The form was designed in line with a proportion. This idea can be found in other fragments where the term εἶδος (B 73) is used. The operation of moulding or forming is expressed by way of the verb ἐκμάσσω, which evokes the artisan work²⁸. In this regard, pottery is the underlying idea of the fragment; it is the model or manufacturing of 'vessels' from a certain mixture. The things that are most apt to mix are those who love each other at the behest of Aphrodite; on the contrary, the rest differ, both in birth, mixture and due to the "εἶδεσιν ἐκμάκτοισι" that will not mingle at the request of Strife.

ποιπνύω (fr. B 73, *Simpl. De Caelo* 530.5)

ὥς δὲ τότε χθόνα Κύπρις, ἐπεὶ τ' ἐδίηγεν ἐν ὄμβρῳ,
εἶδεα ποιπνύουσα θοῶι πυρὶ δῶκε κρατῦναι²⁹.

²⁶ "So too those things that are most apt to mix.
are like, and love by Aphrodite's hest.
But hostile chiefly are those things which most
from one another differ, both in birth,
and in their mixing and their molded forms —
unwont to mingle, miserable and lone,
after the counsels of their father, Hate". Translation by LEONARD (1908) 26.

²⁷ BERNABÉ (2013) 98.

²⁸ SANDOZ (1971) 31.

²⁹ "As Kypris, after watering Earth with Rain,
zealous to heat her, then did give Earth o'er
to speed of fire that then she might grow firm". Translation by LEONARD (1908) 40.

The ‘forms’ may be the soil’s *τύποι* which, after having been moulded, are softened in water and solidified by fire. Hence, it seems that pottery is the idea in this fragment, such as in the former one, as clay vessels are being made. It is worth noting that the etymology of the word *ποιπνύω* is related to the idea of blowing³⁰, which is a key factor to manufacture an object or the form of something. Thus, it seems that the meaning of the term *εἶδος* becomes clear in the context, and at the same time, the usual meaning is enriched since ‘forms’ are solidified and forged by fire and hot air. Aither is not present in this representation and the igneous element plays the role of the Sun.

πορσύνω (fr. B 23, *Simpl. Phys.* 159.27)

οἷτ' ἐπεὶ οὖν μάρψωσι πολύχροα φάρμακα χερσίν,
ἀρμονίῃ μείξαντε τὰ μὲν πλέω, ἄλλα δ' ἐλάσσω,
ἐκ τῶν εἶδεα πᾶσιν ἀλίγκια πορσύνουσι,
δένδρεά τε κτίζοντε καὶ ἀνέρας ἦδ' ἡ γυναικάς
θῆράς τ' οἰωνούς τε καὶ ὕδατοθρέμμονας ἰχθύς
καὶ τε θεοὺς δολιχαίωνας τιμῇσι φερίστους³¹.

Depending on *πορσύνω*, the term is used to mean the ‘forms’ of the different things, plus the complement *πᾶσιν ἀλίγκια*. Empedocles utilizes the example of the artists who paint votive tablets; in this regard, the image is more ‘abstract’ here than in the preceding fragment where he refers to pottery, since he now refers to the art of painting. The figures painted are not living things, but their representation, that is, images of living things. This fragment also states that forms similar to all things can be painted, thus the classificatory connotation of the term can be clearly noticed and then again *εἶδος* has that nuance of making up matter³². Next in the fragment is

³⁰ CHANTRAINE (1968-1980) 925.

³¹ “Bright temple-tablets, and will seize in hand
the oozy poisons pied and red and gold
(mixing harmonious, now more, now less),
from which they fashion forms innumerable,
and like to all things, peopling a fresh world
with trees, and men and women, beasts and birds
and fishes nourished in deep waters, aye
and long-lived gods in honors excellent”. Translation by LEONARD (1908) 25.

³² BERNABÉ (2013) 96.

mentioned that forms may be seen or that are optically visible (DILLER (1971)) 26. Albeit Empedocles refers to the forms of the trees, men, women, beasts, birds and fishes, he also adds the forms of the gods; consequently, the question arises as to whether their 'form' can also be perceived visually. In this regard, DILLER'S statement is open to discussion.

(fr. B 62, *Simpl. Phys.* 381.29)

νῦν δ' ἄγ', ὅπως ἀνδρῶν τε πολυκλαύτων τε γυναικῶν
ἐννυχίους ὄρπηκας ἀνήγαγε κρινόμενον πῦρ,
τῶνδε κλύ'· οὐ γάρ μῦθος ἀπόσκοπος οὐδ' ἀδάημων.
οὐλοφνεῖς μὲν πρῶτα τύποι χθονὸς ἐξανέτελλον,
ἀμφοτέρων ὕδατός τε καὶ εἶδος αἴσαν ἔχοντες³³.

The assemblies are composed of already formed parts and are subject to a principle of convenience by which the earth provides the basic element. According to BOLLACK (1969) 430, the term οὐλοφνεῖς should be understood on the basis of the earlier stages of the zoogony: the separate limbs and combined in random ways are accounted for by the sexual articulation or differentiation. From this point on, the creatures have all the parts they need; the limbs that have found their place and the bodies form assemblies. Hence, οὐλοφνεῖς designates lumps of earth, for the τύποι are the undifferentiated forms that sprang up from the earth. These forms are scions or offspring, most of them were led into life by the action of Love, and their rising from the earth is the outcome of the fire. The verb ἐξανέτελλον indeed indicates the successive difference of these human scions that rose or sprang up from the surface of the earth³⁴. The new creatures have their share of each of the elements (ἀμφοτέρων... ἔχοντες), as indicated by αἴσα.

The interpretation of εἶδος in the fragment is complex. DIELS (1966) 335 holds that the term refers to the air. BOLLACK (1969) 328 adds that it seems that the ambiguity of the term is intentional since in another fragment it designates heat or sweat (B 73). I believe that, as in the aforementioned fragment, the idea

³³ "Come now, hear how the fire, as it was separated, caused to spring up the night born scions of men and of tearful women; for this is a tale that is neither irrelevant nor uninformed. First sprang up from the earth whole-natured forms, having a share of both water and fire". Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 338.

³⁴ BOLLACK (1969) 328.

of pottery or ceramics is also present in this case. In this regard, the meaning of the term becomes clear and it is enriched in context since Empedocles states that the forms become solidified and are made of fire and water, which accounts for a metaphor of the clay with which objects or jugs are made.

Ἰδέα

παντοῖος (fr. B 35, *Simpl. De Caelo* 529)

τῶν δέ τε μισγομένων χεῖτ' ἔθνεα μυρία θνητῶν,
παντοίαις ιδέησιν ἀρηρότα, θαῦμα ιδέσθαι³⁵.

Empedocles refers to the way in which mortal things are composed of roots. Ἰδέη, depending of the verb ἀραρίσκω, is used with an instrumental dative to indicate that the types of mortal things 'adjust' to all kind of 'shapes'. These shapes are the outcome of the mingling of the material components as matter has the faculty of taking 'shapes'³⁶. Since these things have different 'shapes', once again the term has a classifier value: the qualities differentiate the ἔθνη. Perhaps this example constitutes a case of synonymy with εἶδος.

Melissus (480-420 B.C.)

Εἶδος

ἔχω (fr. B 8 DK, *Simpl., de Caelo* 558, 21-559.12)

φαμένοις γὰρ εἶναι πολλὰ καὶ αἰδία καὶ εἶδη τε καὶ ἰσχὺν ἔχοντα, πάντα
ἐτεροιοῦσθαι ἡμῖν δοκεῖ καὶ μεταπίπτειν ἐκ τοῦ ἐκάστοτε ὁρωμένου³⁷.

Certain syntactic structures, such as "εἶδος ἔχειν" correspond to the notion of 'form'³⁸. The relation of εἶδη τε καὶ ἰσχὺν clearly shows the meaning of 'forms of solid bodies'. The noun ἰσχὺς entails the idea of consistency and is backed up by the use of the adjective ἰσχυρός (χρυσὸς καὶ λίθος καὶ ἄλλο

³⁵ "And as these things mingled, countless tribes of mortal things were spread abroad, endowed with shapes of every kind, a wonder to behold". Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 347.

³⁶ BERNABÉ (2011) 25.

³⁷ "We said that there were many things that were eternal and had forms and strength of their own, and yet we fancy that they all suffer alteration, and that they change from what we see each time". Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 305.

³⁸ SANDOZ (1971) 30.

ὁ τι ἰσχυρὸν δοκεῖ εἶναι πᾶν, 8.20). On the other hand, the adjective πολλά gives εἶδος a classificatory meaning³⁹. Hence, the word seems to mean an inalterable determination, and in that sense opposes the term ἰδέα which is more independent of the object.

DILLER (1971) 26 points out that these forms (εἶδη) can be distinguished visually and that correspond to many realities ‘with forms which we fancy to be strong’; nonetheless, and according to Melissus, it is not clear that they are visible because men should not believe in a plurality of things as shown by the senses. This means that there are ‘eternal forms with strength of their own’, but men believe that they suffer alteration and they change because of their incorrect manner of grasping reality.

Philolaus (470-385 B.C.)

Εἶδος

δύο / ἑκάτερος (fr. B 5 Stob, Ant. I 21, 7 c)

ὁ γὰρ ἀριθμὸς ἔχει δύο μὲν ἴδια εἶδη, περισσὸν καὶ ἄρτιον, τρίτον δὲ ἀπ’ ἀμφοτέρων μειχθέντων ἀρτιοπέριπτον· ἑκατέρω δὲ τῷ εἶδος πολλαὶ μορφαί, ἃς ἕκαστον αὐταντὸ σημαίνει⁴⁰.

The terms εἶδος and μορφή are within the scope of mathematics, probably because the Pythagoreans held that the names of the things could be expressed by way of numbers or mathematical figures. Given the numeral δύο and the adjective ἑκάτερος, the use of εἶδος is classificatory: there are two types of numbers (odd and even) and an odd-even mixture of these two that does not seem to be included in the εἶδη⁴¹.

There are πολλαὶ μορφαί of these numbers —odd, even and the mixture of these two—. An early distinction between the gender (the number) and the species (odd, even and the mixture of these two) can be observed. Also, each individual thing has a manifestation (μορφή) revealing its own nature; nonetheless, we do not know to which manifestation it refers.

³⁹ BERNABÉ (2011) 101.

⁴⁰ “Number has two special forms, odd and even, and a third derived from the mixture of these two, even-odd. Each form has many manifestations, which every individual thing reveals in its own nature”. Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 309.

⁴¹ Apparently, the Pythagoreans did not give to the odd and even idea a concrete representation (MOTTE / RUTTEN / SOMVILLE *et alii* (2003) 28).

Perhaps μορφή refers to the individual and concrete forms perceptible by the senses. From this perspective, the term εἶδος is rather more abstract than μορφή.

Democritus (460-370 B.C.)

Εἶδος

παντοῖος (fr. B 167, *Simpl. Phys.* 327.24)

δῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ παντός ἀποκριθῆναι παντοίων (ε)ἰδεῶν⁴².

In the text, Simplicius uses the term εἰδέων; ἰδεῶν is a correction by GOMPERZ kept by DIELS (1966) 178. Both scholars intended to keep this fragment consistent with the title that was passed down through Sextus Empiricus: “Περὶ ἰδεῶν” (II, 137). Albeit Democritus uses the term ἰδέα more frequently than εἶδος, this is not a sufficient reason to justify the correction. In point of fact, it has also been noticed that Empedocles uses the terms ἰδέα and εἶδος interchangeably. Hence, it is likely that Democritus also used the term εἶδος⁴³.

The fragment reveals the philosopher's cosmogony. The whirl model is used to explain the manner in which the different things in the world come-into-being from these indivisible ‘shapes’. The term εἶδος reappears together with an epithet such as παντοῖος, as if referring to a class within a group of different elements and where an external agent causes different shapes in the primeval matter⁴⁴. According to the atomist philosopher, “παντοίων εἰδεῶν” was a set of atoms in a whirl which separated off from the atomic universe to form the world. Consequently, εἶδος means the ‘shape of’ a solid body.

⁴² “A whirl of all sort of shapes separated from the universe”. My own translation.

⁴³ MOTTE / RUTTEN / SOMVILLE *et alii* (2003) 39. An entry from Hesychius’ lexicon is in favour of this use (B 141).

⁴⁴ BERNABÉ (2011) 27.

Ἰδέα

δύο (fr. B 11, Sext. VII 138)

γνώμης δὲ δύο εἰσὶν ἰδέαι, ἡ μὲν γνησίη, ἡ δὲ σκοτίη· καὶ σκοτίης μὲν τάδε σύμπαντα, ὄψις, ἀκοή, ὀσμὴ, γεῦσις, ψαῦσις. ἡ δὲ γνησίη, ἀποκεκριμένη δὲ ταύτης⁴⁵.

Democritus uses the term *ἰδέα* to designate the two ‘forms’ or ‘types’ of knowledge. The act of knowing has ‘two forms’ which are of an unequal value, not perceivable by the senses and refer to an abstract notion⁴⁶. The atomist philosopher upholds that the genuine form of knowledge, “*γνώμη γνησίη*”, takes over right when the senses fail, when that which is to be apprehended is too small. The thought seemingly apprehends atoms and void. Strictly speaking, the *ἰδέαι* indicate two complementary processes regarding the manner of acquiring knowledge. To the obscure knowledge belongs the sight, hearing, taste, touch; on the other hand, the other knowledge is genuine and is separated from the former. In this regard the sense perception is primeval if compared to the ‘genuine one’. *Σκότιος* is clearly used in a metaphorical manner since it refers to the sense perception and opposes to *γνήσιος*. In the fragment TAYLOR (1911) 249 found the opposition between ‘knowledge of real-world’ and the ‘knowledge of the sense-world’. Albeit there is a metaphysical background, wherein the sense-knowledge opposes to intellectual knowledge, the term *ἰδέα* is not used with a ‘technical’ value, but has a classificatory value that can be verified by the numeral *δύο*. Likewise, *ἰδέα* is related to *γνώμη*, which indicates that term tends to be used in a more abstract manner than *εἶδος*.

ἄτομος (fr. A 57, Plut. *Ad. Colot.* 8)

εἶναι δὲ πάντα τὰς ἀτόμους ἰδέας ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ καλουμένας⁴⁷.

This fragment is not a verbatim quotation by Democritus, but is a quotation from a passage of Plutarch. Nonetheless, the atomist philosopher

⁴⁵ “There are two forms of knowledge, one genuine, one obscure. To the obscure belong all the following: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch. The other is genuine, and is quite distinct from this”. Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 422.

⁴⁶ SANDOZ (1971) 52; BERNABÉ (2011) 26.

⁴⁷ “That all things are what he terms indivisible forms”. My own translation.

used the expression since it is accompanied by “ὕπ’ αὐτοῦ καλουμένας”⁴⁸. The doxographer suggests that Democritus uses the term ἰδέα to refer to the elemental corpuscles. By virtue of the notion of autonomous and immaterial existence, the term is applied to the shapes of the atoms in the context of the atomist thinker. The specific nature of atoms cannot be perceived. BERNABÉ (2011) 26 upholds that the word ἰδέα does not refer to ‘visible forms’, but to ‘forms’ reached at by way of reasoning, and these are the atoms.

(fr. B 141, Hesych.)

ἰδέα, ἡ ὁμοιότης, μορφή, εἶδος. καὶ τὸ ἐλάχιστον σῶμα⁴⁹.

The last expression evokes the atoms since indicates that atoms are the smallest corporeal element. The idea of ὁμοιότης may refer to the notion of εἶδωλον which is well attested in Democritus, both in his theory of perception⁵⁰ and in his theology (A 79). Another possible explanation is that similarity favours similarity⁵¹, as is expressed in another fragment (B 64).

(fr. B 6, Sext. VII 137)

Περὶ ἰδεῶν⁵².

Sextus Empiricus refers to this work. As Thrasyllus (68 A 33 DK) does not mention this fragment, DIELS (1966) 138 considers that the title is the copy of another author quoting a grammarian among the physics works (ΠΕΡΙ ΤΩΝ ΔΙΑΦΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ ΡΥΣΜΩΝ ἢ ΠΕΡΙ ΙΔΕΩΝ). But this is just a hypothesis since both titles refer to atoms⁵³.

Diogenes of Apollonia (460-390 B.C.)

Ἰδέα

δαίτα / νόησις (fr. B 5, *Simpl. Phys.*)

ἄτε οὐκ πολυτρόπου ἐούσης τῆς ἐτεροιώσιος πολύτροπα καὶ τὰ ζῶια καὶ πολλὰ καὶ οὔτε

⁴⁸ BERNABÉ (2011) 26.

⁴⁹ “Idea, similarity, form, aspect; and the tiniest body”. My own translation.

⁵⁰ Cicero (*Epist.* XV 16.1).

⁵¹ MOTTE / RUTTEN / SOMVILLE *et alii* (2003) 38.

⁵² “On Forms”. My own translation.

⁵³ MOTTE (2003) 38.

ιδέαν ἀλλήλοις εἰκότα οὔτε δαίταν οὔτε νόησιν ὑπὸ τοῦ πλήθους τῶν
ἐτεροιώσεων⁵⁴.

The term ἰδέα is an internal accusative of εἰκῶς, and at the same time is consistent with δαίτα and νόησις. Diogenes of Apollonia uses ἰδέα within the context of the coming-to-being of creatures, and also within the framework of a reasoning from rational premises. The philosopher considers that living creatures are many in number and many-fashioned with different 'forms', but that cannot be visually determined⁵⁵. Ἰδέα designates the 'external aspect' or 'form' resulting from a transformation. This means that creatures have a specific form, but not a φύσις of their own, since they are the modification of a primary substance: air (B 2). The fragment is an example of synonymy with εἶδος, and it is worth noting that it is related with a term within the scope of knowledge, such as νόησις.

Conclusions

The analysis of the use of the terms εἶδος and ἰδέα by the Presocratic philosophers has extended our understanding of the realities meant by these terms and their semantic field.

Εἶδος appears more times than ἰδέα in the different fragments. It mainly applies to the following realities: the 'Sun' (Emp. B 27); the 'things resulting from the primordial elements of the cosmos' (Emp. B 98; B 115; B 125; B 75; B 22; B 173; B 62; B 35; Diog. Apoll. B 5); the 'number' (Philol. B 25); the 'Being' (Meliss. B 8). Ἰδέα relates to the 'form of the gods' graphically represented (Xenoph. B 15); the 'seeds of all things' (Anaxag. B 4); the 'all manners of mortal things' (Emp. B 35); 'knowledge' (Democr. B 11); the 'atoms' (Democr. A 57, B 14).

Likewise, it is worth noting that there is certain vagueness in the use of these terms. Some fragments, especially those by Empedocles and Anaxagoras, do not state clearly if they refer to the form of the 'elements' or to the 'form of the sensible things'. In this regard, the terms εἶδος and ἰδέα in the presocratic philosophers are not an absolute name, but —in some cases—

⁵⁴ "Because, then, the differentiation is many-fashioned, living creatures are many-fashioned and many in number, resembling each other neither in form nor in way of life nor in intelligence, because of the number of differentiations". Translation by KIRK / RAVEN (1957) 435.

⁵⁵ BERNABÉ (2011) 26.

they require of a genitive to complete their meaning. Consequently, it seems that they are not used with the meaning of ‘simple body’ or ‘nature’⁵⁶, but as the ‘shape of’ a simple body⁵⁷.

Regarding the semantic field of the terms, *εἶδος* accepts several adjectives which have a classificatory use, such as ἄλλος, ἕκαστος, ἑκάτερος, παντοῖος, and the numeral δύο. In point of fact, the Presocratic philosophers use these adjectives rather than other ones to differentiate and classify objects through their ‘form’, whether it can be visually perceived or grasped by the intellect. According to this, we can assume that the ideas of quantity and identification are inherent to the development of philosophy and science. The verbs with which they are constructed express ideas of change or becoming (ἀμείβω, γίγνομαι), materiality, realisation and modelling (ἐκμάσσω, ἔχω, πορσύνω, ποιπνύω). The words with which they coordinate show that they are linked to the semantic field of colour (χροίη) and humidity (ὑδωρ). On the other hand, *ιδέα* is in line with the adjectives παντοῖος and δύο, which reflects the classificatory nature of the term, but at the same time, evidences a rather more abstract use since it appears within the context of knowledge. *Ἰδέα* depends on the verb ἀραρίσκω which connotes the idea of modelling, and which is also the direct complement of γράφω related to the field of knowledge. *Νόησις* is one of the nouns with which it coordinates, which again evidences that the word is related to the field of thought. The related terms account for qualities such as size (ἐλαχύς), form (μορφή) and similarity (ὁμοιοτήτης). The relationship of these three terms with *ιδέα* is because Democritus used *εἶδος* and *ιδέα* in an interchangeably manner for atoms. Finally, *ιδέα* shares with *εἶδος* the noun χροίη, but it also add words from the sensitive field, such as ἡδονή and σῶμα.

Based on the foregoing, *εἶδος* and *ιδέα* may have acquired an additional importance in the Preocratic philosophers. In point of fact, several of these thinkers use the terms in a specialised manner in an attempt to classify different realities, both physical and mental. Nonetheless, it is likely that a ‘philosophy of forms’ can only be considered after Plato and Aristotle,

⁵⁶ TAYLOR (1911) 250.

⁵⁷ GILLESPIE (1912) 202.

that is, when an attempt was made to explain all sensible phenomena by way of an intelligible principle. In any case, we may wonder if the Presocratic philosophers had already paved their way⁵⁸.

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⁵⁸ TEODORSSON (1982) 90; BERNABÉ (2011) 6.

Resumo: Neste artigo, analiso, do ponto de vista semântico, os termos εἶδος e ἰδέα nos filósofos pré-socráticos. Com base no contexto em que os termos aparecem, cito cada fragmento, de maneira ampla, para que os termos possam ser entendidos. No topo do fragmento, em negrito, escrevo a palavra, seja um verbo, adjetivo, numeral ou substantivo, do qual εἶδος ou ἰδέα depende. Quando os termos εἶδος ou ἰδέα não se referem a nenhuma palavra específica, a citação não é precedida de um cabeçalho.

Palavras-chave: Pré-socrático; uso; εἶδος; ἰδέα.

Resumen: En este artículo analizo, desde un punto de vista semántico, los términos εἶδος e ἰδέα en los filósofos presocráticos. Basándome en el contexto en que aparecen los términos, cito cada fragmento de forma extensa para que se puedan entender dichos términos. Encima de cada fragmento, en negrita, escribo la palabra, ya sea verbo, adjetivo, numeral o sustantivo, del que depende εἶδος o ἰδέα. Cuando los términos εἶδος o ἰδέα no se refieren a ninguna palabra específica ningún encabezamiento precede a la cita.

Palabras clave: Presocrático; uso; εἶδος; ἰδέα.

Résumé : Dans cet article, j'analyse, du point de vue sémantique, les termes εἶδος et ἰδέα des philosophes présocratiques. Partant du contexte où les termes sont apparus, je cite amplement chaque fragment pour que les termes puissent être compris. Au sommet du fragment, en caractère gras, j'écris le mot, que ce soit un verbe, un adjectif, un numeral ou un substantif, dont dépendent εἶδος ou ἰδέα. Quand les termes εἶδος ou ἰδέα ne font référence à aucun mot particulier, la citation n'est pas précédée d'un en-tête.

Mots-clés : Présocratique ; usage ; εἶδος ; ἰδέα.