

Saying the Same Thing: What is it to Agree?

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A Senior Essay submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the Integral Curriculum of Liberal Arts.

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May 4th, 2018

“I say ‘ ___ ’; what do *you* say?” “*I* say the *same*.”

Saying the same thing presents the curious and wonderful act (capability) of *agreement*. “To say the same thing” might (in a very pedestrian way) mean: To repeat—word for word, or verbatim—the saying of another. In the most direct way, to say the same thing is to utter exactly the same words in exactly the same order as another person or group of people. In this, the most “on the surface” instance of “to say the same thing”, “I say the same thing” (or, “so I say”) is simply verified by observing that the “right” words in the “right” order, have been uttered. Although it is possible to signify agreement between individuals in this manner, for example, when taking an oath (“repeat after me...”), everyone knows that there is more to agreement—saying the same thing—than making some words one’s own by repeating them. The purpose of this inquiry is to start by paying close attention to words and what it means to “say the same thing”, but, then, to go further into what agreement or “saying the same thing” might mean for the search for truth.

It does not seem necessary to repeat verbatim the words others use in order to understand what others are saying, but it is necessary to possess the capability to say exactly the same thing as those others in order to understand what they mean or convey by their choice of words. The listener understands what the speaker says, but the speaker is not uttering the things he says: the speaker is saying *something* by uttering words. Even if the listener has the ability to utter different words and say the same thing, the fact that the listener can also say exactly same thing by uttering exactly the same words suggests that speaker and listener (responder) make a community of language: speaker *as* speaker and listener *as* listener *require* a shared language;

that is, at the very least, they require the ability to say the same thing by uttering the same words in the same order. Sharing the same words begins at the very first level of speech.

Basic use of words—gesturing at some state of affairs:

“To name the same object” is a shared or joint action. Two or more use the same name in the same way, that is, they point verbally—precisely as if each were to level a finger—at the object.

A single speaker is aware of an external thing; another single speaker is aware of the same thing. Each points, then they are both pointing together. Similarly, “protosigning” occurs as speakers jointly gesture by word at something physical. Since both “point” at the same thing, their act becomes one act: both are now perceiving and holding the thing as one.

Some people communicate using all signals. They use various hand motions to express what they are attending to. Thus, their joint expressive acts are joint attendings to their object.

Two speakers experience a traumatic event. Each of them makes a face and their eyes meet. They can take their simultaneous expression as a sharing of/in the event. Similarly, they might take simultaneous utterances—“Ouch!” or “Oh no!”—as a sharing of/in the event. In each case, it may seem that although they have shared an object, they have not—or have not yet—shared an experience, impression, or thought.

The levels of speech begin with a relationship between *utterances* and *things*. Speakers are exposed to externals and display their current state of attention to them. They can do this by simply pointing, but that physical gesture may be succeeded or replaced by another, an utterance; or the mere utterance may give way to a word.

The relation between utterance and thing, perceiver-utterer and object, graduates into the first level of speech when perceiver becomes perceivers and utterer becomes utterers. One points at a book, looks to another: the other looks to the first but points at the same book, and now they are pointing together. Their separate actions become a new and united—a joint-action. Both are now displaying the same thing. They may join in the silent gesture of pointing, or the sounding gesture of utterance; and if the utterance is also joint—the same—they may go from shared utterance to shared word. Going from shared utterance to shared might seem like the speakers are now saying the same thing, but have not achieved this yet.

There are two types of utterances: the uttering of sounds and the uttering of words. Utterance, though not speech itself, is the prerequisite for speech and thus for shared speech. The speaker says “Wow!”, groans, or screams, as a reaction. When speakers utter words, they are pointing to a thing with words. These words are commonly understood, by speakers, to represent the appointed thing. Rather than substantive reference, at this point, the speaker is still only labeling, and not yet saying. This pointing is the labeling of things with words, without syntax. They can write “cup” on a cup, indicating it is a cup. They can also point at a cup and say, “cup”. This is not a declaration, because there is no syntax, but only uttering a word. This mere ability to utter words has not yet given rise to the act of “saying things”. Speakers begin “saying things” when they reason together.

What is the difference between uttering words and saying things? –naming is uttering words and predication is saying things.

If labeling with words is merely a form of pointing, then what happens when speakers begin to reason together. Words are a bizarre and complex vehicle. Words as words can be shared between speakers as individual thoughts cannot be shared. Words are the device that a speaker uses to form shared ideas. Words are a symbol for the thought that cannot be transported from one speaker to another.

Words spoken sounds are symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul; written words are the signs of words spoken. As writing, so also is speech not the same for all races of men. But the mental affections themselves, of which these words are primarily signs, are the same for the whole of mankind, as are also the objects which those affections are representations or likenesses, images, copies (Aristotle, *On Interpretation*, 16a).

Speakers may think words carry little importance, but words are directly related to actual content. The things have being, thoughts have being, and so must the words as symbols of the thing and the thoughts.

These ‘things’ are that which exists. However, there is more than one way to exist. The most basic form of existence is existing as a physical and tangible thing. These are the ‘things’ that speakers experience and say things of. The other form of existence is existence in the mind of speakers. These ‘things’ are good, truth, beauty, and other ‘things’ of this nature. Speakers think these things exist in the abstract, but they are able to say things about them. This must mean that the things speakers regard as abstract have some real existence.

This saying of things is predication, which “originally and essentially occurs between persons, not in a solitary mind that imposes logic on experience”. To predicate is to describe a thing by joint efforts of a linguistic community, in order to better understand the being of the thing. Predication is a deed in which a community comes to agreement on definition. It is a push

and pull, a give and take of words. Sokolowski states, “each person is rescued from solipsism by the other” (Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 67-69). All speakers are surrounded by and speak of the same things, and all speakers are aware this is the case, so when they say things to one another about the things they are, indeed, saying the same things. The next step is to form the strongest predication of the things by, together, using words as a tool. In this act of predication, words give the thing rest. The things themselves are in constant motion, because they are always actively being themselves. However, in this action the things also maintain their identity. Speakers observe the things in action, so they can better understand the attributes that make these things themselves. When speakers use words they capture a consistent sameness within these things in motion. Agreement on predication gives the speakers a sort of understanding or organization of ideas which lead to knowledge of the things.

Declarations: Owning one’s speech (not just saying but believing)

On this level, the speakers gain knowledge, because they begin to agree about the things that are. Nonetheless, the speakers might disagree about the interpretation of this knowledge; hence, belief is engaged. The speaker exercises reason and forms thoughts about a thing. The speaker perceives things, and then forms declarations about what these things are.

Socrates: “If memory and perceptions concur with other impressions at a particular occasion, then they seem to me to inscribe words in our soul, as it were. And if what is written is true, then we form a true judgement and a true account of the matter. But if what our scribes write is false, then the result will be the opposite of the truth” (Plato, *Philebus*, 39b).

In this case, it is not the individuals’ thoughts being united, but their words. Individual speakers gather experiences of things and make declarations in their own inner dialogue, using

words. These personal declarations are thoughts they hold as their own truth. When speakers and responders speak together they share their personal declarations in word form. They cannot simply hand their declaration to listeners. The speakers and listeners must all become speakers and make their declarations collectively, so the declarations become more reliable truths to the whole speaking community.

My words become our words:

When declarations have become collective, the difference between speech and communication (see page 4) is exhibited. The speaker and the listener (responder) realize the things they say are the same. The speaker and responder notice that they can say the same things. They reach for the most complete understanding they can. The speaker and the listener can never share the same thoughts, but they can share the same words. Hegel advises, “not to give oneself over to the thoughts of others, upon mere authority, but to examine everything for oneself, and accept only one’s own deed as to what is true” (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 50).

Sometimes speakers cannot find the words to express what they want to say. Another speaker might, as is said, “take the words right out of his mouth”. Some brilliant thinkers have a difficult time conjuring up the words to put their ideas into motion. There is something especially interesting about this occurrence: it suggests there may be a mysterious connection among all speakers. If words spoken by the speaker are accepted by the respondent, in place of their own, we must have something else besides just words in common.

This acceptance of another’s words also takes place in interpreting what another speaker says. The speaker says a thing in one way, but the listener fails to understand the thing said, and

is completely perplexed by what the speaker has said. The listener may need to appropriate the words that have been spoken and play with them and may need to puzzle for days to try to understand the speaker's meaning. But an explicit essay at resolution will involve the listener's own formula of words offered to the speaker. The speaker approves the response, "Yes, we are 'saying the same thing'" or disapproves, "No, we are not saying the same thing". In the latter case, the process would begin again: The speaker would try posing another arrangement of words to the listener, who might once more offer an alternative formula, until acceptable words are offered. If not agreement, at least a sign of agreement is that one offer the other words acceptable in lieu of the other's own. For it will then make sense to say: they are not merely uttering the same words, but saying the same things.

To repeat, other than word for word the saying of another:

The speakers are blown away when the listeners (responders) repeat what they have said using different words. How are they "saying the same thing" using different words? This can only be possible because of agreement. Now, they are forming a new declaration together. This is the process of agreement. This case is crucial in understanding the importance of sameness within objects themselves and in speaker's own soul. Since there is an array of different languages with endlessly different words, we can conclude that the words themselves are not what men think when they see an object, say things of an object, or communicate with others. What they are thinking about is the being of the object. Men from all around the world experience objects and scenarios of the same nature. If speakers are speaking in a language foreign to their listeners their listeners will not understand them initially. The words will just be

like utterances to them. The only way these listeners can understand these words to be saying things is with a translator. The only way the translator can translate these words to represent the thing for the listener is by having the same referent.

This situation can also occur within a speaker's own language. This is the case with synonyms. Since there are so many words that mean the same thing, speakers do not always use the same words to describe what they are trying to talk about. Speakers can use simple words or extremely sophisticated and complex words to describe the same thing. There is an abundance of words speakers can use to communicate the clearest picture of their thoughts. Speakers must be as precise as possible if they are to preserve the particular thing within the agreement.

The Universal and the Particular: How does the joint project of saying the same thing relate to thinking the same things?

A universal is a unitary thing that is true to many. One speaker's thought and another speaker's thought can be related to the same thing. In every case, it seems impossible that a universal to be prior to the individual. This is like the idea of Plato's Forms: knowers get a glimpse of the already-set-in-the-sky universal. Aristotle struggles with this question and weighs his options. If the principles are not universal, then speaking knowers create an essence of the things from the individual. Throughout many encounters with individuals, they come to know what is, then, universal. Hegel states, "The inner world, or supersensible beyond, has however, *come into being*: it comes from the world of appearance which has mediated it; into other words, appearance is its essence and, in fact, its filling (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 89).

The appearances are the individual things in the sensible realm, but appearances also represent the universal. The universals would be empty if not “filled” with appearance. These appearances make it possible for man to come to know the object, and in turn, its actuality.

It is as a universal too that we utter what the sensuous [content] is. What we say is: ‘This, i.e. the *universal* This, or, ‘it is’, i.e. *Being in general*. Of course we do not *envisage* the universal This or Being in general, but we utter the universal, in other words, we do not strictly say what in this sense-certainty we *mean* to say. But language, as we see, is the most truthful; in it, we ourselves directly refute what we mean to say, and sense the universal is true [content] of sense-certainty and language expresses this true [content] alone, it is just not possible for us ever to say, or express in words, a sensuous being that we *mean* (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 60).

The speaker cannot utter the thing itself, but by uttering words that represent the thing, the speaker can say what the thing is. Speakers do not have any better way at grasping what it is to say things than describing attributes belonging to the thing as possible. This act is called predication. The community, as a whole, must use language as a tool to get the best idea of the thing’s being. When the speaker talks of a chair, but does not say “chair” exactly, but, “thing is designed for sitting and has legs”, the listener can take this as many different things. Perhaps the speakers are talking of a human beings and way their buttocks are designed for sitting and how human beings have legs. Perhaps the listener thinks of a couch. If the listener responds that they do not know what the speaker means to say, the speaker will have to try again, by further predication. The word “table” is a symbol for what the thing table is. The thing does not belong to the word that represents it. The word is related to the speaker’s experience as the keyboard of a computer is related to the mark it makes on the screen.

Experience and “Sense Perception”

“It seems to me that a man who knows something perceives what he knows, and the way it appears at present, at any rate, is that knowledge is simply perception” (οὐκ ἄλλο τί ἐστὶν ἐπιστήμη ἢ αἴσθησις) (Plato, *Theaetetus*, 151e).

Since, it is by many experiences with these perceptible things that speakers come to have knowledge, the more attempts at speaking of them the better. It is not possible for one individual speaker to experience each object as many times as necessary to know it. A speaker needs a vehicle to enable them to obtain these experiences in mass amounts, and in the most genuine manner available. This is why man has an urge to communicate their experiences to others. In hopes, that they will come together and participate in one another’s experiences by communicating with words. In Plato’s *Philebus* Socrates provides Protarchus with another craftsmen of the soul.

Socrates: “A painter who follows the scribe and provides illustrations to his words in the soul.”

Protarchus: “How and when do we say he does his work?”

Socrates: “When a person takes his judgements and assertions directly from sight or any other sense-perception and then views the images he has formed inside himself, corresponding to those judgements and assertions” (Plato, *Philebus*, 39b-c).

This seems to be the same idea as Hegel’s sense certainty. The truth of the thing lies within the speaker’s perception of the thing.

In order to systematize these ideas of things into categories of sameness, man needs to communicate. A speaker uses language to get closer to the universal truth of the things he perceives. No matter how language is being used, or in which case, language weaves together individual truths and makes them whole truths. This is not to say the truth of the individual is not a truth in itself. However, if more individual speakers come to agreement their joint thought is

sturdier than one single thought. It very well could be a self-preserving truth, but the truth is more universal when put into language.

The True is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development. Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a result, that only in the end is it what it truly is; and that precisely in this consists its nature, viz. To be actual, subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 11).

Since, it is true that things that are being-at-work-staying themselves are always the truth of the thing, truth is perceived in moments. “An actual sense-certainty is not merely this pure immediacy, but an *instance* of it” (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 59). Speakers yearn to get a hold of the thing’s being. They want to be able to hold the thing still enough to define it. When speakers perceive things there is a necessary split second of stillness in which they capture the thing they perceive.

It is extremely difficult to recognize that this break in motion is even occurring, because it happens so fast. Naturally, speakers do not have the self-assurance to hold fast to their perceptions as truth. Even over time, and countless experiences with a thing, speakers go in circles to say the things they see. It is doubt of self that lets speakers believe there is something more than what they sense repeatedly. The speaker perceives a thing and then, utters, thinks, and then says. By using words the speaker captures stillness in something that seems to be always in motion.

It is the whole which, having traversed its content in time and space, has returned into itself, and is the resultant *simple Notion* of the whole. But the actuality of this simple whole consists in those various shapes and forms which have been its moments, and which will now develop and take shape afresh, this time in their new element, in their newly acquired meaning (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 7).

It is fundamental for being-at-work-staying itself that the physical thing and the thought of the thing are equivalent. These modes of being can be placed in a ratio by saying: sensible object: being-at-work :: actuality in spirit: staying itself. Each term in this ratio is directly related to its so called “opposing term”, because the Hegelian term “actuality” is the truth of the “sensible object”, and among the Aristotelian terms the “being-at-work” is the truth of the “staying itself”, so the fifth uniting term is “truth”. The spirit stays itself when it moves or changes another and it only does this by moving itself. “Spirit is indeed never at rest but always moving forward” (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 6). This is an instance of Hegel being able to take over Aristotle’s words for his purposes and of Aristotle being able to take Hegel’s. As readers of both philosophers can conclude, they are “saying the same thing”. Spirit, for Hegel, is always the truth of the thing, and so is Aristotle’s being- at-work-staying itself.

Being-At-Work-Staying Itself:

A primary substance, for Aristotle, is a specific thing: this man or this here horse. Now, if only one man or horse were to die, then their species would still exist. However, if all of the men and all of the horses ceased to exist then mankind and horses as a species would no longer exist. The primary substances are the foundation of all things. They are the most “being” and the most “thing”. They are the most being at work staying themselves. They can do this independently from any other source. Only things with life can actively participate in staying themselves. Other things are less being because they rely on primary substances to give them thinghood. Substance cannot be found “in” or “of” any one thing. Primary substances are only found alone being themselves and nothing else. Non-living objects or images rely on the being of the subjects.

In the first page of book one of Aristotle's *The Categories*, he uses "ζῷον" as an example to describe things which are equivocally named. The word "ζῷον" can mean "portrait" or "animal". In this case he is saying that ζῷον can refer to or name the animal itself, living, or the portrait of the animal, which is non-living. He starts off with this example and it is crucial to understand its importance. Without the living animal, ζῷον, the portrait ζῷον, could not exist. Therefore, the living animal, ζῷον, is the primary substance. The portrait, ζῷον, is a separate entity created by the artist, and therefore not a substance at all. The portrait depends on the artist to be and the artist depends on the animal, "primary οὐσία", to create the painting. The portrait ζῷον is only an image of the actually living primary οὐσία ζῷον. An artist cannot paint a portrait of the ζῷον without a living primary οὐσία ζῷον as his foundation for the image he creates.

When shown a portrait of a horse, and asked what it is a young speaker will say, "horse". When an educated speaker is asked the same question, an educated speaker will say that the portrait is only a painting of the horse and relies on the being of the living horse to exist. The horse and the portrait of the horse have the same names but they are completely different in actuality. Some words used to predicate the two are the same, but the thoughts are different. "For they have the name only in common, the definitions, (or statements of essence) corresponding with the name being different" (Aristotle, *The Categories*, I.a 5-6). The portrait of the animal is not the real thing. If the speaker says, "Look! There is a horse over there!", the listener may expect a stable with this year's Kentucky Derby winner. Instead, the listener looks and is disappointed to see it is only an acrylic painting of that same horse. This is why speakers must make distinctions with their words.

The second most being things are “of” primary substances. This includes the species and genera of the primary substance, “those within which, being genera, the species themselves are contained” (Aristotle, *The Categories*, V. 15-16). Men and horses are both animals and mammals. A speaker can predicate John, the man and Bay, the horse with animal. It is also possible to predicate animal of men and horses in general. Animals would not exist if every species of animals was extinct. A secondary substance λέγεται—is said of—a primary substance. Mankind can be said of each individual. Men and horses can be said to be animals.

These secondary substances can only be used as “γένη”. The genera are dependent, in terms of knowledge, on the primary substance. It relies on species to be. However, the species relies on the sturdy foundation of the primary οὐσία. “Were there no individuals existing of whom it could be thus affirmed, it could not be affirmed of the species” (Aristotle, *The Categories*, V. 2b 39-41). This insists that primary οὐσία is a living being. Only living bodies can be the subject. Everything possessing any sliver of being only exists because of primary οὐσία. Primary οὐσία are the ὑποκείμενα of all things. The “τὰ ὄντα” are the subject and the underlying foundation (ὑποκείμενον) (Aristotle, *The Categories*, II. Ia.20). Secondary substance can only predicate their subject. These secondary substances cannot be in the subject.

The third most “being things” are those which exist “in” primary substances. These “things” are the least worthy of being called things. They hardly deserve the title of “thing”. They do not have any thinghood of their own. They do not maintain their own state of being. They are always leaning hard on the foundation, which they cannot be without. These things cannot be outside of primary substances. They rely on substances to be what they are. For example, a particular speaker’s sense of humor cannot exist outside of the speaker, the primary

substance. Rationality in general can exist outside of the speaker's own rationality. However, if rationality ceased to exist within all primary substances, rationality in general would cease to exist. The speakers as primary οὐσαί are what makes each speaker's rationality unique.

“Οὐσία δέ ἐστιν ἡ κυριώτατά τε καὶ πρώτως καὶ μάλιστα λεγομένη, ἢ μήτε καθ' ὑποκειμένου τινὸς λέγεται μήτε ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ τινί ἐστιν” (Aristotle, *The Categories* V. 1-3).

The word, κυριώτατά, means the most fundamental authority. This is translated as the “truest and strictest”. Hegel and Aristotle have similar ideas on this. Hegel seems to be directly referencing the “being-at-work-staying itself, when he states:

The object which I apprehend presents itself purely as *One*; but I also perceive it in a property which is *universal*, and which thereby transcends the singularity [of the object]. The first being of the objective essence as a One was therefore not its true being, But since the object is what is true, the untruth falls in me... (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 70).

Primary οὐσία is a thing in the most authoritative sense and most actively being-at-work-being-itself. Primary οὐσαί fully participate in their own being. The foundation does not need anything to support its being, because it is fulfilling that on its own. Since speakers cannot convey the being itself, they must use other words that represent universal qualities to define the thing, that is, to co-predicate. Aristotle thinks speakers are able to come to agreement through communication and reasoning, because they all experience the things themselves.

Spirit:

For Hegel, “reason is Spirit”, so it is Spirit that gives speakers the ability to reason, and therefore agree. The spirit contains the most valuable gift man possesses, the ability to reason and form thoughts. Hegel states,

Spirit then, is consciousness in general which embraces sense-certainty, perception, and the Understanding, in so far as its self-analysis Spirit holds fast to the moment of being

an objectively existent actuality to itself, and ignores the fact that its actuality is its own being-for-self. If, on the contrary, it holds fast to the other moment of the analysis, viz. that its object is its own being-for-itself, then it is self-consciousness (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 264).

Hegel believes that the Spirit is the most in-itself, because it is a substance and a universal at the same time. Aristotle thinks all living things have a quality like spirit. Hegel wants to combine spirit of the speaker's thoughts with the things being perceived. He believes things have a certain being for thought. Aristotle and Hegel are not in opposition to one another; in fact, their ideas are related. For Aristotle, the thing is itself, within itself, in every moment. For Hegel, it is itself for the sake of spirit. The speaker gives the thing rest. Though these may seem like conflicting ideas, they are not. With Aristotle, the speaker discovers the essence of the object. With Hegel, the speaker creates an essence of the object in spirit. Discovery is the passive approach and creating is the active. However, they are both aiming towards the same goal: to have absolute knowledge/truth.

...the first object, in being known, is altered for consciousness; it ceases to be the in-itself, and becomes something that is the *in-itself* only *for consciousness*. And this then is the True: the being-for-consciousness of this in-itself. Or, in other words, this is the *essence*, or the *object* of consciousness. This new object contains the nothingness of the first, it is what experience has made of it (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 55).

Spirit is has the ability to explain the truth of everything it takes in.

Speakers tend to feel extremely removed from the metaphysical, so they do not realize that they are constantly utilizing something metaphysical within themselves, the spirit, which makes them conscious beings. When they speak they are outwardly expressing this consciousness of things and their own thoughts. Speakers are led by spirit and its desire to be one whole spirit. They turn to one another and form a community, because their spirits are like

magnets. It is by reasoning together as a community that speakers realize the spirit of the community. This ‘spirit’ is an unspoken common understanding. There is a “feeling” of mutual understanding. This “feeling” is exactly what it sounds like it is. It is manifest in speakers and listeners, physically and emotionally. The feeling of mutuality is amongst the same feelings as love, because both are connections of the spirit. Spirit is the common thread among all speakers.

When speakers recognize a common thread in their thoughts they begin to form the community in which they are ruled by spirit. The *Spirit of the community* is “the Spirit’s highest form of consciousness” (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 286). In Hegel’s *Spirit of the Community*, the community, as a whole, decides what is moral in order to protect the individual. *Divine law* coincides with these judgements of the community. Those who do wrong against the community will be punished by the government. This mentality of universality is called “inner divine law”. The concept of “Inner divine law” reveals that all speakers have the same affections of the soul. In the spirit of the community speakers do not only say the same things, but they have the same beliefs. There is one grand, all-encompassing soul, which is the divine. This divine does not belong to any religion. This divine is the divine that is within all speakers. Hegel’s idea of spirit is similar to Aristotle and Plato’s idea of the soul, because they are both connected to reasoning.

The Soul of Reason

The word, “soul”, can be extremely intimidating when said in no relation to any other thing. Thinkers impose preconceptions when it comes to understanding the “soul”. The soul’s

being becomes clearer when the word “soul” is replaced with something speakers think they are more acquainted with, like “mind”. Aristotle states:

Now, in the first place, it is a mistake to say that the soul is a spatial magnitude. It is evident that Plato means the soul of the whole to be like the sort of soul which is called *mind* not like the sensitive or the desiderative soul, for the movements of neither of these are circular. Now mind is one and continuous in the sense in which the process of thinking is so, and *thinking* is identical with the *thoughts* which are its parts; these have a serial unity like that of number, not a unity like that of a spatial magnitude. Hence mind cannot have that kind of unity either; mind is either without parts or is continuous in some other way than that which characterizes a spatial magnitude (Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 406b).

An individual speaker possesses a thought, which is a part of the process of thinking. Speakers think together, but cannot share thoughts. All beings with a soul have the ability to think and have thoughts. Awareness of external things triggers speakers to react. A reaction causes speakers to make declarations. Speakers desire to affirm their declarations. Hence, the speakers, share their words with the listeners. The words represent their thoughts. Speakers say things by using words until each of their words become a new, jointly created thought. This process will continue amongst many speakers and responders, so that, the words are heard by many listeners. Only the souled and spirited can transcribe words into thoughts.

Speakers and listeners alike, strive for a world of consistency. The only way speakers can support their thought is by attempting to communicate the thought to a listener and by eventually forming an agreement with words shared with the listener as the listener becomes a responder.

Something looked at from close at hand doesn't seem to be the same size as it does when it is looked at from the distance.

No it doesn't.

And something looks crooked when seen in water and straight when seen out of it, while something else looks both concave and convex because our eyes are deceived by its colors, and every other similar sort of confusion is clearly present in our soul. And it is because they exploit this weakness in our nature that *trompe l'oeil* painting, conjuring, and other forms of trickery have powers that are little short of magical.

That's true.

And doesn't measuring, counting, and weighing give us most welcome assistance in these cases, so that we are not ruled by something's looking bigger, smaller, more numerous, or heavier, but by calculation, measurement, or weighing?

Of course.

And calculating, measuring, and weighing are the work of the rational part of the soul. They are (Plato, *Republic* X.602c-602e).

Inequality does not appeal to souled beings. They desire equality in all respects. It is this desire that pushes speakers into communication. Speakers attempt to achieve consistency within themselves and amongst one another. Although speech is the tool, the agreement is on more than just words. The words represent the things and the agreement represents affections of the soul.

Socrates: "That our soul in such situation is comparable to a book?"

Protarchus: "How so?"

Socrates: "If memory and perceptions concur with other impressions at a particular occasion, then they seem to me to inscribe words in our soul, as it were. And if what is written is true, then we form a true judgement and a true account of the matter. But if what our scribe writes is false, then the result will be the opposite of the truth" (Plato, *Philebus*, 38e39a).

These declarations can be tested for validity by conversation. When speakers communicate about things and agree together (say the same thing), their individual thoughts are recognized as true. If more people hold a belief as their own it is a stronger truth. Agreement is when both speaker and listener (responder) hold the same individual declaration as truth. Although only one speaker can possess the original declaration, the responder is now on board. Now, to revisit the question raised initially...

What does it mean for many to say the same thing?

To say the same thing means there must be something grand that unites speakers and listeners as a whole community. The fact that speakers are able to speak (utter), form opinions (similar or seemingly dissimilar), say things to one another, and form the same truths means there is a power inside all individual speakers. Freud says, “Words were originally magic and to this day words have retained much of their ancient magical powers” (Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, 20). Words hold the power needed to connect the speaker and listener deeply, that is, connect their thoughts. The speaker uses words to invite the listener into their declarations and opinions of the things they say. Words could be a sign of spirit, soul, and higher being that unites all.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. (John 1:1-2).

Word, logos, can be said in many different ways: opinion, speech, reason, discourse. This word was with God in the beginning. God placed the word within men and made them speakers and listeners. The divine quality to speak is possessed by the souled or spirited, because it brings them to agreement. Agreement is the closest men can get to sharing their thoughts in their pure form. Speaker’s thoughts take place in the mind or the soul. So, “saying the same thing” or agreement, is a likeness of one man’s soul connecting with another. Since speakers can agree, they must be understanding something more than just words when they listen and respond. They experience the same things and the things themselves are being the same in themselves. Speakers have their own experiences and thoughts. However, do not fear, the world is not in flux. Speakers put the pieces they have taken from the perceived world back together by saying things

and coming to an agreement. Words give speakers the power of agreement and this gives all speakers and listeners a truth. No matter how many words we speak and share, we cannot share the individual thoughts in their pure form. Although an individual's thoughts and experiences cannot be shared, the things they experience are shared and so are the words they use to symbolize those experiences. This being said, does agreement create more of a truth than experience and thought?

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