

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LOGOS

VOLUME I

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THE HIDDEN PATTERNS OF THE LOGOS
(Poetic Form and Philosophical Content in Heraclitus)¹

I.

It will soon be two thousand years since one of the earliest Christians, the wise author of the Fourth Gospel, a man who according to tradition was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus from Nazareth, wrote his famous sentence:

ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος At the beginning there was the Word

But as we know, half a millennium earlier, another sage, Heraclitus of Ephesus, was the first man ever to use the word λόγος to express a philosophical and theological concept. It is he who gave to the word λόγος a conceptual pregnancy and gravity which it never lost ever since.

True enough, modern historians of philosophy and religion have been relentlessly arguing for already two centuries about what Heraclitus had meant by λόγος. Dozens of interpretations have already been put forward.

To mention only the most extreme ones, some scholars deny outright that Heraclitus ever used the word in any special sense and think that he meant, depending on the context, either his own spoken or written word (DK 22 B 1, B 2, B 50, etc.), or the word of others (B 87, B 108), or *reputation* (B 39), or *proportion* (B 31), and so on.²

Others, on the contrary, when they do not identify the Heraclitean *logos* with saint John's concept the way it was to be understood a century later, *i. e.* as already pointing to the pre-existent Son of God before his incarnation (such was the interpretation of Church Fathers like Justinus or Clement of Alexandria³), — others still believe that he used the word *logos* to describe some fundamental metaphysical concept without any direct relation to the everyday meanings of the word.

In our days the latter view, taken literally, has practically no advocates left: historicity has won the battle.⁴ But the former is rather popular, and if many scholars still reject it, it is not because it is philologically undefendable (it can be very convincingly defended) but rather in view of the subsequent fantastic good fortune of the term itself which this opinion leaves unexplained.

No doubt, this good fortune could be understood as a mere product of the intrinsic semantic potentialities of the word — which looks as if it was

predestined to play the rôle it actually played — and the discovery of these potentialities could be attributed to the Stoics (their *logos* is already an undisputed fundamental concept of their doctrine) or to Philo Judaeus. Yet, why couldn't Heraclitus have been the first to perceive and use these intrinsic semantic potentialities? And next, do not the Stoic sources themselves point to Heraclitus as having been an important source of inspiration? Didn't Philo equate Heraclitus with Moses?⁵

If so, then the *logos* which Heraclitus speaks of cannot be torn off from the Logos which, as he is convinced, speaks *through* him. But similarly the *logos* which speaks *through* Heraclitus cannot be chopped off from the *logos* Heraclitus speaks *with*, *i. e.* from his own word. And whoever wishes to understand the *logos* which Heraclitus speaks of must pay heed first to the *logos* which speaks through him, in other words to the way he speaks himself.

But as we know, his way of speaking has been described since ancient times as ὁ ἠρακλείτειος σκοτός, the Heraclitean obscurity. This Heraclitean darkness was proverbial already in Plato's time. Suffice it to recall the humorous description of Heraclitus' followers which he puts into the mouth of Theodoros in the *Theaetetus* (179 e — 180 c); the complaint of Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* (1407 b 11 = text. A 4) about the ambiguity (a deliberate one, to my mind) of the first sentence of fr. B 1; the opinion of Theophrastus quoted by Diogenes Laertius (IX, 6) about the incoherence of the book or the epithets of κοκχυστής and αἰνικτής applied to him by Timo of Phlius (quoted by D. L. *ibid.*); finally the nickname ὁ σκοτεινός which became an almost obligatory attribute of the philosopher's name in late hellenistic, republican and imperial times⁶.

But the first man to complain about the negative effects of this obscurity of the *logos* of Heraclitus was... Heraclitus himself, when he wrote at the beginning of his book :

	B 1	
Τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἕντος αἰεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκούσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον.		Though this word is true and extant e'er uncomprehending happen men to be both ere they've heard it speaking and having heard it firstly.
	B 34	
ἀξύνετοι ἀκούσαντες κωφοῖσιν ἐόικασι: φάτις αὐτοῖσιν μαρτυρεῖ παρεόντας ἀπεινά		The fools: when they've heard it they look like the deaf: about them does the saying testify: "even present they're absent"

No wonder that it is precisely there, in his self-conscious darkness, that lies the secret of Heraclitus' *logos*.

My goal in *this paper* is not to propose another interpretation of Heraclitus' *logos*, it is more modest: just to draw you attention unto certain literary devices — which remained unnoticed from Aristotle's time to ours — used by Heraclitus to encode or express his *logos*, his message (and accordingly to the techniques which we must use today to decipher this message), and to underline

that if the Heraclitean *logos* as concept has anything to do with his own *logos*, his own way of speaking and writing — the opposite would be surprising — then these devices are extremely relevant in any attempt to identify the content which the word *logos* implied for him.

In a broader perspective, I shall be hinting at three theses: *firstly*, that the λόγος and the σχότος of Heraclitus are but the two sides of one and the same medal and have one and the same origin: his pre-Aristotelian insight into the surrounding world, his pre-Aristotelian thought and speech patterns, and his extraordinary visionary and poetical genius; *secondly* that his λόγος is structured to a degree of complexity and sophistication going far beyond what has ever been imagined by the boldest modern student of his “art and thought” — whence his σχότος —; and *thirdly* that both his λόγος and his σχότος were somehow part and parcel of the immanent mechanism of the κόσμος⁷.

II.

When you are faced with a dark text, you can react in three different ways. First way: say “this text is unintelligible” and leave it as it is. Second way: study the existing interpretations and their argumentation, and choose the best one or if they seem unconvincing try to find and argue a better one. Third way: to tell oneself “if I do not understand this text, this means I have overlooked something important on which the meaning depends” and start searching for this something.

This decisive something may be outside Heraclitus’ book, or inside it but outside the fragment you interpret, or inside this very fragment. Our chances of finding it, if it is outside the book, are poor. Our chances of identifying it, if it is in another fragment, are better but require a long and patient reconstruction of the book. But if it is inside the fragment, it is here, ready to be seen and grasped. Yet how many readers and interpreters of Heraclitus notice it, and if they notice it, how many do really attach any importance to it?

Let us take fragment B 22 which tells us exactly how we must act in order to find the Heraclitean ‘gold’, in order to hear his *logos*: dig a lot of earth.

Χρυσὸν γὰρ οἱ
διζήμενοι
γῆν πολλήν
ὀρύσσοι καὶ εὐρίσκουσιν
ὀλίγον.

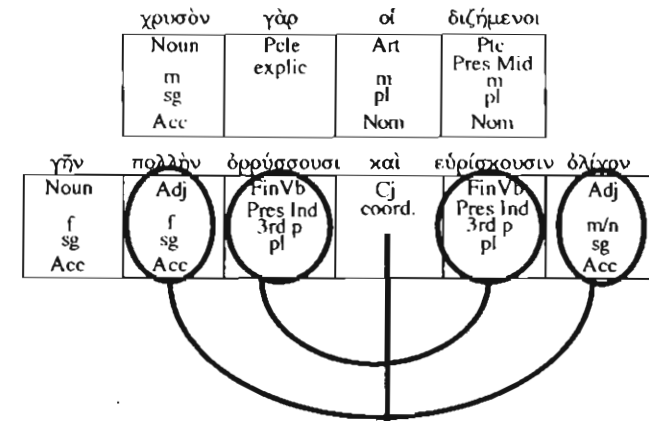
For those who search
for lumps of gold
a lot of earth dig out
and find a little

I tried very imperfectly when reading to render the rhythmic (syllabotonic) and phonic structure of this fragment: the isosyllabism (*isocolon*), isorhythmic pattern* and rhyme (*homoioteleuton*) of χρυσὸν γὰρ οἱ and διζήμενοι; and the homoioteleuta of γῆν πολλήν and of ὀρύσσοι - εὐρίσκουσιν. But there is still another *homoioteleuton* which, I am sure, nobody heard: χρυσὸν - ὀλίγον. Yet if we look at the fragment as a whole, we discover that its rhymes are organised into a perfectly symmetrical structure:

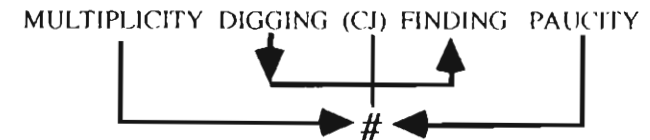
-on
-oj | -oj
-ên | -ên
-ousi | -ousi-
-on

Worth mentioning is also the paronymic assonance of ὀρύσσοι and εὐρίσκουσι(ν): same length, same accented syllable (the second), same consonants (except for the aspiration *h* and an extra *k*), same positions of the vowel *vis-à-vis* the consonants.⁹

If we examine now the *grammatical* level of this fragment, here is what we find:

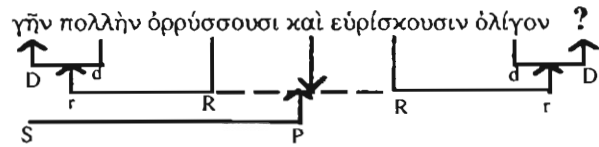


We find a complete chiasmus (except for the gender) of the grammatical morphemes (or rather morphosemes) of the five last words. We find a similar chiasmus at the level of the lexical meanings:



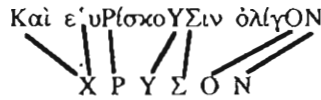
With the difference though that the relation between the first element (MULTIPLICITY) and the last (PAUCITY) is one not of identity but of contrariness, and that between the two central elements (DIGGING and FINDING) is one of continuity: *dig* and *find* are two consecutive stages of *unearthing*.

Finally, on the *syntactical* level, it looks like we find again the same chiasmic structure of the predicate.



but in fact one essential element is lacking: the noun which is determined by ὀλίγον. Of course, this ellipsis is easy to fill. The lacking word must be masculine or neuter, and therefore it is χρυσόν and not γῆν. Nevertheless, this 'limping' construction creates a feeling of frustration.

The only way to overcome this frustration is to find the lacking word embedded in the phonetic matter of the fragment itself:



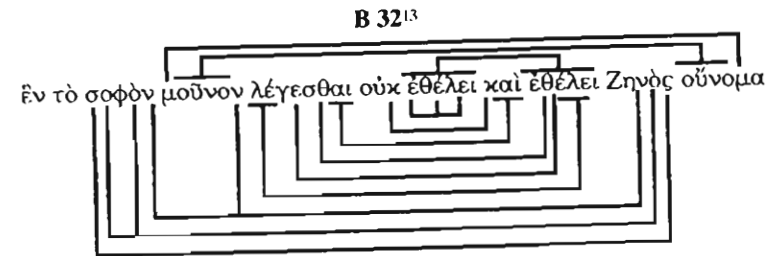
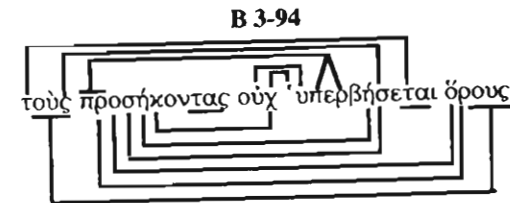
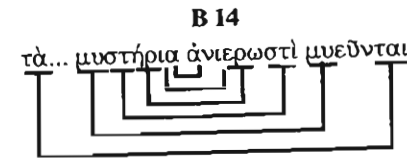
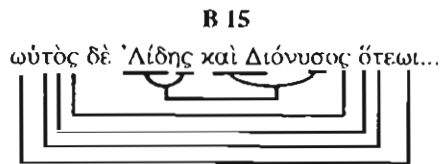
(Cf. Plat. Crat. 396 b 6-7 ΚάθαΡΟς ΝΟῦΣ = Κ Ρ Ο Ν Ο Σ.)¹⁰

This fragment, though it looks like an innocent riddle rather easy to solve, is in fact a *paradigm* used by Heraclitus not only to tell us plainly that finding a grain of *truth* (gold is too transparent an image for us to have any doubts about its metaphorical meaning) requires a lot of work, a lot of digging, but also to show us the object and the method of this work: the thing to dig is the *text* — Heraclitus' *text* or *the text of reality*, — and the things to be dug out and deciphered are the hidden patterns it contains.

III.

The fragments of Heraclitus are literally crowded with such curious patterns on each of the eight linguistic levels of the text (graphic, prosodic, phonetic, grammatical/lexical, syntactical, semical, logical) and it would take me hours to display them and to comment on them. Those I shall be speaking of are but a very small sampling.

Here are a few examples of a very curious type of phonic structure extending to a whole phrase and which I propose to call *palindromic assonance*¹¹:



The solutions to such riddles (and the riddles themselves) are much harder to find. Some people would say that these are not riddles at all but mere devices of phonic ornamentation with a purely aesthetic or mnemonic function. There are reasons to doubt they would be right. For one cannot help noticing that in the first example both divine names are placed in a way to make obvious their phonic resemblance AID-S, i. e. to identify the second to the first. (Note that this

combinations of sounds AID-S appears again at least three times¹⁴ in the same fragment: ΑΙΔοίσι·τιν, ἀνΑΙΔέ·στατα and ληνΑΙΔ·σουσιν): that in the second τὰ μυστήρια as a whole is phonically reflected by ἀνιερωστί·μυεῦνται: that in the third it is the word θνητοί which is turned upside down (μεταπίπτει, cf. B 88 μεταπεσόντα) to become κτήνεα: that in the fourth χρυσὸν happens to be but ὄν σύρ- (= τὰ τῶν ὄνων σύρ[ματα]): that in the fifth προσήκ- 'appropriate' is inverted into (οὐ)χ ὑπερβήσεται ὄρ(ους) '(that which does not) transgress (the limits)'. As to B 32, I shall return to it later.

To those who wonder how such sound patterns could "work", could be heard, I shall answer "I do not know", but I do know how they could be read, and perhaps even how they could be written. One word suffices to explain it: βουστροφῆδόν.

IV.

This is why one should be extremely serious about the brilliant observation concerning fr. B 52 made 35 years ago by Clémence Ramnoux. True enough, she still wrote then that "such a solution can be suggested only as a kind of game". But the following year she repeated it in an article reprinted in the 2nd ed. of her book, this time without any qualification.¹⁵ Here is a slightly more developed version of it.

ΑΙΩΝ ΠΑΙΣ ΕΣΤΙ ΠΑΙΖΩΝ ΠΕΣΣΕΥΩΝ ΠΑΙΔΟΣ Η ΒΑΣΙΛΗΗ

ΑΙΩΝ	ΑΙ	ΑΙ	ΩΝ	ΩΝ	ΑΙ	Α	Ι	Ι
ΠΑ	Σ	ΕΣΤΙ	ΠΑ	Ν	ΠΕΣ	ΠΑ	Σ	
Α	Ε	Ι	ΩΝ					
ΑΙ	Ε	Ν	Ε	ΩΝ				
		Ζ	ΕΥ	Σ	ΒΑΣΙΑ-			
			ΕΥ	Σ				

Ἄϊων πᾶς ἐστὶ Πᾶν, ἀείζ<ο>ων, αἰέν ἑών, Ζεὺς Βασιλεύς
Entire Aîôn is Pân, ever-living, ever-being, Zeus-King

We discover, first, that some key words (αἰών, πᾶς, πᾶν, ἀείζων, αἰέν) seem to be woven into the text of the fragment... And we discover then that they even form a sentence, a sentence which looks very much like an old hieratic formula, a formula where one can even recognise a metric pattern:

Ἄϊων	(- ≍ -)
πᾶς ἐστὶ Πᾶν	(- - ∪ -),
ἀείζ<ο>ων	(∪ - ∪ -),
αἰέν ἑών	(- ∪ ∪ -),
Ζεὺς Βασιλεύς	(- ∪ ∪ -)

(though slightly different readings may be possible). Miss Ramnoux cleverly compared this hidden text to Aesch. *Agam.* 55-56: ὑπάτος δ' αἰών ἢ τις Ἀπόλλων ἢ Πᾶν ἢ Ζεὺς "Supreme divinity, or some Apollo, Pan or Zeus".

And she deduced from it the existence of a tradition common at least to Heraclitus and Aeschylus according to which divine names were all approximate equivalents of each other meaning *What Always Is* or *What Always Lives*. (An idea which we shall find again elsewhere in Heraclitus.)

Thus, Clement of Alexandria (*Paed.* 1, 21, 4) had very good reasons, speaking of the θεῖα παιδιὰ of the ἐν Χριστῶι παιδίῳ, to add: τοιαύτην τινὰ παίζειν παιδιὰν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Δία Ἰεράκλειτος λέγει. Which means either that the philosopher had mentioned Zeus in the immediate neighbourhood of our quotation, or that Clement knew the clue of the riddle.

One could also compare this with the etymology of Πᾶν in Plato's *Cratylus* (408 cd): Πᾶν αἰπόλος = ὁ πᾶν ἀεὶ πολῶν (in B 52 we rather have ὁ πᾶν ἀεὶ ἑών). And 'Socrates' adds: as a son of Hermes καὶ ἔστιν ἦτοι Λόγος ἢ Λόγου ἀδελφὸς ὁ Πᾶν.

V.

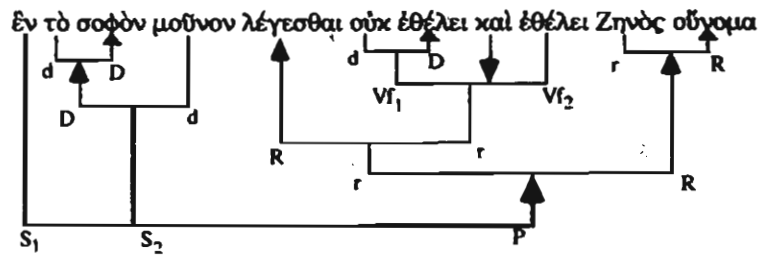
But the phonic level is far from being the only level of Heraclitus' *logos* hiding an invisible and meaningful harmony. We can find it at all the levels of our fragments, from what I call the *chronometric* sub-level (syllabotonic rhythm, metric encrustations, isocola, strophic division, etc.) to the *semic* level, with the morphological, the lexical and the syntactical levels in between.

Let us have a look at what the latter has to offer and let us examine a fragment the phonic pattern of which we have already seen and where again we find the name of Zeus: fr. B 32 ἐν τῷ σοφῶν μόνον λέγεσθαι οὐκ ἐθέλει καὶ ἐθέλει Ζηνὸς ὄνομα. This sentence is usually translated thus: *One the only wise does not want and does want to be called by the name of Zeus* (pattern 1, see *infra*). This presupposes that λέγεσθαι is governed by both verbs οὐκ ἐθέλει καὶ ἐθέλει. But nothing forbids us to interpret (1) λέγεσθαι as depending only on οὐκ ἐθέλει and as governing in its turn the nominatives or accusatives of the beginning, (2) Ζηνὸς ὄνομα not as an internal accusative or an accusative of specification depending on λέγεσθαι, but as the direct object of the second ἐθέλει. This would give, for instance, the following translation: *The only wise does not want to be called One and wants the name of Zeus* (pattern 9). And a third construction is possible not only separating the two verbs but also attributing different subjects to them, e.g.: *The only wise does not want to be called One and the name of Zeus wants it* (pattern 15).

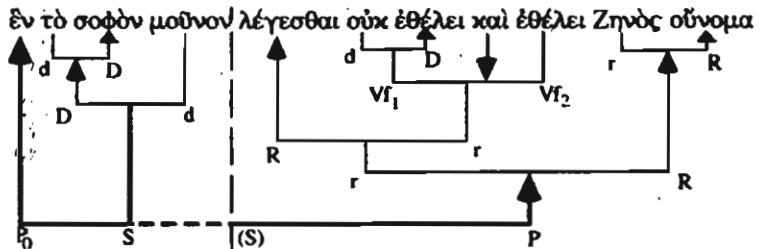
If we add to that that in each of these cases:

1. subject and predicate or complement can change places:
2. μόνον can go either with τῷ σοφῶν or with λέγεσθαι, and can be understood either as an adjective or as an adverb; and
3. the first three or four words can form an independent phrase meaning *The wise is (only) one*: —

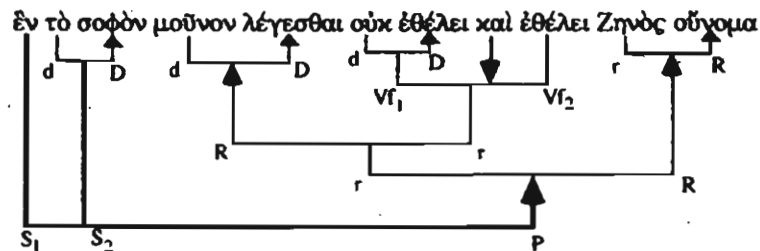
if so, then the result is that our fragment present us theoretically¹⁶ with the following 18 different possible syntactical interpretations:



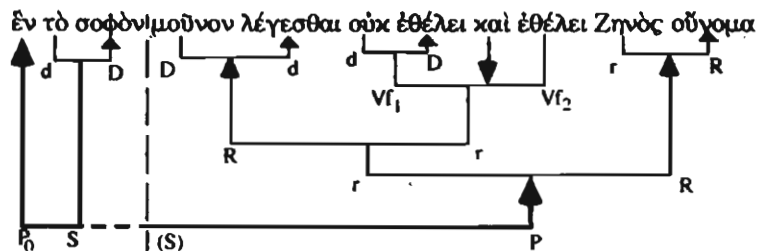
1. The One, the only wise, does not want and does want to be called by the name of Zeus.



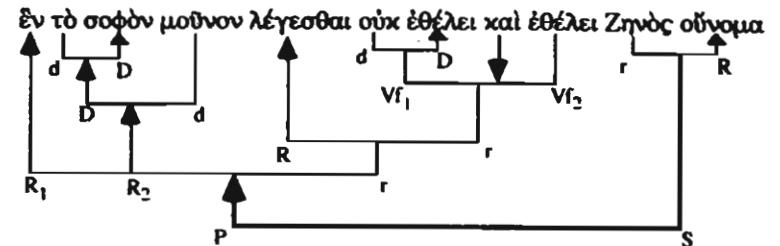
2. The only wise is one: it does not want and does want to be called by the name of Zeus.



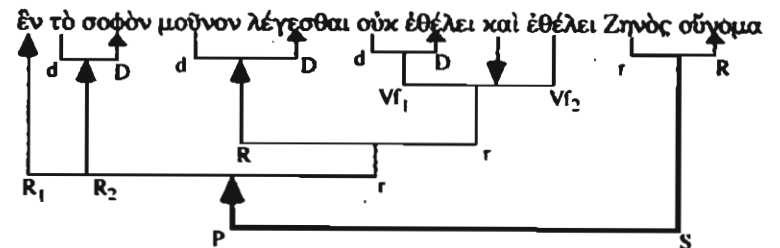
3. One, the wise, does not want and does want to be solely called by the name of Zeus.



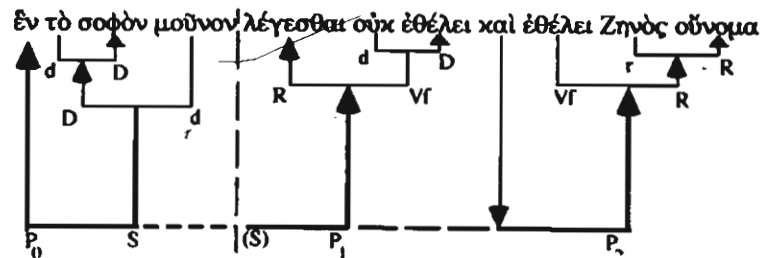
4. The wise is one: it does not want and does want to be solely called by the name of Zeus.



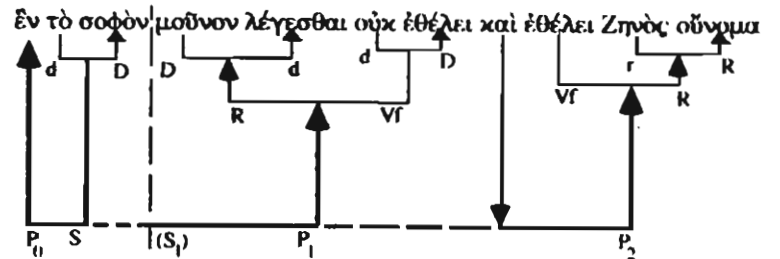
5. The name of Zeus does not want and wants to be called one the only wise.



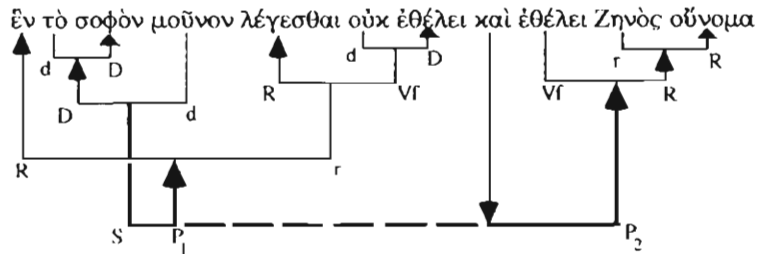
6. The name of Zeus does not want and does want to be solely called one, the wise.



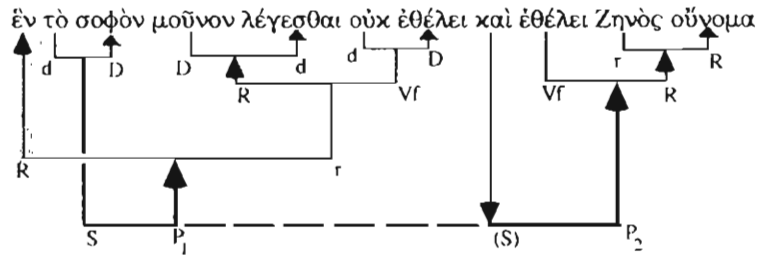
7. The only wise is one; it does not want to be called and wants the name of Zeus.



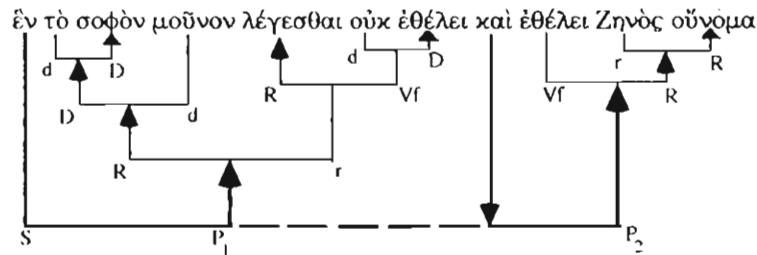
8. The wise is one; it does not want to be only called and wants the name of Zeus.



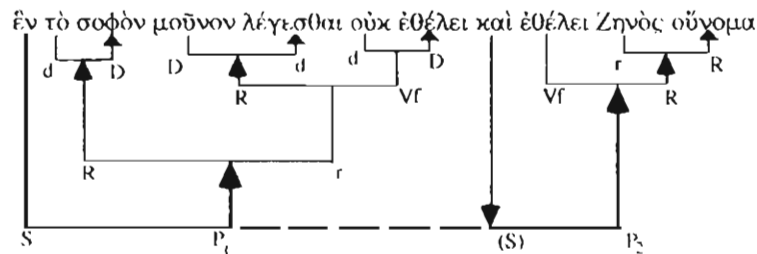
9. The only wise does not want to be called one and wants the name of Zeus.



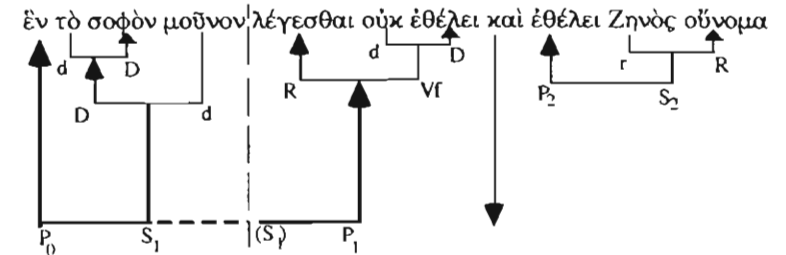
10. The wise does not want to be solely called one and wants the name of Zeus.



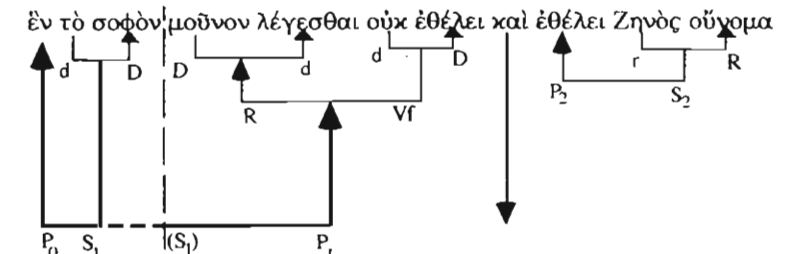
11. The one does not want to be called the only wise and wants the name of Zeus.



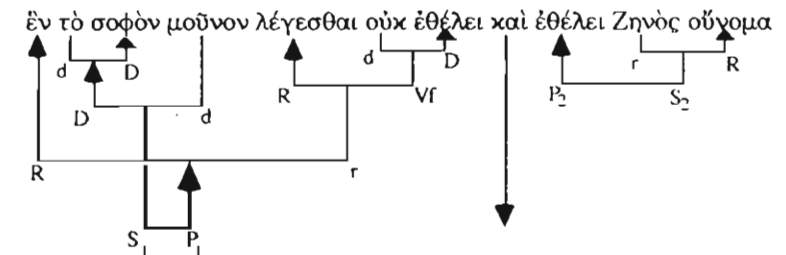
12. The one does not want to be solely called the wise and wants the name of Zeus.



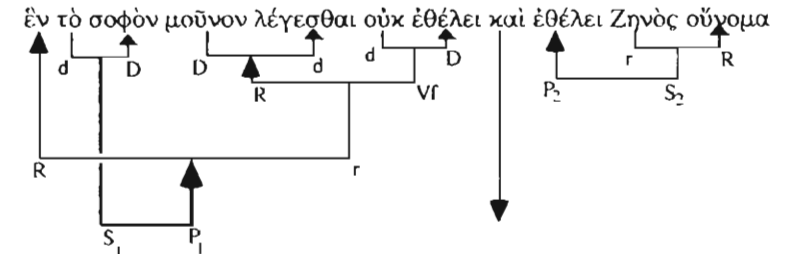
13. The only wise is one; it does not want to be called, and the name of Zeus wants (it).



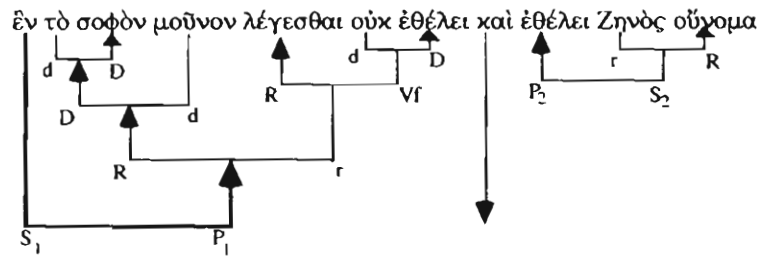
14. The wise is one; it does not want to be called only, and the name of Zeus wants (it).



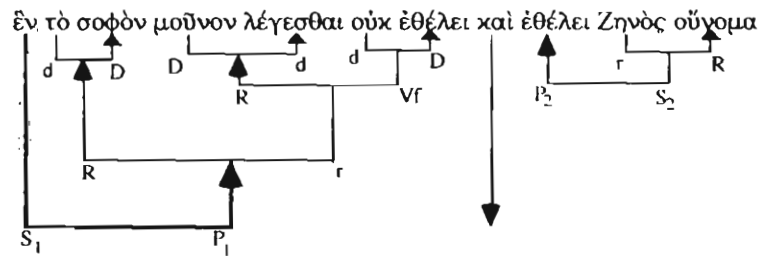
15. The only wise does not want to be called one, and the name of Zeus wants (it).



16. The wise does not want to be solely called one, and the name of Zeus wants (it).



17. *The one does not want to be called the only wise, and the name of Zeus wants (it).*



18. *The one does not want to be solely called the wise, and the name of Zeus wants (it)*

If now we compare with each other the 18 syntactical constructions of B 32 we shall find out first that they can be divided into three groups differing by their basic structure:

- X does not want and wants Y (1)
- X¹ does not want Y¹ and <X¹> wants Y² (2)
- X¹ does not want Y¹ and X² wants <Y¹> (3)

Which, taking into account the other variants, gives us the following classification: (see next page)

Then, owing to the synonymy of some of the resulting statements and disregarding the plurivocity of many words (such as *μόνον*), we realise that what we have in fact is not 18 different constructions, most of them consisting of two statements, but a collection of 21 different simple but more or less contradictory statements (shown on second next page).

Subject 1	Finite Verb 1	Complement 1	Subject 2	Finite Verb 2	Complement 2
1. Ἐν τὸ σοφὸν μόνον	οὐκ ἐθέλει	-	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	λέγεσθαι Ζητῆος ὄνομα
2. (τὸ [Ἐν δὲ] σοφὸν μόνον)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	-	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	λέγεσθαι Ζητῆος ὄνομα
3. Ἐν τὸ σοφὸν	οὐκ ἐθέλει	-	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	μόνον λέγεσθαι Ζητῆος ὄνομα
4. (τὸ [Ἐν δὲ] σοφὸν)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	-	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	μόνον λέγεσθαι Ζητῆος ὄνομα
5. Ζητῆος ὄνομα	οὐκ ἐθέλει	-	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	"Ἐν τὸ σοφὸν μόνον" λέγεσθαι
6. Ζητῆος ὄνομα	οὐκ ἐθέλει	-	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	"Ἐν τὸ σοφὸν" μόνον λέγεσθαι
7. (τὸ [Ἐν δὲ] σοφὸν μόνον)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	λέγεσθαι	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	Ζητῆος ὄνομα
8. (τὸ [Ἐν δὲ] σοφὸν)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	μόνον λέγεσθαι	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	Ζητῆος ὄνομα
9. τὸ σοφὸν μόνον	οὐκ ἐθέλει	Ἐν λέγεσθαι	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	Ζητῆος ὄνομα
10. τὸ σοφὸν	οὐκ ἐθέλει	Ἐν μόνον λέγεσθαι	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	Ζητῆος ὄνομα
11. Ἐν	οὐκ ἐθέλει	"τὸ σοφὸν μόνον" λέγεσθαι	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	Ζητῆος ὄνομα
12. Ἐν	οὐκ ἐθέλει	"τὸ σοφὸν" μόνον λέγεσθαι	.	καὶ ἐθέλει	Ζητῆος ὄνομα
13. (τὸ [Ἐν δὲ] σοφὸν μόνον)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	λέγεσθαι	καὶ Ζητῆος ὄνομα	ἐθέλει	(sc. τοῦτο)
14. (τὸ [Ἐν δὲ] σοφὸν)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	μόνον λέγεσθαι	καὶ Ζητῆος ὄνομα	ἐθέλει	(sc. τοῦτο)
15. τὸ σοφὸν μόνον	οὐκ ἐθέλει	Ἐν λέγεσθαι	καὶ Ζητῆος ὄνομα	ἐθέλει	(sc. τοῦτο)
16. τὸ σοφὸν	οὐκ ἐθέλει	Ἐν μόνον λέγεσθαι	καὶ Ζητῆος ὄνομα	ἐθέλει	(sc. τοῦτο)
17. Ἐν	οὐκ ἐθέλει	"τὸ σοφὸν μόνον" λέγεσθαι	καὶ Ζητῆος ὄνομα	ἐθέλει	(sc. τοῦτο)
18. Ἐν	οὐκ ἐθέλει	"τὸ σοφὸν" μόνον λέγεσθαι	καὶ Ζητῆος ὄνομα	ἐθέλει	(sc. τοῦτο)

Subject		Predicate		No.
Nominal Phrase	Finite Verb	Complement		
I. Ἐν τῷ σοφῶν μοῦνον (1, 2, 7, 13)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	λέγεσθαι Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (1, 2)	1	
		λέγεσθαι <οὔτω> (7, 13)	2	
	ἐθέλει	λέγεσθαι Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (1, 2)	3	
		Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (7)	4	
II. Ἐν τῷ σοφῶν (3, 4, 8, 14)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	μοῦνον λέγεσθαι Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (3, 4)	5	
		μοῦνον λέγεσθαι <οὔτω> (8, 14)	6	
	ἐθέλει	μοῦνον λέγεσθαι Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (3, 4)	7	
		Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (8)	8	
III. τὸ σοφῶν μοῦνον (9, 15)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	Ἐν λέγεσθαι (9, 15)	9	
	ἐθέλει	Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (9)	10	
IV. τὸ σοφῶν (10, 16)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	Ἐν μοῦνον λέγεσθαι (10, 16)	11	
	ἐθέλει	Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (10)	12	
V. Ἐν (11, 12, 17, 18)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	τὸ σοφῶν μοῦνον* λέγεσθαι (11, 12, 17, 18)	13	
	ἐθέλει	Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (11, 12)	14	
VI. Ζηνὸς οὐνομα (5, 6, 13-18)	οὐκ ἐθέλει	Ἐν τῷ σοφῶν μοῦνον* λέγεσθαι (5, 6)	15	
		λέγεσθαι (13)	17	
	ἐθέλει	μοῦνον λέγεσθαι (14)	18	
		Ἐν λέγεσθαι (15)	19	
		Ἐν μοῦνον λέγεσθαι (16)	20	
		τὸ σοφῶν μοῦνον* λέγεσθαι (17, 18)	21	

* μοῦνον can be either adjective and modify the preceding context, or adverb and modify the following verb.

Practically in means that the words "One", "Wise", "Sole" or their referents, taken together or separately, on one pole, and the word-combination "the name of Zeus" on the other are torn apart by opposite tendencies which incite them to repulse each other, but also to attract each other, and that these mutual repulsions and attractions act both inside the first pole and between it

and the second pole. These attractions and repulsions seem to concern first and foremost the relation between name and what is named. This is indubitable as concerns Ζηνὸς οὐνομα, but is more than a mere possibility at the other end (because of λέγεσθαι). But in the latter case, another interpretation remains possible, related to the identification/differentiation of things named (λέγεσθαι being then a euphemism for εἶναι), which moreover seems to be the only interpretation possible when speaking of the internal relations of the first pole (between Ἐν, τὸ σοφῶν and μοῦνον), provided at least one of them is the subject. Symmetrically, since Ζηνὸς οὐνομα can also be the subject, the topic can also be the identification/differentiation of names, and of names only.

In short, what we have is a case of *syntactical* polyphony¹⁷ which is in no ways accidental or gratuitous, but serves as a working model of a *semantic* polyphony according to which relations between the names in the fragment and their nominees are such that it is impossible either to distinguish or to confuse respectively: (1) the divine name and its nominee, (2) one divine name and another divine name, (3) one divine nominee and another divine nominee. The *One*, the *Wise*, the *Only* and *Zeus* are simultaneously and mutually both names and their corresponding nominees; as names they are simultaneously both synonymous and non synonymous, both adequate and inadequate to their nominees; as nominees, they are simultaneously both identical and non identical to each other, both properly and improperly denominated by their names. But that is not all.

What I just said reflected the *symmetrical* part of our semantic polyphony. But this polyphony has an *asymmetrical* side as well. Its most conspicuous signs are: the presence of οὐνομα on only one of the sides; the qualitative and quantitative differences between the two poles: we have two or three *abstract* names on one of them against one *divine* name on the other; the numerical superiority (14 vs. 7) of those potential statements whose subject are abstract nouns as against those whose subject is the divine name; the fact that the negative form of the verb stands prior to the positive.

What is most curious is that this negated verb serves as focus to the big and relatively well balanced palindromic assonance of our fragment (see on p. 153) which connects σοφῶν to Ζηνὸς on the one hand, and λέγεσθαι to καὶ ἐθέλει on the other, while a secondary assonance, which is closer to the right pole, is focused on καὶ and connects μοῦνον to οὐνομα. This secondary assonance is isomorphic to what we have just called the *symmetrical* part of the syntactical polyphony, while the large one enhances its *asymmetrical* part.

Thus, while he both states and negates their identity, Heraclitus seems to prefer the negation, the non-identity of both poles, as opposed to their identity, in other words he appears to prefer the *One Wise* to *Zeus*, but without excepting any of the other possible interpretations, including the one which states just the opposite: the *Wise* does *not* want to be called *One* (or vice versa) and wishes the name of *Zeus*.

It goes without saying that these first steps towards an interpretation are in no wise definitive or exhaustive. I only strived to draw your attention onto the

importance of the hidden supralinguistic features of Heraclitus' *logos* (namely here: syntactical polyphony) for any exegesis of his thought.

VI

To wind up, or rather to cut short this paper which could go on and on so abundant are these features, a few very tentative and hypothetical words on what all this seems to mean as far as Heraclitus' own *logos* and the Logos speaking through him are concerned.

Heraclitus' *logos* of course is first of all *his own* account, *his own* word, *his own* book, i. e. what *he* says and shows in his book, his own (subjective) vision of the world which he wishes to communicate to us. But since everything he says in his book is an account of the sum total of the world around him and has for him a glaring (objective) reality, this account of the world *is* true now, *was* already true before having been written down, and *will remain* true even if the book no longer exists. It could be identified with Truth itself, as independent from Heraclitus or anybody. This is why the *logos is*, this is why it *ever is*, this is why everything *comes into being* and *happens* according to it.

All this is not new, it lies on the surface of the text, and the majority of the modern interpretations of the *logos* (as law, structure, reason, sense, measure, formula, etc.) say just that, even though they tend without sufficient reasons to give priority to this or that concrete aspect of *the objective word of the world as indistinguishable from the subjective account of the philosopher*. The latter definition (which is not unlike that given by Marcovich¹⁸), though correct, is not sufficient. Why?

Because **just as** the world, as seen by Heraclitus, the world ruled by the objective *logos*, is structured, ordered, organised, but also dynamic, contradictory, tense, living — *cosmos*, harmony, fire, vortex —, **in the same way** the subjective *logos* which Heraclitus uses to express its objective counterpart and describe the world it rules *is also structured, ordered, organised, dynamic, contradictory, tense, living*.

This assertion is less trivial than the previous, but it does not say all either.

We all know that in Heraclitus' time, words and notions such as *objective/subjective, being/becoming, order/disorder, stability/instability*, etc., etc. had not yet been invented. There was no appropriate philosophical and scientific language, there were none of the tools needed to conceptualise Heraclitus' vision of the world, to identify and describe its elements, to analyse its physical and metaphysical mechanisms, to cast them in pre-existing linguistic and logical forms, in short, there was no means to *formalise* this world-vision and to formulate it not only in Cartesian terms, but even in Aristotelian. (I leave open the question of whether Heraclitus' world-vision would have yielded to an Aristotelian type of formatting.)

What he did have were the resources of his native language, of which he had an extraordinary command, perhaps enriched by some hieratic tradition and multiplied by his poetical genius. Heraclitus possessed not so much what we would call now a good literary culture and an easy hand at writing, but rather an

unusually deep sense of the opportunities that this language gave him provided he applied to it techniques which allowed him to structure normally meaningless or redundant elements and to destructure normally significant elements.

Structural semantisation of meaningless elements (achieved mainly through rhythm and various phonic repetitive structures) creates a whole network of additional semantic ties which supplement and modify those created by the linguistic structures (grammar, syntax, vocabulary) and interact with them; its main effect consists in creating various degrees of polyphony (i. e. *actual* polysemy, to be distinguished from the *potential* polysemy found in the dictionaries) at word level: from mere hinting at the possibility of another meaning besides the main one to the blunt coexistence of a number of different, or even opposite, meanings in the same word.

Semantisation through destructuring consists in omitting certain marks on which depends the identification of the linguistic or semantic function of an element and the absence of which makes any definite choice impossible. This also creates different types of polyphony such as various alternative syntactic constructions and, therefore, meanings, various puns, etc.

I do not intend to analyse these mechanisms here. I shall only underline two important points.

First, even though we find in Heraclitus a very strong presence of oral elements (cf. Havelock's *preliteracy*), he uses a great number of poetical structures which work only in written form (thus the pun on BIOS in B 48, *or* the simultaneous syllabotonic and metric rhythms of many of his phrases, *or* the various syntactical constructions or word and sentence divisions of one and the same text, *cannot* be simultaneously articulated orally). Even more, the opportunities given by the written form probably played an important rôle in the genesis of Heraclitus' style.

Second, all these diverse techniques had one and the same overall function to fulfil: to *simulate, modelise, create in deed* what the text only said or even omitted to say in *words*. We have had a good but rather trivial example of the latter in fr. B 22, and another very profound one in the case of B 32. Heraclitus' text has been deliberately built in such a fashion that the attentive reader (I stress the word *reader*, not the listener) is constantly faced with problems of reading, dividing phrases, connecting words, distributing logical accents, etc., and therefore led to reread, rethink what he reads and finally to understand that these very hesitations, this intellectual going to and fro to which the text condemns him was precisely the deepest layer of the message¹⁹.

In other words, Heraclitus invented for philosophy a specific language based not on univocity, non-contradiction, the excluded *tertium* and the syllogism, but on polyphony, contradiction, the included *tertium* and the paralogism, a living communicative and suggestive language, mobile, pulsating inwardly, speaking not only to the conscious mind, but also to sensual, acoustic, iconic, synergetic perception, a language the function of which it was not to tell and convince with arguments, but to *show*, to make *think*, to make *feel*, to make

experience, to make *live* and thus to communicate one's world vision and perception *itself*.

This non-logical way of the *logos* (as opposed to the Aristotelian logical way) has been rejected by the mainstream of philosophy, but it never ceased to exert a strong fascination on the thinkers of all times, from Plato (see the *Cratylus*), the Stoics with their *λόγος προφορικὸς* and *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος*, Philo of Alexandria for whom it was the Word of Iahwe, saint John who believed this word to have been incarnated by Jesus, and through them the whole Christian trinitarian theology and christology, but also the philosophical poets and poetical philosophers of modern times such as Goethe, Hölderlin, Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger (or, in very different quarters, religious thinkers such as, say, Shri Ghosh Aurobindo).

The *subjective logos* of Heraclitus, therefore, is much more structured, much more elaborate, perhaps even much more *formalised* in its own way, than it appears to be at first sight (or out of sheer unawareness of how involved it may have been). This means that the *objective logos* it expresses is accordingly much more complex than we ever suspected. And since Heraclitus' vision of this objective *logos* reflects his perception of our world such as it was before it was categorised by Aristotle, the only means we have to dig out the golden relics of this lost continent is to identify and decipher the hidden structures of his so brightly dark utterances.

NOTES

1. This paper was read under the title "Ὁ λαμπρὸς λόγος τοῦ Σκραίτου: How to Listen to the Logos of Heraclitus?" of which I am now dissatisfied. — I should like to thank most cordially here the Organising Committee of the 7th International Conference on Greek Philosophy and its president Professor K. Boudouris for having generously given me the status of invited speaker and thus made my participation possible.

2. See, e.g., M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford, 1971) 115 ff.

3. Just. Apol.: Clem. Strom. 1, 57, 6 (p. 39,29 Stählin-Früchtel) τῆς δὲ τοῦ λόγου τοῦ ὄντος αἰ θεολογίας (cf. B 1).

4. But less extreme views, deriving the philosophical meaning of *λόγος* from its ordinary meaning, are of course quite common. Cf., e.g. M. Marcovich, *Heraclitus. Editio Maior* (Mérida, 1967) 1: "The Logos is an objective Truth or universal Law..."; *ibid.*, p. 8: "ὁ λόγος... seems to mean first *statement* implying (*oral*) *teaching*".

5. See e.g. Numenius ap. Euseb. PE XIV, 5, 11; Diog. L., VII, 174; IX, 15; Ar. Didym. ap. Eus. PE XV, 20, Philod. *De piet.* 14, etc.; Philo, *Quis rer. div. heres* 214; *Quaest. in Gen.* III, 5.

6. Most of the ancient *testimonia* concerning Heraclitus' style and proverbial darkness are collected (31 items) or referred to (ca. 30 items) in: S. Mouraviev, "Testimonia de vita et scripto Heracliti Ephesi", *Vestnik drevnej istorii*, nr. 131 (1975) 233-239; nr. 136 (1976) 66 f. (Epimetricum ad p. 233-239), and commented upon in "Kniga Geraklita Efesskogo [The book of Heraclitus]", *ibid.*, p. 61-4. An enlarged and improved edition of both texts and commentary is due in vol. III.A of: S. Mouraviev (ed.), *Heraclitea. Edition critique complète des témoignages sur la vie et l'œuvre d'Héraclite d'Éphèse et des vestiges de son livre*, Moscou—Paris (will include 5 parts: I. *Prolegomena*, II. *Traditio Heraclitea*, III. *Recensio Heraclitea*, IV. *Refectio libri Heracliti*, V. *Indices*, Vols II.A.I and IV.A have already appeared).

7. The latter is not even a hint, but only a tentative *arrière-pensée*.

8. It is one of my contentions, since 1972, that the rhythm of Heraclitus' prose is based not on syllabic quantity (metre), but on syllabic quality (accent), just as in Modern Greek, though his accent was of course a pitch accent, not a dynamic one. See Mouraviev, "Sillabo-tonichnost' ritmicheskoy prozy Geraklita Efesskogo" [The syllabotonic nature of Heraclitus' prose rhythm]: *Antichnost' i sovremennost', K 80-letiju Fëdora Aleksandroviča Petrovskogo* (Moskva, Nauka, 1972) p. 236-51; *idem*, "Crux eruditorum. le dossier du fr. B 26 DK d'Héraclite", *La philosophie grecque et sa portée culturelle et historique* (Moscou, Progrès, 1985) p. 88-89; *idem*, "Le dossier du fragment B 21 Diels-Kranz d'Héraclite d'Éphèse", *Revue des Études grecques* 104 (1991) p. 71-72. I am actually writing (in French) a study devoted to the lower linguistic levels of Heraclitus' poetics which will include a chapter on his prose rhythm.

9. The study just mentioned in the previous note will also include a chapter on the phonic patterns used by Heraclitus (alliterations, rhymes, chimes etc.). Cf. Mouraviev, "Skrytaja harmonija. Podgotovitel'nye materialy k opisaniu poetiki Geraklita na urovne tonem" [The hidden harmony. Preparatory materials for the description of Heraclitus' poetics on the phonemic level], *Paleobalkaništika i antichnost'* (Moskva, Nauka, 1988) p. 145-64.

10. I owe this wonderfully relevant example to Professor Livio Rossetti (Perugia). See his article "Quale skotemotes? Sul rapporto che Eraclito instaura col suo uditorio potenziale", *Philosophica* 1 (1992) 3-28 (cf. p. 28, n. 18).

11. I use the word *assonance* in the broad sense of phonetic chime by which I mean any repetition of a sound or of a combination of sounds, and the word *palindromic* as denoting the reversal, in the second term of the repetition, of the order of the elementary sounds and sound combinations of which the chime consists.

12. In B 29 I follow Cobet in deleting of after θνητῶν. The assonance shows clearly that Heraclitus put θνητῶν on an equal footing with αἰτήρια as *animate beings*, which excludes the interpretation of the former as denoting *mortal things* as opposed to *eternal glory*.

13. The correction of ἄνομα into Ionic οἴνομα is suggested both by the Ionic μοῖνον and confirmed by the sound pattern.

14. A fifth instance would be τὴ καὶ διττόσσι if one accepts this reading which I advocated in "Clement, Protreptique 34,2 ss. / Heraclite, fr. B 15", *Revue des Études antiques* 78-79 (1976-1977) 42-9.

15. Cf. Rannoux, *Voie abstrait et structure de pensée chez Heraclite*, Thèse = "Héraclite ou l'homme entre les choses et les mots" (Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1959; 1968) p. 449; p. 300.

16. Of course, not all of them would have practically occurred to a Greek reader, and some may have been excluded by the context (which we lack).

17. Other Heraclitean instances of syntactic ambiguity are cited, e.g., in D. Sidet, "Word order and sense

in Heraclitus: Fragment One and the River fragment", *Ionian philosophy* (Athens, Association for Greek philosophy, 1989) p. 363-368; Mouraviev, "Comprendre Héraclite", *Âge de la science 3, La philosophie et son histoire* (1990) pp. 208-210.

18. M. Marcovich, art. "Heraclitus", *RF. Suppl. X*, col. 271-2.

19. This was clearly sensed by Charles H. Kahn in his well known definitions of Heraclitus' *linguistic density and resonance* (see C. H. Kahn, *The art and thought of Heraclitus* [Cambridge, Univ. Pr., 1979] p. 89-95). Unfortunately, he made very little use of either, restricting himself to cases which had already been for a long time the matter of vivid debates among scholars. Another more recent study underlying the poetic nature of Heraclitus' style which deserves mentioning is : K. Robb, "Pre-literate ages and the linguistic art of Heraclitus", *Language and thought in Early Greek philosophy* (La Salle, Monist Library of Philosophy, 1983) p. 153-206.

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