

From Many Logoi to the One Wise: Epistemic Method in Heraclitus

Sarah Feldman

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Doctorate in Philosophy degree in Philosophy

Department of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts
University of Ottawa

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Abstract

This doctoral dissertation examines the interrelation between three aspects of Heraclitus' thought: (1) his interest in perspectival or context-dependent conceptions of the opposites; (2) his views on the obstacles to and limitations of human (as contrasted with divine) knowledge; and (3) his conception of reality as a unity, along with the divergent kinds of unity that he associates with the divine and the human perspective.

This dissertation argues that Heraclitus conceives of reality as an undifferentiated unity that can only be understood from a "perspectiveless" state. In other words, reality is such that it can only be grasped from a state unconditioned by the perceptual and cognitive features arising from one's idiosyncratic "creaturely" constitution – especially one's needs and values. This perspectiveless state also corresponds to the divine "perspective."

Heraclitus' logos, this thesis argues, is a method for recognizing the underlying structure of human thought and discourse, and the view of reality that this structure yields. However, this method, when used consistently and globally, serves to undermine both the logos itself and the human perspective that it reflects. Through an analysis of Heraclitus' perspective juxtapositions, this thesis shows that a full engagement with the logos' method of evoking the unity of opposites allows the audience to achieve a (temporary) collapse of perspective and apprehension of reality as a unity free of oppositions and differentiations.

By viewing Heraclitus' statements concerning human knowledge in this light, we can resolve certain puzzles in Heraclitus' conception of unity, his preoccupation with the perspectival (despite his rejection of the idiosyncratic) and his attitudes towards human knowledge. The unity of opposites, while not part of the nature of reality, plays an essential part in the common structure of human thought. By cleaving to this common structure, and by engaging fully with the conflicting perspectives which it brings together, and which are equally

idiosyncratic with respect to the true nature of reality, the audience overcomes the limitations of the human perspective, and achieves a temporary apprehension of a reality which cannot be grasped from within its constraints.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge funding from the University of Ottawa and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship, whose support made it possible for me to undertake this project.

I'm grateful to my family for not only accepting the somewhat impractical choice to do a doctorate in Philosophy, but for being genuinely supportive of it, and during a period when they might have been forgiven for wondering if my time might not be better spent on more pressing matters.

I'm grateful to my thesis committee, Antoine Côté, Graham Hunter and Francisco Gonzalez, for their advice not only on this thesis, but on issues ranging from grant applications to conferences to abstracts. Most of all, I am indebted to my supervisor, Catherine Collobert, for her patient and precise attention to each and every draft. Professor Collobert's support and guidance, her willingness to back a somewhat unconventional interpretation, has been instrumental in helping me find in my research in ancient Philosophy a deep and steady pleasure that far exceeded any *ἐλπίς* with which I entered the program.

Almost equally unexpected and un hoped-for were the friendships formed over the course of this doctorate, with colleagues like Gary Stephen Beck and Fabien-Denis Caillé, who inspired and sustained me both with their ideas on ancient philosophy and with their human kindness. I'm grateful to them and to my other friends across the disciplines for support, advice and fellowship over the last few years – especially Shelby Bertrand, Maud Brunet-Fontaine, Anthony Della Zazzera, David Girard, Jérôme Gosselin-Tapp, Olya Hashemi, Evan Jones, Devin Krukoff, Sumayya Mayet, Krista Megeney and Creighton Stevenson.

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General Introduction

Heraclitus of Ephesus lived and worked in the late 6th century or early 5th century BCE. Like other Presocratic thinkers, his work exists only in fragments – and in Heraclitus’ case, these fragments are of a notoriously enigmatic character. We should, perhaps, be cautious about claiming to have grasped once and for all the unified system that lies behind the weave of ambiguities, paradoxes, and apparent self-contradictions. Yet Heraclitus does invite us to seek such a unity¹ – not only in the world itself, upon whose unity he repeatedly insists, but in his own statements, which exhibit careful structuring and interconnection both on the stylistic and on the philosophical or “doctrinal” level. This thesis will offer a new account of the unity of Heraclitus’ thought – and, more specifically, of certain aspects that appear particularly discontinuous, incoherent, or even self-contradictory. Given the condition of the evidence and the very nature of Heraclitus’ mode of philosophizing, I acknowledge that there is, as there must be in any interpretation of Heraclitus, scope for reasonable doubt. Yet the interpretation that I put forward in this thesis does, I think, allow us to see the unity of his thought in a new light, and, more specifically, to see that unity through features of his fragments that, in my view, have not yet been satisfyingly integrated into accounts of his overall philosophy. More specifically, I will address three significant problems in Heraclitus scholarship:

(1) Heraclitus, as observed by numerous scholars,² has a preoccupation with perspective, such that his illustrations of the cosmic structure revealed by the logos (i.e., the unity of opposites) often employ both explicit and implicit juxtapositions of conflicting perspectives. On the surface,

¹ See Prier 1973: 23-25 and 1976: 57-79 for a survey of the history of recent efforts to identify that unified system. Prier divides the efforts into two “schools”: the symbolic/structural school (whose earliest representatives include Schleiermacher, Hegel and Lasalle) and the scientific/literalist “school” (among whose adherents he includes Burnet and Guthrie, but also Kirk and Marcovich – if only because they share the school’s problematic dependence “upon the categories of post-Aristotelian philosophy” [82]).

² See Robinson 1987: 183-184; Osborne 1997: 80-116; Kirk 1962: 73-86.

this seems to be at odds with his vehement rejection of the idiosyncratic worldview. Two idiosyncratic worldviews might be better than one (depending upon whether the idiosyncratic worldview is taken to offer some piece of the truth, or none at all), but their share of the truth, when combined, seems unlikely to be great enough to allow us to grasp the underlying structure of the cosmos. Why, then, does Heraclitus choose to stress the perspectival elements of the juxtaposed opposites?

(2) Heraclitus' model of unity appears to be inconsistent. On the one hand, the unity of opposites plays a fundamental role in his thought, and in his conception of the nature and unity both of individuals and of the cosmos. On the other hand, he offers repeated hints that there is a unity beyond oppositions. Some of his claims concerning "[the one] wise" (ἐν τὸ σοφόν) seem to point in this direction (B108, perhaps B32), as does his claim that divine cognition lacks a dualistic structure (B102). Even his description of the cosmos as a great fire in B30 seems to hint at the notion of a reality from which the structure of opposition – and even, perhaps, of differentiation – is absent.

(3) Heraclitus' thought is haunted by the spectre of epistemic pessimism – that is, the widespread Archaic view that knowledge is the exclusive province of the gods and is largely or entirely inaccessible to human beings. Scholars are most likely to note this problem in those fragments that place the epistemic condition of the divine, or of the one wise, in explicit or implicit contrast with the epistemic condition of humans (e.g., B78; B83; B102; B108). Less commonly, epistemic pessimism is recognized as an implication of Heraclitus' tendency to speak of the ignorance of human beings in a manner that invites a generic, rather than particular, construal – that is, a manner that encourages (without absolutely requiring) a reading that takes in the whole class of human beings, rather than only the majority.

In this thesis, I examine how these puzzles arise from the nature both of Heraclitus' epistemic method and of the epistemic end at which it aims. Humans *qua* humans cannot attain knowledge, since their idiosyncratic mode of cognition limits them to the model of unity rooted in the unity of opposites, rather than the non-dual unity apprehended by the god. Nonetheless, it is through a commitment to grasping the unity of opposites – along with the conflicting perspectives from which they derive – that humans can glimpse the genuine unity of reality by temporarily leaving behind human cognition and its idiosyncratic, perspectival limits.

Thus, this doctoral thesis argues that Heraclitus' conception of reality is as an undifferentiated unity that can only be understood from a “perspectiveless” state. In other words, reality is such that it can only be grasped from a state unconditioned by the perceptual and cognitive features arising from one's idiosyncratic “creaturely” constitution – especially one's needs and values. In arguing for this position, this thesis aims to fulfil three, interconnected objectives:

(1) The first objective is to provide an account of Heraclitus' logos. The logos, I argue, emphasizes a new orientation towards phenomena, rooted in the relations and connections found in discourse. More specifically, the logos focuses attention on the fundamental structure of discourse, as it appears in the simultaneous conflict and interdependence between opposites. This reorientation involves turning the attention to the modes of connection-making that are common to all human thought, rather than becoming distracted by the specific connections and inferences salient to individual contexts. It provides the audience with a grasp of the general structure of human thought and gives them a coherent picture of reality as seen from this shared human vantage.

(2) The second objective is to show that, for Heraclitus, reality is an undifferentiated unity, without distinctions of any kind. This unity differs considerably from the kind of unified reality the logos reveals from the shared human vantage. The undifferentiated unity can only be apprehended from a perspectiveless “vantage” that belongs to the divine.

(3) The third objective is to show that the perspectiveless vantage, and the understanding of the true nature of reality can be (temporarily) attained by humans, via a systematic undermining of the foundations of perspective. This process, I will argue, is mediated by the logos, which fulfils two main functions in relation to the audience’s achievement of a perspectiveless vantage. First, the logos functions as a method for the consistent application of the fundamental structures of human thought. Such a method not only provides an overarching picture of reality, as seen from the human perspective, but ultimately shows that structure of human thought, when rigorously and consistently applied, undermines itself; by following through on the implications of the logos, the audience is thus led to undermine its own perspective in a process that then culminates in the grasp of reality as an undifferentiated unity. In addition, however, the (ultimately) self-undermining character of the logos provides a source of paradoxes that Heraclitus exploits, using the structure of human reality, as seen in accordance with shared, logos-grounded human thought, to point towards the true nature of reality as an undifferentiated unity.

Before beginning on an overview of my argument, it might be useful to offer a general sense of the significance of these issues, not only for Heraclitus scholarship, but for the field of early Greek philosophy more generally. If, within 21st century thought, generalized pessimism about human knowledge tends to have a flavour of the theoretical and (merely) intellectual, in Archaic Greece it formed an integral part of a cultural tradition that contrasted the constraints of human

perspective with the breadth of the divine perspective. Human beings, the Archaic poets tell us, are incapable of knowledge, simply by dint of the kinds of creatures that we are. Our temporal, spatial, perceptual and cognitive scope is vanishingly small compared to that of the gods; even those capacities which we possess are distorted by our impotence in the face of the deceptions woven by our own affections and drives, along with the (interconnected) illusions woven against us by the gods themselves.³ We possess only a small, often warped window on a world that the gods take in as a whole with a single sweeping glance; the narrowness of our individual view means that we often fail to see how things fit together, missing significances that seem to be self-evident to the gods.⁴ The emphasis on human limits, and the idea that knowledge was the province of the gods alone, is also the general import of the two famous inscriptions at the entrance to the Delphic oracle – “Know thyself” (γνῶθι σαυτόν) and “Nothing in excess” (μῆδεν ἄγαν)⁵ – which were among “the guiding thoughts of Hellenic prudence.”⁶ It’s not surprising, then, that the question of whether, and how, human knowledge was possible would represent a significant preoccupation of early Greek philosophers, and that the attempt to understand the nature of reality or cosmic phenomena would be intimately tied to self-reflection on the limitations of human nature and cognition. The pressure of epistemic pessimism is further increased by the fact that much of early Greek philosophy is concerned with attaining knowledge of the unity of reality.⁷ This knowledge would be particularly difficult for mortals to attain, since, unlike the gods, they have no exalted vantage point that might let them take in the whole of reality. Throughout the early Greek tradition, we find philosophers who seem to work in constant

³ E.g., Pind. *Nem.* VI. 5-6, XI.42-46; Sem. fr. 1; *Od.* 18.136-7; Archil. fr. 131 (West); *Il.* 2.484-492.

⁴ This is one of the major “messages” of oracle stories. See Fontrose 1978: 58-70.

⁵ On their likely presence in the entrance to the temple as rebuilt by the Alcmaeonidae in the late sixth century, see Parke & Wormell 1956b: 387. Both sayings draw attention to human limits, invoking a “self-distrust [which] is rooted in the feeling of the immense gulf that separates the human from the divine” (Parke & Wormell 1956b: 420; see also Wilcox 1994: 95-96).

⁶ Parke & Wormell 1956b: 389.

⁷ On this difficulty as one of the special problems of early Greek epistemology, see especially Leshner 1999.

proximity to the threat of generalized epistemic pessimism. These include not only Heraclitus and his predecessor Xenophanes – whose infamous assertions of our failure to know (οἶδα) and the universality of opinion/appearance (δόκος),⁸ and of his own account as offering only “things like the truth” (ἐοικότα τοῖς ἐτύμοισι)⁹ sometimes overshadow his forceful positive claims concerning the nature of the divine¹⁰ and of the mundane elemental nature of traditionally daimonic spheres such as the underworld and the heavens.¹¹ We can also find similar negative pronouncements in, for instance, Democritus¹² and the Pythagorean Philolaus.¹³

It is difficult to know how to deal with the spectre of generalized epistemic pessimism in a philosopher whose work would seem to be rendered pointless were human knowledge truly impossible. Our instinct, I think, is to find ways to dissolve the tension between an (apparently) positive epistemic project and (apparent) leanings towards epistemic pessimism. Sometimes the tension might be explained away through a reinterpretation of those elements or fragments with apparently dire epistemic implications; at other times, commentators may find reason to challenge their authenticity. At other times, both the words and their ostensibly pessimistic meanings might be accepted, even as their relevance is discounted. A commentator may accept that their philosopher made such a claim, but reject that he made it, so to speak, *as* a philosopher. This part of the philosopher’s work, they might argue, is merely rhetorical; it is either intended as a sop to the tradition or it is a kind of lapse, a momentary reversion to familiar modes of thought.

I do not intend to mount a general argument against any of these strategies. This dissertation argues for a particular interpretation of Heraclitus’ ontology and epistemology, via

⁸ B34.

⁹ B35.

¹⁰ E.g., B23; B24; B25; B26; B11 (implicit); B14 (implicit).

¹¹ E.g., B28; B32.

¹² E.g., B117.

¹³ E.g., B6.

an analysis of his epistemic method. The more general question of Archaic pessimism, and the philosopher's place within it, is outside its scope. I do, however, hope that my discussion of Heraclitus' views in this area will contribute a growing body of scholarship that sees the early Greek philosophers as engaged in a genuinely philosophical enterprise, while recognizing that their place in a cultural and historical context sometimes requires us to rethink preconceptions about the origins and methods of the philosophical project. As I'll argue in Chapters 3 and 4, Heraclitus' expressions of epistemic pessimism are both precise – that is, humans *as humans* are incapable of knowledge – and compatible with the attainment of knowledge by humans who have (temporarily) left their humanity behind. Heraclitus, then, shares with the poets the general view that human epistemic capacities are constrained by human nature and the cognitive and perceptual faculties with which it is associated.¹⁴ Moreover, he also seems to have adapted the poets' own methods for using statements of epistemic pessimism for achieving positive epistemic ends.

In Archaic poetry, the tension between positive assertions and negative, epistemically pessimistic ones can play an important role in leading the audience to recognize the force of certain cultural truisms. The forceful evocation of human shortcomings with all their affective baggage, the insistence upon our limits and the illusory nature of our hopes, creates in the audience a state of mind receptive to and capable of grasping the certainties that the poet writing in such a strain offers, so that they come to truly *know* those human limits that they habitually

¹⁴ However, as I argue in Chapters 3 and 4, Heraclitus parts company with the poets on the questions of *how* our human nature and faculties are at fault. For the latter, our knowledge is constrained to almost nothing by the limited scope of human experience (temporal and spatial) and the limited power of our perceptual faculties (which can also be tricked by the gods). For Heraclitus, our knowledge is undermined by the needs and values that fundamentally shape our perceptions and thoughts.

overlook in favour of more appealing fantasy.¹⁵ It seems plausible that some Presocratic philosophers may at times use the tension between the positive and negative epistemic claims with the skill and deliberateness of the poets.¹⁶ This thesis will argue that Heraclitus, at least, does just that. As I show in Chapters 3 and 4, part of his epistemic method involves weaving together those statements that tend towards epistemic optimism and those that tend towards epistemic pessimism. He attacks his audience's absorption in private, idiosyncratic ignorance; he shows this privacy and idiosyncrasy as a failure of self-knowledge, since even the most ignorant and idiosyncratic thought uses (albeit inconsistently) the general structure of human thought with which the logos is concerned (Chapter 2). Yet he also shows that, in the greater scheme of things, the general structure of human thought is itself idiosyncratic (Chapter 3). He contrasts the fundamental duality of human thought with the non-duality of divine thought and indicates that when we apply the basic structures of human thought consistently, they undermine themselves (Chapter 4). Yet like the Archaic poets, his use of negative epistemic moves, his insistence on yanking the ground out from under his audience's feet, is part of a positive epistemic project, as he helps the audience move towards knowledge. In Heraclitus' case, however, this is not merely knowledge of human limits, but knowledge that goes beyond the limits of the human perspective: an understanding of reality itself.

¹⁵ Sem. fr. 1 offers an extreme example. After 21 lines of unrelenting evocations of the fundamental ignorance of humans (which the poet equates with that of domestic animals) and the evils that beset our lives, we are offered a slender hope: If we can keep from believing that we know or can attain things that lie beyond the mortal scope, we will not suffer quite so much. Here (as, we will see, in Heraclitus), negative epistemic statements are not mere assertions of traditional dogma. As Carson 1994: 71 observes, the poem “does not lecture us on, but involves us in... ‘our’ ephemerality.” In doing so, it increases the likelihood that it will extinguish the affect- and appetite-driven hopes that might lead an Archaic audience to believe that they can overstep limits that, as the truisms of the culture have already informed them, are ingrained in human nature. In this way, they might come to truly take in the dictum of the Delphic oracle – that is, they may come to “know themselves” and, in doing so, recognize and adhere to their human limits.

¹⁶ Plato, famously, does so with great ingenuity, particularly in the *Apology* – though the question of how we are to read Socrates' apparent assertions of epistemic pessimism in this dialogue is, of course, highly problematic.

This comparison between the strategies of Archaic poets introduces some important questions about the kind of methodology appropriate to the interpretation of early Greek philosophy in general, and of Heraclitus in particular. As I argue in Chapter 1, both Heraclitus' historical context and the style in which he writes support an interpretive approach that treats his work not merely as a source of doctrine or argument, but also as a vehicle of experience that draws upon the techniques of the poets and of the prose literary tradition for its mode of impacting the audience through a nexus of physiological, affective and intellectual responses. As we'll see, this is supported both by the fact that Heraclitus was working within an oral culture, addressing an audience trained to take in both poetry and prose compositions as multimodal oral performance, and by Heraclitus' own style. This makes the question of methodology particularly complex, since an account of Heraclitus' philosophy must take into account the probability that resonances rooted in the literary tradition and historical context might play a substantive role in his meaning. Given that the methodological difficulties of Presocratic philosophy are, even on a purely textual level, considerable, I have devoted Chapter 1 to the discussion of my methodology as it concerns the questions of philology, translation, Heraclitus' method of communication, and the role of the historical and cultural context. Chapter 1 also contains an initial approach to the question of interpreting a philosopher through conceptual language that lies outside that philosopher's own vocabulary. I will argue that such impositions are almost inevitable with a philosopher such as Heraclitus, who often formulates his ideas in ways that incorporate aspects of the poetic mode of communicating through direct experience and impact. Along with a discussion of potentially suspect conceptual terms such as "perspective" and "perspectivism", as well as a definitions section that explains some key terms as used within the thesis, this chapter also provides a general outline for what the reader can expect to see as I navigate between, on the one hand, the

need to clarify Heraclitus' general philosophical project through such imported conceptual terms and, on the other hand, the need to maintain fidelity to the more immediate, experience-oriented sense of the fragments.

This general outline receives immediate application in Chapter 2, which focuses on concepts and conceptual thought as a core issue addressed by Heraclitus' "logos". In Chapter 2, I argue that the term "logos", as used by Heraclitus, picks out, simultaneously: (1) an orientation towards discourse that draws attention to the general structure of language and thought; (2) this structure as the apparent nature of reality (which is, however, only the view of reality seen in accordance with human nature); and, (3) the specific discourse or discourses in which such an orientation is grounded and through which it is expressed (in particular – since he plays with the audience's expectation that this will be the one, clear meaning of "logos" – Heraclitus' own). A logos-grounded orientation to discourse reorganizes the audience's conception of reality by facilitating reflection on their own modes of relating ideas and concepts. They come to view reality not in terms of discrete individuals or categories but in terms of an overarching unity of interrelated individuals or categories. This overarching unity is ultimately rooted in the unity of opposites – the interdependence of two concepts linked both by mutual exclusion and mutual entailment, or, more broadly, two items brought together through and despite the strife between them. The logos-grounded reorientation is associated with an even more fundamental cognitive shift that Heraclitus demands of his audience. He invites a shift away from their customary inferential mode, which is rooted in concrete thinking, where a specific physical-perceptual frame of reference plays the central role in how they connect ideas and categories in any given case. In its place, he offers a comparatively abstract, logos-grounded approach to connection-

making, where the central relations between ideas arise from the consistent role played by opposition across different contexts and frames of reference.

What makes the logos potentially compelling for the audience – despite that fact that it requires them to take an unfamiliar and unusually abstract approach to the familiar phenomena of daily life – is that it gives these phenomena an overarching structure that is aligned with the structure of human thought. In this way, it creates a picture of reality that is not idiosyncratic to a specific context, since it encompasses the broader human frame of reference. Chapter 3 will show that this broader frame of reference, understood as the human perspective, is nonetheless idiosyncratic with respect to the nature of reality itself. Heraclitus' human-animal perspective juxtapositions, I argue, show that ignorance is inherent in the human perspective. This is shown through the fact that Heraclitus establishes an equivalency between the human cognitive faculties and the proverbially faulty cognitive faculties of pigs, fish, and donkeys. Yet it is also visible in the fact that these juxtapositions seem to cast doubt on the human capacity to grasp the unity of opposites, thus highlighting a limitation on logos-grounded comprehension. This last point is particularly troubling, because the audience has come to believe (not quite accurately, as it turns out) that it is in the unity of opposites that they grasp the true nature of reality. Unable to grasp the unity of opposites, they find themselves deprived of what appears to be the one remedy for human ignorance. Chapter 4 argues that, taken together with the human-animal juxtapositions, Heraclitus' fragments on divine understanding both deepen the conviction of human ignorance and point to a way beyond human ignorance. On the one hand, Heraclitus' statements concerning divine understanding emphasize that ignorance is, in fact, inherent in the human perspective. This is because Heraclitus presents divine understanding as apprehending reality as an undifferentiated unity, and as doing so from a perspectiveless state. By contrast, human cognition

is fundamentally dual and perspectival. Yet despite this apparent impasse, the human-animal perspective juxtapositions, approached in the light of the logos' method, turn out to offer a means of (temporarily) leaving behind the human perspective and apprehending reality as it truly is. By attempting to grasp the unity of opposites as it appears in these juxtapositions – and, in the process, taking on the conflicting perspectives which ascribe those opposites to the materials in question – the audience generates within itself a collapse of the framework of perspective that allows them to encounter reality non-perspectivally, as an undifferentiated unity.

Chapter 5 invites us to reconsider some of Heraclitus' other fragments in the light of the dual role that they might play as both expressions of the logos and as a way of showing how the logos undermines, and points beyond, itself. Initially, these fragments function to reinforce the logos' method. Such reinforcement is crucial to the process that culminates in their apprehension of reality as an undifferentiated unity; a firm commitment to grasping the unity of opposites is needed in order for the audience to achieve a collapse of perspective through the human-animal juxtapositions. Chapter 5 looks at two main sets of fragments that play this dual role. First, it looks at the fragments in which Heraclitus expresses the overarching nature of reality (from the human vantage) through the unity of the opposites "one" and "all". These fragments, I argue, do not simply express the view of reality as structured through the unity of opposites. Rather, Heraclitus' exploitation of the paradoxes around this important pair of opposites points towards the ultimate nature of reality as an undifferentiated unity. It does so, however, in a way that forestalls the instinct to treat the verbal expression of a "one" outside or beyond the "all" as adequately expressing such a unity – since, as non-dual and undifferentiated, it cannot be expressed or grasped either in conceptual thought or in language. The second set of fragments I deal with in Chapter 5 are those illustrations of unity of opposites grounded in everyday human

events and experiences. Many of these fragments, I argue, serve a secondary function as perspective juxtapositions in their own right. Initially, these instances of the unity of opposites facilitate the audience's movement *away from* the typical Archaic Greek mode of thought, which is highly concrete, with an inferential structure rooted in the associations arising from a highly specific context or frame of reference – and their movement *towards* the logos' comparatively abstract focus on the role that the unity of opposites plays across different contexts. In facilitating the movement towards logos-grounded thought, such expressions of the unity of opposites are part of a general effort to dampen the affective and physiological content of the opposites, which is associated with their tie to a concrete context or frame of reference, and which interferes with the audience's ability to see the opposites as equal and interdependent. Yet for an audience familiar not only with the method of the logos, but with the perspective collapse generated by the animal-human perspective juxtapositions, these instances of the unity of opposites serve a further function. Many of the juxtaposed opposites in the latter set of fragments are also associated with juxtaposed human perspectives. When the audience brings this perspectival element back to the fore – along with the concrete context and affective content bound up with perspective – the attempt to grasp the two conflicting human perspectives together has the same impact as the attempt to grasp the conflicting human and animal perspectives together (as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4): it generates a collapse of the perspectival framework and a resultant (temporary) apprehension of reality as undifferentiated unity.

Finally, Chapter 6 will answer objections that might arise for readers who see Heraclitus as fundamentally located within a tradition of Ionian cosmology. This chapter offers an outline of the main features of Heraclitus' cosmos. It situates the cosmic structure within the overarching view of reality seen in accordance with the structure of logos-grounded human thought. It also

shows how, like the logos-grounded articulations of unity and plurality explored in Chapter 5, this logos-structured cosmos incorporates built-in paradoxes. It argues that Heraclitus once again exploits these paradoxes in order to point away from the notion of a cosmos structured through the relation between differentiated parts, and towards a view of reality as an undifferentiated unity.

This dissertation is a work of history of philosophy. I will discuss in Chapter 1 what responsibilities this, on my view, creates with respect to rigorous scholarship. Here, however, I would like to briefly address the approach that I have taken towards the potential ethical or political implications of my characterization of the historical context – and, more specifically, my characterization of Heraclitus’ likely audience. I am conscious that some readers may take exception to my use of gendered pronouns when I speak of Heraclitus’ audience. This is a deliberate decision. As I argue in Chapter 1, both Heraclitus’ barbs and his textured allusions assume an aristocratic audience, with full access to the kinds of venues where both old and new expressions of high culture would not only be heard, but heard repeatedly – chiefly, as I suggest in Chapter 1, the symposium. Such “insider” institutions would, similarly, be available only to a male, cisgender audience. It should go without saying that this assessment of the nature of Heraclitus’ audience (along with descriptive terms such as “aristocratic” and “elite”) is not a normative one. My dissertation attempts to bring out the richness of Heraclitus’ thought, rather than to interrogate exclusionary features bound up with its historical context. These exclusionary features can, however, only be papered over, not remedied, by the use of inclusive language when speaking of what was in fact a male audience, or by ignoring the kinds of assumptions that point to a socioeconomically privileged audience. Moreover, insofar as we are interested in what

Heraclitus has to offer, despite important blind spots, ignoring the less admirable aspects of his context might cause us to miss out on insights arising from his engagement with his real audience, rather than the one that we wish that he'd had.

My reference to fragments in pre-Platonic philosophers gives, first, the numbering used by Laks & Most in their *Early Greek Philosophy*, followed by the DK number. In lengthier discussions where it is necessary to make repeated reference to the same fragment number, I have sometimes dispensed with the LM number after the first reference, using only the DK number in subsequent references. In the case of the fragments of philosophers other than Heraclitus (and, generally, those of Heraclitus as well¹⁷), I have also used the text of fragments as given by Laks & Most. My abbreviations are those of *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th edition.

¹⁷ See Chapter 1, section I for a detailed discussion of my method in dealing with the philological issues presented by the fragments.

Chapter One: Methodology and Terminology

Introduction

In this chapter, I outline my methodology for the interpretation of Heraclitus, address some potential objections to that methodology, and introduce some key terminology and concepts for this dissertation.

In the first section, I discuss my approach to: (a) issues of textual criticism, such as judgments concerning authentic and spurious fragments, the weighing of evidence among different manuscripts, and emendations; (b) the use of doxographical material; (c) issues of translation and interpretation. My aim in this initial section will be to establish and justify the limitations, starting points, and methodological assumptions within which this dissertation operates. One crucial point to which this section repeatedly returns is the role of audience reception in Heraclitus' epistemology. In a broad sense, the question of audience reception is an important one for any historian of philosophy. If we are to understand an argument by a Medieval or Early Modern Philosophers, for instance, we have to begin from the conceptual framework that the philosopher shared with his or her readership, and that motivated problems that are often difficult to recognize if we remain entirely within a 21st century framework. For Heraclitus, however, the audience plays a far more marked role in his mode of communication, such that the interpretation of his work cannot afford to lose sight of the kinds of responses that it might aim to elicit from the audience. This is a thesis on Heraclitus' epistemology and ontology, which makes specific claims about Heraclitus' conception of the true nature of reality and how he proposed we might attain knowledge of it. Yet because the manner in which *any* late Archaic philosopher communicates with his audience cannot be neatly separated from what he

communicates, and because the play of audience response and expectation is so central to Heraclitus' communication in particular, my analysis of Heraclitus' epistemology emerges through an analysis of the epistemic process in which Heraclitus invites his audience to engage. The initial section of this chapter therefore considers the centrality of audience experience to the epistemic process from two angles: (a) the general significance of audience experience for all poetic and prose compositions in this period; (b) the specific significance of audience experience for Heraclitus, as indicated by both the "style" of the individual sayings and by the kinds of connections that accrue among clusters of sayings.

In the second section of this chapter, I attempt to define the responsibilities, as I understand them, of a historian of philosophy. I consider, first, the kinds of responsibilities that I believe lie *outside* the scope of a dissertation such as this one – in particular, the responsibility to defend the coherence of Heraclitus' position from the objections that might be raised by later philosophers, especially where those later philosophers work from within a historical tradition and conceptual framework that was unavailable to Heraclitus. Second, I discuss some of the responsibilities that lie *within* the scope of a work of history of philosophy, as I understand it – in particular, the responsibility to avoid imposing an anachronistic conceptual framework. I look briefly at the problems associated with the interpretation of a philosopher such as Heraclitus, who does not offer a built-in conceptual language for his philosophy; I describe my approach to the use of conceptual terms that are not translations of terms used by Heraclitus himself. Finally, I discuss my use of a particular concept – that of "perspective" (and "perspectivism") – and answer objections that might arise from this usage on the basis of possible anachronism.

In the final section of this chapter, I introduce and define some key terms as they are used within this dissertation, including: “plurality-in-unity”, “unity-in-plurality”, “unity-without-plurality”, “experience”, “cosmos”, “world”, and “concept”.

I: Text and Context: Principles of Textual Criticism, Translation and Interpretation

My goal in this section is to clarify the basic starting points and methodological assumptions with which I operate. However, since both the philological and more general interpretive framework within which I operate may require further explanation, much of this section is concerned with Heraclitus’ cultural and historical context. The purpose of this contextualization is to justify two related aspects of my methodology. First, it is my view that the stylistic complexity of Heraclitus’ fragments, along with his use of literary¹⁸ devices, language, and imagery, represents an integral part of his meaning. Such literary elements are not, in other words, a “merely rhetorical” (in the sense of purely persuasive or ornamental)¹⁹ aspect of the fragments that can be separated from their philosophical or doctrinal content. Second, I assume that the philosophical content of Heraclitus’ work is intimately bound up with the kind of

¹⁸ I use the word “literary” with an awareness that what we call “literary” does not map easily onto the world Heraclitus inhabited. Nonetheless, the word is a useful one when dealing with a body of poetry and prose that has many of the qualities of what we call “literary” – including, for instance, a set of communicative conventions in which stylistic considerations play a central role. The term “literary”, as applied to Archaic poetry and (some) Archaic prose, also acknowledges a certain kinship with our idea of “the literary”: in both cases, the mode of communication is partially constituted by the evocation of a certain sort of experience through such compositional features as diction, structure, imagery, rhythm etc. It also provides a way of coping with the fact that, while most of Heraclitus’ models for such features belong to the high literary tradition which is almost exclusively poetic, we seem to find some gestures towards what can only be described as a prose literary tradition, including the folk tradition, as represented, for instance, by the Aesopic fable (see Kurke 2011), a tradition of proverbs and wisdom tales, as represented by the sayings attributed to the seven sages (see Granger 2002) and the stories associated with those sayings (Martin 1998), and, finally, by the prose compositions of the early *historiē* (e.g., Anaximander, of whose “rather poetical words” Simplicius complains [Simpl. *In Phys.* 24.25: ποιητικωτέροις...ὀνόμασιν].) For an in-depth defence of the use of the term “literary” in the context of Archaic Greek prose compositions, see Kahn 2003.

However, perhaps the most problematic feature of the word “literary,” in this context, is the fact that it is sometimes used as the contrast to “oral.” I never use the word in this connection, contrasting “oral/orality” only with “literate/literacy.”

¹⁹ My use of the word “rhetorical” throughout the rest of this dissertation will follow the practice in Classics scholarship of speaking of various sorts of patterning devices and strategies (phonic, structural, etc.) as “rhetorical.” The term is not meant to contrast with “substance” or “doctrine” unless that contrast is stated explicitly.

experience that the work might have been expected to evoke in the audience – and this, again, is an experience in which the rational or doctrinal element is not easily separable from the affective and perceptual elements. While an important part of the justification for this aspect of my methodology lies in the actual interpretation of the fragments, part of my goal in this section is to offer a rough sketch of the reasons behind these two aspects of my methodology, appealing both to the specific nature of Heraclitus' compositions, and to the context within which Heraclitus worked. In the section that follows, I address the literary and experiential aspects of the fragments from three different angles. First, I look at the question from the point of view of translation, focusing on features specific to Heraclitus' own work, even while placing his work within the broader literary context. Here, my focus is on the question of multiple meanings and multiple layers of interpretation. Specifically, I argue for an approach to translation (and to the interpretation with which the translation is bound up) that construes Heraclitus' ambiguities as deliberate and meaningful, and that takes an inclusive approach to the array of alternative denotations and connotations offered by a particular word or phrase and the breadth of resonances offered by a particular phrase, statement, etc. Second, I look at the question of the literary and the (closely connected) experiential significance of the fragments from the point of view of the distinction between an oral and written context, and, more specifically, the role that oral vs. literate culture plays in determining the relative separability of the philosophical content of a composition from other elements that might influence its reception. I argue for the view that Heraclitus' work would have been transmitted, at least primarily, in oral form, and that, *even if* some of its transmission occurred in written form, the conventions that shaped its composition would have been rooted in what was still, at the end of the Archaic period, an oral culture. I argue that this, along with other elements of the cultural context within which Heraclitus worked,

favoured the production of philosophical works in which the rational (inferential or doctrinal) content was bound up with non-rational elements of direct experience. Finally, I offer a (necessarily speculative) look at the likely composition of Heraclitus' audience more narrowly construed. I suggest that they are likely to have been the *polis*' "elites" or "aristocracy" (with the term understood to mean merely a more or less closed group of citizens whose wealth and/or family lineage made them important figures in the running of the city²⁰), and I look briefly at the inter-relation between this more narrowly construed cultural context, and some of the themes and rhetoric of Heraclitus' sayings.

This dissertation is a work of history of philosophy, rather than of textual criticism. This fact raises certain difficulties for the study of a figure like Heraclitus, who presents what sometimes seems to be an infinite regress of philological and palaeographic problems. Some of these problems are not only far beyond the scope of a 400-page dissertation in philosophy, but also beyond my current scope as a scholar – in particular, many of the questions around textual transmission. For this reason, it has proved necessary to establish a primary edition as a starting point. I have followed Laks & Most both in their identification of and in their text for the verbatim fragments. Where I diverge from them, I provide a rationale for my decision. The decisions of other commentators play a significant part in that rationale – in particular, the decisions arrived at in the main editions that I've relied upon in the course of this dissertation, including: Marcovich (1967), Kirk (1962), Mouraviev (1999-2012), Kahn (1979), Robinson

²⁰ This seems to have been true regardless of whether the *polis*' constitution was democratic, oligarchic, or tyrannical. The expectation that the "elites" or "aristocrats" would rule the city seems to have been independent of questions of constitution and political affiliations (such as *polis*-centred a guest-friendship centred affiliation). (See Kurke 1999: 17-18. My use of the term "aristocrat" refers only to this particular "class", and the educational background and convivial activities and conventions that obtained within it.

(1987) and Conche (1986).²¹ Other significant factors include a comparative analysis of the text itself on the basis of terminology (e.g., attestations of a given term within Archaic poetry and prose) and style (i.e., stylistic congruence with other fragments). I also give some attention to the context(s) within which the fragment is quoted, although, with the exception of some of our earliest sources – for instance, Plato, or the author of the Derveni papyrus – I am limited in my ability to recognize incursions of the source’s style upon the style of the fragment or to consider the quotation in the context of the source’s typical use of quotations. Thus my analysis here often depends upon the arguments and evidence offered by modern commentators.

I have chosen the Laks & Most edition on the basis of the editors’ approach to verbatim fragments, and, in particular, what I take to be the seriousness of their attempt to work with the fragments on philological/palaeographic grounds alone. For instance, they are among the only editors to reject the Bernays’ emendation of fragment D59/B125,²² which adds a μή so that the fragment reads “Even the *kukeon* separates if it is not stirred” (καὶ ὁ κυκῆων δίσταται <μή> κινούμενος) rather than “Even the *kukeon* separates when it is stirred” (καὶ ὁ κυκῆων δίσταται κινούμενος). In this instance, I believe that there are a number of reasons, not all of them doctrinal, for favouring the emendation, and in chapter 5, I argue (somewhat tentatively) against Laks & Most’s text in this case. Yet Laks & Most’s decision has a strong palaeographic basis.²³ The puzzling (but not incoherent) character of the fragment as it has been transmitted to us is a

²¹ I have excluded some major editions from this list simply because the commentator’s philological basis for determining verbatim fragments is not clear – often because the commentator’s primary focus is philosophical rather than philological. Pradeau 2004 offers a highly useful arrangement of different contexts in which a given “verbatim” fragment is cited, but since he treats as verbatim nearly all of Diels’ “B” fragments (as well as many of his of “A” fragments), it is less useful when it comes to the decisions concerning authenticity.

²² The emendation is also rejected by Mouraviev.

²³ I leave aside here a number of complicated issues that Laks & Most would have weighed, including historical questions (such as the exact nature of the *kukeon*), and the weight of evidence from the various locations in which we find reminiscences of this fragment with an implicit μή, including, in the case of Pseudo-Alexander, a rather close reminiscence, though one peppered with Atticisms (e.g., ἐάν) and (more damningly) streamlined into a textbook present general conditional that jars against Heraclitus’ usual style.

significant point in favour of the authenticity of the original, since it means that καὶ ὁ κυκλῶν δίσταται κινούμενος would be far more likely to have a μή added in the course of its transmission, rather than to lose a μή. There is one other reason that the caution of Laks & Most's treatment of the verbatim fragments recommends their version as a primary edition for this dissertation. Where the editors judge that a verbatim fragment is present but may be contaminated by the context of the citation, they are conservative in their judgement of how much of the text to allow as direct quotation; sometimes this amounts to just a single word (e.g., D40/B35²⁴). I find their combination of caution and precision particularly valuable given the important interrelations between Heraclitus' style and his meaning.

I've adopted the approach of the majority of scholars in restricting my analysis almost exclusively to the verbatim fragments, using the doxographical evidence sparingly and with great caution.²⁵ There are a number of reasons for this. First, while it may be a slight exaggeration to say, as Kirk does, that "there is remarkably little information in the doxography which is not to be had more accurately from the fragments,"²⁶ it is also difficult to reconstruct a recognizably Heraclitean thought from the doxographers' isolation of a single strand from the multiple interpretative levels of which Heraclitus' statements are composed.²⁷ Second, despite the likelihood that a majority of ancient accounts and interpretations of Heraclitus' views are

²⁴ Compare, for instance, Marcovich 1967, who accepts three words – enough to allow the fragment to express a complete thought. Kahn 1979 accepts all eight words of Clement's quotation as genuine.

²⁵ Schofield 1988: 537 notes that the premise that the knowledge of the Presocratics must rest on the verbatim fragments is "the foundation on which all modern study of Presocratic philosophy is built." See also Havelock 1982: 234; Jaeger 1948: 110-111. (There are, of course, exceptions. The study of the Milesians, and the early Pythagoreans, is limited to doxographical reports, since in these cases, we are almost entirely without reliable verbatim fragments – with the exception of Anaximander B1 in the former case, and the fragments of Philolaus in the latter case.)

²⁶ Kirk 1962: 20. For an even stronger rejection of the doxographies, see Kahn 1979: 293 (following Zeller).

²⁷ On the importance of these multiple interpretive levels to the understanding of Heraclitus' meaning, see below. Freeman 1966: 107-108 also sees this as the central reason for the "unsatisfactoriness of the doxographical tradition." For a heroic but highly speculative attempt to reconstruct a "lost fragment" from multiple doxographical reports, see Finkelberg 2017: 41-66.

traceable back to Peripatetic sources,²⁸ the doxographers still offer the interpreter an array of theoretical orientations to choose from, meaning that they offer evidence for a wide variety of conflicting readings of the fragments. For the purposes of this dissertation, for instance, the Plotinian account of Heraclitus' views would provide obvious support for my thesis²⁹ – as would certain aspects of the Stoic account. On the other hand, a reader who wished to counter my reading by presenting Heraclitus as a physicist would find support in Theophrastus' version of Heraclitus as it appears in Diogenes Laertius.³⁰ The choice between these incompatible ancient accounts of Heraclitus must be rooted in one's analysis of the verbatim fragments. In this broad sense, Kirk's apparently hyperbolic statement turns out to be wholly apt: the plausibility and accuracy of an interpretation depends upon how well it accounts for the fragments themselves, not how well it accounts for the interpretations given by the testimonies.

The translation of any text is, of course, bound up with questions of interpretation. In Heraclitus, the interpretative issues of translation are particularly acute. This is, in part, because we possess a relatively small body of verbatim fragments. Under these circumstances, a different translation of individual phrases and words is sometimes capable of making a significant difference to how we might understand Heraclitus' thought. In addition, however, Heraclitus' speech is often both lexically and syntactically ambiguous, and the question of translation immediately raises the question of the significance of these ambiguities. For this reason, it isn't possible to offer a methodology for translating the fragments without, at the same time, offering a methodology for

²⁸ E.g., Kirk 1962: 20, following Diels.

²⁹ For instance, the fact that Plotinus viewed Heraclitean being as "one in itself" (Stamatellos 2012: 27, 46; see, e.g., *Enn.* V.1.9.1-7). On the view of Stamatellos 2012: 44-48, Plotinus saw himself as inheriting Heraclitus' conception of the one as both omnipresent in plurality and transcendent of plurality.

³⁰ Our familiarity with Theophrastus' doxography might make us inclined to argue for the greater reliability of his account. Against these assumptions, see Bergamo 2017, who argues for Plotinus as a "highly reliable" source of information on Heraclitus, and presents evidence that Plotinus was a first-hand witness – that is, he had a copy of "Heraclitus' book."

interpreting them. Thus, I've placed the following discussion of the philological aspects of translation in the context of an account of my treatment of the ambiguities, and more broadly, the multiple interpretations that Heraclitus' style seems to invite.

My translations of the fragments are inelegant. I have not striven to reflect the richness of the originals in my own translations (as Kahn does, for instance), preferring to offer flat-footed translations that aim to approximate, as far as possible, the "literal". In this, I have found it helpful to lean on the similarly flat-footed translations of Laks & Most, alongside the philological analyses of Kirk, Marcovich and Mouraviev, among others. When I speak of my methodology for translation, therefore, I am really speaking of my methodology for determining how words, idioms and structures used by a particular writer of late 6th century/early 5th century Ionic Greek can be recognized, explained, thought about, and interpreted in modern English. In this, I have adopted, in a large part, the approach (if not always the conclusions) of Charles Kahn. Specifically, I assume: (1) that Heraclitus' use of wordplay, double-meanings and ambiguities forms a substantive part of the meaning of his statements;³¹ (2) that, similarly, where a fragment seems to invite multiple interpretations, it is often a mistake to treat these interpretations as mutually exclusive possibilities.

Both (1) and (2), as I understand them, imply that Heraclitus' sayings often invite multiple levels of interpretation – as when, for instance, a saying invites one interpretation on immediate reception, and another on later reflection. The multiple interpretations may be successive, with one interpretation gaining primacy over the other. Often, however, they are

³¹ The presence of significant wordplay in the fragments is very difficult to ignore, given the existence of fragments such as B48, where the wordplay constitutes the main substance of the statement. For most of the twentieth century, the mainstream reading of Heraclitus has included an acceptance of his tendency to create puns that imply substantive connections (e.g., ξυνός/ἄξύνετοι D1/B1, D4/B34; ξυνιάσιν D49/B51; ξύν νόφ D105/B114). See, e.g., Kirk 1962: 67-69; Marcovich 1967: 192; Hussey 1982: 54-56. Parke and Wormell 1956 also note affinities between Heraclitus' style and that of the Pythian responses of the Delphic oracle (xxxiii-xxxiv) and draw attention not only to the use of lexical ambiguity in the latter's responses (xxvi) but also to other ways in which they invite multiple interpretations (xxvii).

either complementary, or else form a single, internally conflicting unit of meaning that the audience is asked to hold together, akin to the opposites that they are asked to regard as a unity.

As Kahn notes, in giving Heraclitus credit for these multiple meanings, we are simply recognizing the significance, first, of the fluency and virtuosity of displayed in the construction of his aphorisms,³² and second, of the fact that Heraclitus' work, in its use of different forms,³³ diction, and devices,³⁴ is rooted in a literary tradition.³⁵ This implies that, despite the fact that Heraclitus did not write in verse, the mode of reception that he invites from the audience will be

³² As Robb 1983: 153 puts it "The linguistic artistry of Heraclitus is universally admired."

³³ For instance, riddle (e.g., D35/B123; D58/B84a); folk legend (e.g., D22/B56 [Kahn 1979: 8]); proverb (e.g., D110/B84b); and of course, epic and lyric poetry (e.g., the elevated style and use of epic formulas in D85/B30).

³⁴ For instance, rich phonic patterning (e.g., D87/B90; D122b/B25); lexical and syntactic ambiguity (e.g., D1/B1; D44/B41; D45/B32), as well as devices such as antithesis (e.g., D53/B48) and chiasmus (e.g., D87/B90).

³⁵ Perhaps it seems inconsistent that a philosopher who heaped so much scorn upon the most important poets of his time could also be an inheritor and creative appropriator of the tradition to which those poets belong. First, our surprise at this fact should at least be tempered by the fact that this same approach is adopted with great vehemence and skill by Plato. Nonetheless, it's likely that Heraclitus' own self-definition was, comparatively, more closely aligned to the poets, if only because Heraclitus had a comparatively small range of intellectual influences outside of the poetic tradition. In addition, it's important to note that for Heraclitus, the division between the poet-sage and the philosopher-rational inquirer was far hazier than it is for us. (See Kahn 1979: 10; Most 1999: 332- 333. Tor 2017: 10-60 examines the parallel – and overlapping – case of the division between the philosopher as a rational critic of traditional religion and the religious figure of poet-prophet-sage, arguing for an alternative conception of the philosopher as an appropriator of religious authority and an adapted version of the poet-prophet-sage figure.) Heraclitus' sense that the two belong to the same category is implied by D20/B40, where he mentions Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Hesiod, and Hecataeus as representatives of the same epistemic approach (specifically, *πολυμαθῆ*). Moreover, all of the philosophers/inquirers Heraclitus singles out for scorn appear to have had a significant influence on facets of his work. The opening of Hecataeus' book (fr. 1) not only bears some resemblance to the opening of Heraclitus' book (D1/B1), but also establishes a one/many comparison that both resembles Heraclitus D43/B108, and alludes to Hecataeus' own project of supplying one account that gathers together, cuts through, and makes sense of the many contradictory accounts offered by others. Xenophanes appears not only to have had an impact on Heraclitus' de-anthropomorphized god, but also to have been a crucial influence upon his epistemology (see Long 1992; Leshner 1994; Curd 2013; Wilcox 1994, among others). Any claims regarding Pythagoras' influence upon Heraclitus must, of course, remain speculative given the deep uncertainties around exactly what Pythagoras said and did (beyond his evident promulgation of some kind of doctrine of metempsychosis). However, Brann 2011: 31-38 argues that Heraclitus' logos was adapted from a Pythagorean model of relations between numbers, while Kahn 2001:37 and Shipton 1985: 129-130 argue that Heraclitus' conception of *harmonia* was adapted from the Pythagoreans. These examples suggest Heraclitus was capable of directing biting criticism towards those same figures who significantly influenced his work – and may even suggest that his criticisms of a given figure are, themselves, evidence of influence. Finally, in his criticism of his influences and contemporaries, Heraclitus is behaving exactly as we would expect of a sixth- and fifth-century poet, for whom such invective would have been among the strategies of audience engagement (see, e.g., Griffith 1990). It is also a traditional response to those who share the same kind of expertise both in the philosophical context and in the context of technical expertise and inquiry (e.g., medical, religious; see Betegh 2007: 350-359).

rooted in their experience of epic and lyric.³⁶ Such a mode of reception allows and anticipates the possibility of multiple interpretations. This is not to imply that Heraclitus' audience would (necessarily) have approached a literary composition with a judgement consciously focused upon the multiple interpretations that the composition elicits. (In Heraclitus' case, as I'll discuss in greater detail in the coming chapters, the situation is somewhat different – the composition is structured so as to draw conscious recognition and reflection from the audience.) Yet an attentive audience's reactions to the work would nonetheless have encompassed multiple implicit assessments of the emotional and cognitive significance of an individual phrase, statement, or event.³⁷

The model of how the multiple interpretations work in Heraclitus' case can be, and has been, described from various angles. Kahn focuses on primarily on the literary angle, highlighting multiple layers of interpretation resulting from the evocation, frustration and realignment of expectations around word meaning, rhetorical strategies, and the literary (and sometimes pragmatic) associations attached to a particular object. McCabe focuses upon the doxastic angle, examining the way in which Heraclitus' sayings evoke a familiar belief, provoke a questioning of that belief, and finally trigger a realignment of an existing conceptual framework that integrates both the belief and the questioning of that belief.³⁸ Tor focuses upon

³⁶ See also Glenn Most, who claims that we must read Heraclitus, along with other early Greek thinkers, as making "systematic use of specific poetic devices in service of a philosophical communication" (Most 1999: 335). Granger 2002 also stresses the significance of Heraclitus' literary style for his meaning (though Granger is particularly interested here in the oral folk literature derived from the maxims of the Seven Sages and the verse oracles of Delphi).

³⁷ See, for instance, Halliwell 2019: 5-6 on Homer's evocation of Nestor's turbulent mental state upon hearing the growing tumult of battle. Halliwell notes that the simile Homer selects both replicates that mental state by identifying it with the image of a turbulent sea and creates a distancing effect by presenting the sea as "somehow immobilised, as well as somehow 'mute.'" The former brings with it a conviction of the significance of the human events and evokes anxiety in the audience. The latter invites the audience to see these events from a level at which the human events and the associated individual interests are experienced as an alien element – a beautiful, but indifferent play of forces. See also Bakewell 2007 on the multiple layers of interpretation evoked by Aeschylus' description of Ares as a *χρυσάμοιβός* at *Ag.* 437.

³⁸ McCabe 2015.

the different levels of interpretation that occur as the audience treats a particular claim first as a discrete statement, then as a statement in the context of Heraclitus' composition as a whole; this results in dynamic reconfigurations of the audience's construal both of the original statement, and of the body of other statements with which they seek to make it cohere.³⁹ All three scholars treat these different elements – the linguistic, literary, and doxastic expectations, along with the puzzles around the coherence and consistency between part and whole – as interdependent in establishing the multiple interpretations that Heraclitus' sayings would have provoked. In this, I follow their lead.

Establishing what the audience's expectations would have been requires a consideration of multiple elements – philological, historical, and conceptual. On the philological side, my analysis of the fragments depends to a high degree on uses attested during the Archaic period, or found in the works of early-to-mid fifth century poets such as Pindar. Herodotus, as our only extensive source of Ionian prose within a century of Heraclitus, is another important resource. Given that we possess only a few verbatim fragments from the many technical (scientific/philosophical, geographical, historical/mythographical, architectural, perhaps even mathematical) works of this period, I have also considered, and sometimes accepted, a technical use of a term not attested until the later 5th century. These kinds of judgements are, however, less than straightforward, so I have tended to be somewhat cautious in accepting such usages. On the one hand, the evidence that we do possess shows that certain words, such as κόσμος, had, by Heraclitus' time, already acquired a technical meaning⁴⁰ through their use in these kinds of

³⁹ Tor 2017. For multiple interpretations as a constitutive part of Heraclitus' mode of communicating, see also Graham 2009; Granger 2002: 6; Robinson 1987, among others.

⁴⁰ See Kahn 1994 for an in-depth discussion of the evolution of this meaning. There exists a broad consensus among commentators that κόσμος in D85/B30 means "ordered world" (or, e.g., "world order", or even "world") rather than a more familiar, non-technical meaning from this time period, such as "arrangement." Cf., however, Finkelberg 2017: 57-62.

works. The paucity of extant fragments from the technical works of this period, as contrasted with the materials that we have some evidence existed (for instance, works by Anaximenes⁴¹ and Anaximander,⁴² and probably more than one work by Hecataeus⁴³) suggests that other terms, too, have already begun to acquire an additional technical sense. On the other hand, the rapidity with which these sorts of terms were evolving means that an over-dependence on later usage is likely to be misleading.

The problem is compounded by the fact that Heraclitus lived through a period during which the nature of conceptual thought underwent a shift towards a greater degree of abstraction, such that it can be difficult to establish the degree of freedom that, for instance, qualities, might have from their physical exemplars. The degree to which a quality such as “good” is understood as a constitutive part of the objects to which it is ascribed changes the meaning of the term – and has significant consequences for the interpretation of the statements in which it appears. For this reason, part of my interpretation of the fragments involves consideration of what might be termed the cognitive or conceptual context of their composition and reception. I incorporate two important sources of information in identifying this context. First, I make use of studies that deal with the conceptual structure of Archaic epic and lyric, and with the structure of Archaic thought more generally (e.g., Snell 1953; Onians 1988; Lloyd 1992). Second, I refer extensively to works that look at the trajectory of early Greek philosophy in order to track the kinds of conceptual shifts made visible through comparisons between one philosopher and another (e.g., Mourelatos 1973; Leshner 1983; Wilcox 1994).

⁴¹ At least on the basis of Diogenes Laertius’ comment on his style at 2.3 (A1 DK).

⁴² Diogenes Laertius reports that he created a summary of his views (Diog. Laert. 2.2 = A1 DK); the Suda credits him with three works (A.1986 = A2 DK). Our more reliable evidence is, of course, the verbatim fragment B1.

⁴³ Fränkel 1973: 345-346 believes that he composed five works – one geographical, and four historical-mythographical. It seems plausible, at least, that his geographical and historical works may have been distinct (Granger 2002: 13).

A final, important element in the interpretation of the fragments is the set of common experiences which Heraclitus shares with his audience – both pragmatic, everyday experiences and literary experiences.⁴⁴ These make it possible to frame the assumptions, expectations and associations that Heraclitus might bring, and might reasonably expect his audience to bring, to his composition. Determining the literary associations requires reference to Archaic epic and lyric; these provide a sense of some likely connotations of phrases and images. The pragmatic experiences present more of a challenge, given that our knowledge of everyday lives in late 6th century/early 5th century Ionia is, of course, limited. Nonetheless, there is sufficient historical information available, in many cases, to make it possible to determine shared pragmatic background experiences and knowledge likely to impact the interpretation of particular fragments – for instance, the level of knowledge that the different social classes Archaic Greeks shared concerning the needs and natures of domestic animals (e.g., Kron 2014), the significance of gold in both the value systems and trade of Western Ionia in the 6th century (e.g., Seaford 2004), the importance of the Cayster river to Ephesus and the problems to which it was subject (e.g., Kraft 2011). Such studies help to frame my interpretation of the fragments by establishing, for instance, the kinds of historically specific understandings and associations that colour such seemingly general ideas as “gold-based trade” and “pigs wallowing in mud” and even “war” and “river.”

The question of shared pragmatic and literary experiences becomes easier to establish if we can define Heraclitus’ audience more narrowly. We know that they were Greeks of the late sixth or early fifth century. It seems likely that Heraclitus conceived of his audience as, first, his fellow Ephesians and, second, Greeks of Western Ionia more generally. This does not, of course, rule out the possibility that he might have had wider audience even within his own lifetime. It

⁴⁴ For the use of the term “literary”, see above p. 18n18.

does, however, suggest that his conception of his audience, of their shared literary and pragmatic background, would have been shaped in important ways by the audience he was most accustomed to speaking to – which was, almost certainly, his fellow Ephesians.

I'd like to suggest, tentatively, that we can define this "primary audience" even more narrowly as the "aristocrats" or "elites" of Ephesus: the subset of citizens who, through their wealth and (usually) bloodline, formed a social group constituted by certain ties, conventions, and duties.

The claim that Heraclitus is speaking to his fellow Ephesians seems to be supported by the fragments' use of references that assume knowledge of local personalities and events.⁴⁵ His references to such elements of the *polis* as the law and city wall, and his exhortations to attend to the former would lose a great deal of their power in the absence of an investment in the affairs of a particular *polis* that is shared by speaker and audience. This is not, of course, to deny that these references have a universal character – they are not just speaking of the law of Ephesus, but of any city's law – the move from the particular to the general (and beyond) that we see, for instance, in B105/B114, derives a great deal of its power from the fact that it invites the audience to think about their own particular *polis*. A stranger would be unlikely to inspire such immediate reflections from an audience – his statements would be understood either as starting from the general conception of the polis or, worse, from his own *polis* only. In addition, the biographical reports on Heraclitus (as late and notoriously unreliable as such reports are) are notable in attributing to Heraclitus no foreign travel at all. This makes him unique among his fellow-

⁴⁵ For instance, D11/B39 references Bias, from nearby Priene; D14/B121 not only attacks the Ephesians directly, but does so in reference to a specific event – the exile of a man named Hermodorus. Heraclitus' attacks on his fellow philosophers and inquirers also centre on those who lived, at least for a time, in or near Western Ionia (Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Hecataeus) – though this last is hardly decisive evidence given the close links between this region and *historiê* in the Archaic period.

historiê, all of whom are associated with wide travel.⁴⁶ It is possible that this divergence from the traditional biographical mould signals a kernel of truth.

Heraclitus' audience can, I think, be further narrowed by the indications that he is speaking, specifically, to an aristocratic minority. First, his diction and imagery are partially drawn from those of the aristocratic culture of the Archaic and early Classical period. He uses the "in-group" language by which the aristocratic elite self-identify – for instance, the opposition between the *συνετοί* and the *ιδιώται*, or between *οἱ ἄριστοι* and *οἱ πολλοί*,⁴⁷ the references to gold, never silver, when speaking of markers of value.⁴⁸

What makes this use of the "in-group" language so significant is that Heraclitus uses the language of aristocratic self-definition even as he excludes his audience from the group defined by that language (or at least emphasizes that their inclusion is not a given). It would be uncharacteristic of Heraclitus to waste words making the obvious point to the populace at large that they were not the aristocratic few; this would barely even qualify as an insult. It would simply serve to exclude the audience from the discourse from the outset, alienating them without even properly attacking them or their prejudices. Understood as an address to the elite, the words become both barbed – as a challenge to aristocratic identity – and paradoxical.⁴⁹ In other words, it would be both more insulting, and more likely to demand attention.

⁴⁶ For instance, Herodotus seems to place Thales travelling with Croesus for at least part of his advance against Cyrus (Hdt. 1.75); Aelian has Anaximander founding a colony at Apollonia on the Black Sea (Ael. VH 3.17/A3 DK); Xenophanes, both by his own account (D66/B8) and by the report given by Diogenes Laertius (Diog. Laert. 9.18-20), seems to have spent much of his life travelling from city to city; Pythagoras travelled from Samos to Croton. While we have reason to be sceptical about the *specific* journeys attributed to the Milesians especially, the sheer number of journeys attributed to them, along with the kinds of observations that appear to have underpinned their theories, supports the view that travel formed a significant part of their lives. See, e.g., Couprie et al. 2003: 73. For further discussion of the likelihood that Heraclitus' restricted his philosophical activity to a single city, see Robb 1983: 185; Granger 2002: 16.

⁴⁷ Battisti 1990: 6, 8-9, 13, notes that *συνετοί* was used by the aristocracy to describe their social status and the shared outlook, knowledge and traditions by which they signalled that status (and their distinction from the *ιδιώται*).

⁴⁸ For the importance of the gold (especially as contrasted with silver) for the late Archaic aristocrat, see Kurke 1999: 41-65.

⁴⁹ For discussion of this feature of the important concept of *οἱ συνετοί*, p. 89.

Heraclitus' richly allusive sayings also seem to assume a breadth of education that would have only been available to a minority of citizens.⁵⁰ While it's true that the entire citizenry would have been familiar with the Homeric and Hesiodic poems, and would have been able to recite portions of each, it was the aristocratic elite who were most often expected to memorize the entire corpus.⁵¹ The (generally) elite audience of the symposium⁵² also provided the primary audience for more contemporary compositions, including lyric poetry (broadly construed),⁵³ as well as the reperformance of more public compositions such as dramatic and hymnic verse;⁵⁴ such an audience would be in a better position both to appreciate the poetic density of Heraclitus' words, and to register the full impact of his manipulation and frustration of conventional expectations. They would be better equipped not only to recognize Heraclitus' allusions, but also to unravel their complexities. Most importantly, the education of the ancient Greek child emphasized an approach to poems that involved revisiting, reconsidering and reworking the same materials over and over.⁵⁵ This is reflected in the structure of the symposium as well, which furnished an occasion where the skills acquired in the classroom could be applied to a new educational context, through which a self-selected in-group transmitted its moral, aesthetic, social and epistemic norms not only through recitation, but through the presentation of new compositions, and the discussion of older, culturally significant works.⁵⁶ The focus on repetition within sympotic culture also makes it congenial to Heraclitus' sayings, which not only lend themselves to multiple hearings but can, through a change in the order of the sayings, or through the emphasis of one word (or syllable) over another, draw attention to different layers of

⁵⁰ It seems unlikely that any regular schooling would be available to the citizenry as a whole (Thomas 1992: 75).

⁵¹ See Havelock 1963: 140.

⁵² Carey 2010: 34.

⁵³ Carey 2010: 33.

⁵⁴ Budelmann 2010: 11.

⁵⁵ Bloomer 2013: 158.

⁵⁶ This aspect of the private gatherings of the elite is critiqued (and parodied) in Plato's *Protagoras* 347c-348a.

meaning over the course of repeated recitations. As multiple commentators have noted, the evidence that Heraclitus seemed to have composed for a small audience who would perhaps have heard his composition multiple times may be closely connected to the density and multi-dimensionality of his sayings; under these circumstances, he could pack more into a single statement, demand that his audience unpack the different meanings, and even aid them in the unpacking.⁵⁷ Heraclitus' mode of aphorism-based composition may even have been a familiar one within the world of the symposium. Many of the legends surrounding the "performance" of wisdom by the Seven Sages connects that performance to a sympotic tradition.⁵⁸ Moreover, the special wisdom that marks out the aristocrat seems to have been identified with mastery of γνῶμαι,⁵⁹ or maxims. This does not necessarily mean that Heraclitus' own performance context was restricted to the symposium,⁶⁰ though it does suggest that his audience would have been made up of that group of wealthier and more powerful citizens whose cultural knowledge, expectations, and values were formed in significant ways by the culture transmitted and formed through the symposium. This would, probably, be the same group to whom the *historiê* most

⁵⁷ See, e.g., Robb 1983: 185; Granger 2002: 16.

⁵⁸ For the association between sympotic performance and the Seven Sages, see Martin 1998: 123. As Granger 2002: 12-13 observes, there are parallels between Heraclitus' sayings and those attributed to the Seven Sages, in their various configuration (though Heraclitus' sayings differ from those of the latter in demanding attention not only to their internal structure, but to the interrelation with his other sayings. In other words, his work may lack the traditional narrative or metrical modes of establishing continuity found in epic poetry, but it still establishes connection and continuity through the use of repeated structural, thematic, imagistic, etc. elements.)

⁵⁹ Bloomer 2010: 457; Kurke 1999: 63. Heraclitus repeatedly questions whether real wisdom is to be found in such maxims and plays off of the tendency to run together the memorization of a series of "wise maxims" – γνῶμαι – with wisdom.

⁶⁰ Some fragments, do, however, support the symposium as a performance context. It seems plausible that the κοσμὸν τόνδε ("this order") with which D85/B30 begins was intended to initially evoke for the audience the orderly nature of the symposium – this order was, as Ford 2004: 39-45 notes, a key preoccupation of the symposiast culture. Read this way, some of the more perplexing elements – the τόνδε (with its emphasis on some immediate cosmos that the speaker can physically point out to his audience) and the statement that "no human or gods made it" (since the puzzling notion that a human might have made it is resolved if we see the audience as beginning from the thought that the cosmos in question is the symposium itself). See Kahn 1979: 133, who notes that the meaning of "this good order" or "this ornament" must have been the audience's intended starting point in interpreting κοσμὸν τόνδε. He does not, however, suggest any particular "this order" to which the audience's initial interpretation might attach itself. Note also the importance of the word μέτρον in the language of sympotic values (where it is closely associated with κόσμος; see Levine 1985); this word, too, plays a key role in D85/B30, as well as in other fragments descriptive of the cosmos, such as D89c/B94 and (in verbal form) D86/B31.

often presented their work – if only because the greater leisure, more extensive education, and political and personal investment in being (perceived as) “wise” would make the elite minority more likely to react more strongly, positively or negatively, to the new ideas. Some of these ideas (e.g., those of Xenophanes) might have been presented in a traditional sympotic context. Others might have been presented at a more informal private gathering. One plausible context for the dissemination of such works is offered by Plato’s *Parmenides*, which pictures a small group gathering to hear Zeno read his book and to discuss his ideas.⁶¹ On balance, however, the evidence seems to support the view that Heraclitus’ sayings were composed with the sympotic context in mind, and with the intention of manipulating the symposium’s conventions. As mentioned above, Heraclitus uses the aristocrats’ language of self-definition against them. Such a move would be particularly powerful in the symposium, where it both echoes and undermines a major convention of sympotic literature. Since the symposium itself serves as a means of the cementing and defining the in-group, traditional sympotic literature often serves that unification of group members either through praise of the group at large, or through the criticism and mockery of an outsider (or the singling out of an unlucky insider).⁶² Heraclitus narrows the “in-group” until it includes only himself, directing his invective and mockery at its traditional members and challenging the supposed wisdom by which they distinguish themselves from the many. Heraclitus also appropriates the self-reflexive dimension of sympotic literature – more specifically, its repeated exhortations to drink, which, like the self-praise or other-mockery of sympotic literature, serves as “expression of the social bond between the participants.”⁶³

Heraclitus’ invective against drinking, seen in its likely context, gains both clarity and

⁶¹ For the view that Heraclitus’ work would have been disseminated in this manner, see Robb 1983: 183; Fränkel 1973: 257n9.

⁶² Carey 2010: 38.

⁶³ Carey 2010: 34.

dimensionality. The force of this invective – and in fact, his invective in general – becomes both sharper and more limited in scope when considered as part of a composition aimed specifically at an in group of fellow elites within a sympotic-type context. On the one hand, his insults now appear more carefully chosen, and therefore likely to cut deeper. On the other hand, it helps to make sense of what some commentators, following the mostly suspect biographical tradition, have mistaken for genuine misanthropy in Heraclitus’ discourse⁶⁴ – regarding him, for instance, as an aberration among Archaic Greeks, where the life of the individual was generally bound up with the life of the *polis*.⁶⁵ Yet it seems unlikely that any true misanthrope, in an oral culture, would have taken the trouble of setting his thoughts into the kind of order found in Heraclitus’ sayings⁶⁶ – especially when so many of those thoughts do seem, in some way, to attempt to share something with his audience about his own discoveries concerning knowledge and the nature of reality. Given their proper context, Heraclitus’ insults have a paradoxicality that allows them to serve as a goad to the audience. Rather than merely alienating the audience, as they likely would if spoken to their ostensible target (that is, “the many”, or the people, as distinct from “the best”, or the aristocrats), Heraclitus’ sayings seem to demand that the audience prove themselves worthy of their own terms of self-lauding self-definition.⁶⁷

The above sketch of the “narrow context” of Heraclitus’ audience is, of course, speculative. I do not claim, for instance, that we can know for certain that Heraclitus’ composition would have been presented in a sympotic context, though I think that reading his

⁶⁴ Some of these “misanthropic” statements, as I will argue in this dissertation, also point towards Heraclitus’ rejection of the possibility of human knowledge – i.e., the fact that humans qua humans, or humans constrained by the human perspective, can attain knowledge.

⁶⁵ See, e.g., Carson 1984: 67n11.

⁶⁶ On these points, see my discussion of orality and literacy below.

⁶⁷ Robb 1983: 185 suggests that Heraclitus’ audience may have “relished the taunt – each listener like the member of a congregation who assumes that the damning sermon is addressed to his neighbour.” This may be one element of Heraclitus’ sayings – though Heraclitus takes care to keep the audience from becoming too self-satisfied in this assurance.

words in this way offers a plausible way of deepening our understanding of them. I do, however, think that his “primary audience” would have been a broadly local one, possessing the kind of education, and investment in viewing itself as “wise,” that would likely have characterized only the small “elite” section of the population at this time. Again, this “primary audience” is significant only insofar as may have shaped Heraclitus’ expectations of shared literary and pragmatic background. Occasionally, for instance, I will suggest that our understanding of a fragment might be deepened by a consideration of the everyday character of a given phenomena (trade in gold; the passage of rivers; war); in such cases, I’ve found it helpful to bear in mind those aspects of the phenomena most likely to be salient (or even), in Ephesus or Western Ionia in the late Archaic period.

Throughout this dissertation, I repeatedly refer to Heraclitus’ “audience.” In what follows, I will address two aspects of this term. The first concerns the question of whether the reception of Heraclitus’ work should be understood through the lens of “orality” or “literacy”. I argue, first, that it is very likely that Heraclitus’ work was received by listeners, rather than readers.⁶⁸ I then turn to what is, for this dissertation, the most important aspect of the orality vs. literacy question. Even if, for the sake of argument, we maintain that Heraclitus’ was an audience of readers, the manner in which Heraclitus’ composition was absorbed would have been conditioned by the nature of audience reception within what was still an oral *culture*. This fact is intimately connected with the second, more important, aspect of the role of the “audience” in relation to Heraclitus’ work – the fact that the meaning of his work is bound up with the experience it was intended to evoke in the audience. This means that even though his goal is one that we would

⁶⁸ An oral mode of presentation would, of course, be involved in presentation in a sympotic context. Thus my (tentative) argument above for a sympotic context of reception can be regarded as offering some degree of evidence for an oral mode of presentation.

recognize as genuinely philosophical – one that grapples directly with conditions of knowledge and the nature of reality – his discourse should still be understood, primarily, not in terms of a series of inferences that can be gathered from it, but in terms of a series of responses that he anticipates creating in his audience (which will, however, include the recognition of certain inferences or inferential patterns). The available evidence suggest that Heraclitus’ discourse was very likely transmitted orally.⁶⁹ Nonetheless, my choice of the term “audience” is intended to allow for the possibility of either an audience of listeners or an audience of readers. There are a number of reasons for taking this approach. First, it is my view that the answer to the question of whether Heraclitus wrote for an audience of listeners or readers would not settle major controversies around the interpretation of the fragments. While it is extremely difficult to judge the literacy levels during Heraclitus’ period,⁷⁰ it’s clear that the shift towards a literate rather than oral *culture* had not yet occurred in his time.⁷¹ In other words, the written word during the late Archaic period supplemented, rather than supplanted, the existing customs and practices of the

⁶⁹ Literacy levels were too low in this period for the dissemination of manuscripts to constitute any kind of “publication” (Havelock 1982: 232-233). Even if manuscripts circulated in this manner, a philosopher of Heraclitus’ healthy ego seems unlikely to content himself to a mode of dissemination that would so far restrict his audience. Moreover, given that compositions of cultural value continued to be preserved by oral, rather than by written means, and given that the rapidity with which papyrus on which any “book” would have been written decomposes, his work would have been unlikely to have survived without the wider audience that oral “publication” afforded. In addition, while both Ephesus and nearby Miletus were important trading routes, books (in the form of papyrus rolls) didn’t begin to appear until the end of the fifth century, and the earliest reference to a book trade dates to the early fourth century (Xen. *An.* 7.5.14; See Thomas 1992: 13). Among the surviving archaeological evidence, the documents (as opposed to, for instance, amphorae with one- or two-line inscriptions) that travelled long distances include only interstate treaties (Wilson 2009: 553) and letters between traders (Wilson 2009: 554).

⁷⁰ Wilson 2009: 559-561 notes that the degree of literacy attained during this period is not only difficult to estimate on the basis of existing evidence, but varies dramatically between regions. In late sixth century Athens, a large proportion of the population seemed to possess the basic literacy required to read and understand the name and list of achievements associated with some public figure. By contrast, in late 6th century Crete, literacy seems to have been “scribal literacy”, largely confined to a small group of specialists whose literacy formed an essential part of their occupation.

⁷¹ As Thomas 1992: 74-100 emphasizes, even a shift towards reading did not immediately eliminate the “performative” assumptions of the audience – that is, the tendency to engage with the words as a multi-modal experience that drew not only on the intellectual responses, but also on the sensory and affective responses with which they were bound up.

oral culture.⁷² In the case of longer documents, this means that the function of the written document was to support, rather than supplant, the public oral performance. In fact, even in the Classical period, “solitary and silent reading was almost unknown.”⁷³ This means that even if Heraclitus wrote a book, the function of that book was almost certainly that of a “script” for performance.⁷⁴ Moreover, even if the work *was* read by solitary readers, it would have been read (as well as written) in a context where the cultural framework of orality still governed the mode of composition, transmission, and reception. That is, its model of communication, no less than its language and style, would have been shaped by the compositions from which both Heraclitus and his audience had learned to communicate and to parse communications, and upon which his work draws, even as it competes with and reacts against them. On this model, moreover, the idea of writing for oneself alone would have been an oxymoron,⁷⁵ while any notion of writing for future generations would have been mediated by the reality of writing for the present generation, given that the survival of one’s composition depended upon making that composition salient and memorable for one’s audience,⁷⁶ which thus functioned as a “partner” in the poet or

⁷² Wilson 2009: 556

⁷³ Thomas 1992: 13.

⁷⁴ Thomas 1992: 125-127; Robb 1983: 155-157. Even if Heraclitus’ audience was made up of readers, it’s significant that both he and his readers would have been steeped in the oral context, with oral performance as the primary means by which they learned about new ideas and formed their expectations concerning the structure and nature of various sorts of compositions. Under such conditions, one would expect the oral context to have a significant effect upon the creation and the reception of Heraclitus’ discourse regardless of whether it was read or performed. (See also Robb 1983: 178).

⁷⁵ Even if we leave aside the facts of the cultural context, we could simply note that we have found nothing that even *approximates* a diary or commonplace book prior to Marcus Aurelius’ *Meditations*. Even surviving notes scratched on pottery shards take the form of communications to slaves or neighbours. The idea of writing for oneself in any robust sense may be quite recent, beginning with the Puritan exercise of keeping a book for the purposes of daily self-examination in order to reflect on one’s sins (Mallon 105; 208).

⁷⁶ Even after the advent of writing, the latter was not conceived as a means by which one could reach some future of audience (see, e.g., Robb 1983: 158-159). If Heraclitus indeed deposited his manuscript in the Temple of Artemis, this could not have indicated that he hoped in this way to safeguard his work for the future. If he did so, it would be in approximately the same spirit in which bards had themselves buried with their script of the Homeric poems. Objects dedicated to the Temple of Artemis in Heraclitus’ time were not, in any case, preserved for future generations or for the public. They were given up to Artemis absolutely, in a process akin to sacrifice. This is made clear by evidence that the contents of the early Archaic temple to Artemis were buried at the time of the construction of the Croesus temple at around 550 B.C.E. As Karwiese 1991: 6-7, the most plausible explanation of the burial of

philosopher's composition.⁷⁷ Such a "partnership" involved a model of poetry or prose understood as an experience to be undergone, rather than as a way of communicating ideas wholly abstractable from the form in which they were conveyed. This is the context in which Parmenides framed his text both as a retelling of the experience of an initiation into the "Mysteries" and as an initiation of the audience into those same "Mysteries";⁷⁸ it is also, to some degree, the context in which Democritus, in the late 5th century, offered a scientific model of the world and of human nature using highly evocative aphorisms that combine aesthetic force (through the use of riddle,⁷⁹ repetition and phonic patterning,⁸⁰ and imagery⁸¹) with moral authority in a manner that both draws strength from and lends strength to the epistemic weight of his account.⁸² It is also a context in which the distinction between the truth value, the aesthetic order, and the moral appropriateness of a composition was not well-established.⁸³ Thus, the philosopher, in order to convey his meaning to his audience, had to aim for more than the kind of clarity required of a contemporary philosopher who wishes to convey an idea. He also had to speak in a way that his audience, trained to receive "literature" as a multi-modal experience to be "lived", would find most meaningful (in the robust, rather than narrowly semantic, sense of "meaningful"). As historians of Ancient Greek philosophy, then, our job is to try to get at what a pre-Platonic philosopher is trying to say by considering not only the meaning of particular arrangements of words and concepts in the context of his time period, but also, at the same time,

the temple treasures at around the same time as the creation of the new temple is that some taboo existed on relocating the temple treasures even to a new temple to the same goddess on the same spot. If the treasures were given over to the possession of the temple in this absolute sense, it is difficult to imagine that they would be available for the use in any form – and in a culture highly aware of the physical reality of writing and reading (see Thomas 1992: 74-100), the reading of a papyrus would be considered no less a form of "use" than the cooking of a meal in a cauldron.

⁷⁷ Havelock 1982: 20.

⁷⁸ Tor 2017: 283.

⁷⁹ E.g., D164/B122a.

⁸⁰ E.g., D14/B9; D167/B122a; D164/B122a.

⁸¹ E.g., D55/B164.

⁸² E.g., D226/B191; D274/B119

⁸³ See Ford 2004: 40; Griffith 1990: 189.

the kind of response he might be seeking to elicit from his audience with those words and concepts. This is particularly apparent in Heraclitus' case. Even commentators who would not necessarily stress the role of the audience in compositions by other pre-Platonic thinkers acknowledge that the imagery, structure, and language of Heraclitus' sayings all reinforce the point that the experience of the words is of central importance.⁸⁴ These facts further support Kahn 1979 that we must interpret Heraclitus in line with literary⁸⁵ modes of communication, yet it also reminds us not to fall into the trap of thinking that Archaic models of literary communication would map neatly onto ours. In other words, while a modern reader might experience a poem via an interpretation from which sensory and emotional responses were largely suppressed and still (perhaps questionably) believe that he or she "gets the gist" of the poem, the sensory and emotional responses played a more overt role in constituting the nature of literary communication in the oral culture of late Archaic Greece.

I have argued that Heraclitus' discourse was very likely composed for oral performance, and that it communicated to the audience by evoking an "experience" at least partially constituted by a play of interconnected sensory, emotional, and intellectual responses. In what sense, then, was it even philosophical? Havelock has argued that the ancient Greek oral discourse largely excluded philosophical thought; it was dependent upon literary or rhetorical techniques, was rooted in a formulaic vocabulary and structure,⁸⁶ and invited the audience to treat its communication not so

⁸⁴ See, among others, Minar 1939: 332; Tejera 1991: 493, 496; Kirk 1962: 151-152; Hussey 1982: 58. The latter lays particular stress on the need to understand Heraclitus through an interpretation that applies all the resources of literary scholarship," since such an interpretation "would approach Heraclitus in the way he himself intended" (52-53).

⁸⁵ For a defense of this somewhat awkward and imprecise term, see page p. 18n18 above. Again, I do not intend any alignment between "literate" and "literary". The latter is simply meant to include other "artistic" (for lack of a more appropriate term) forms beyond poetry (riddles, proverbs, wisdom tales, etc.)

⁸⁶ Havelock 1963: 82-84. On the use of formulae in Archaic Greek oral epic, along with evidence of flexibility and dynamism in this use, see Dihle 1994: 7.

much as abstractable content, but as an experience. This engendered a degree of engagement and identification that ran counter to philosophical argument, not only because it kept the audience mired in concrete or image-based thinking, unable to separate out the meaning of the poetry from the form in which it is conveyed, but because it rendered the audience passive in the face of that meaning, absorbing it rather than evaluating it.⁸⁷ Some of these claims are, in my view, applicable to Heraclitus.⁸⁸ Even if Heraclitus' composition did, in fact, take the form of a written book, it was certainly not a book structured around an abstractable argument. Again, this is a feature of a context within which the multi-faceted experience of the composition was deeply entangled with its success in communicating an idea. As I argued above, and as I hope to illustrate over the next four chapters, Heraclitus uses the language and structures of poetry (and literary prose) in order to generate a particular experience in his audience. This experience forms a key part of his philosophical project.⁸⁹ More specifically, Heraclitus' composition represents an attempt to communicate to his audience something difficult to grasp, and to facilitate in them an epistemic end impossible to communicate, and that this plays a part in what he said, and how he said it. In Chapter 3, I will argue that the nature of what Heraclitus seeks to show his audience is such that it cannot be expressed in language, and in Chapter 4, I will look in greater detail at how Heraclitus' use of language is tailored to deal with this problem. Yet I will also argue that, far from inviting the audience to remain passive or limited to the deeply concrete modes of Archaic conceptualization, Heraclitus' mode of communication guides the audience towards a greater degree of abstraction in their thinking, and, in doing so, helps them towards a consistent and

⁸⁷ Havelock 1963: see especially 145-160.

⁸⁸ Havelock 1982 does, in fact, recognize in the Presocratics generally, and in Heraclitus specifically, a sort of intermediate stage in which some of these 'unphilosophical' elements persist and others do not, and some of the elements that persist do so in new ways.

⁸⁹ On the experiential nature of the epistemic process engendered by the fragments, see, e.g., Graham 2009: 79; Emlyn-Jones 1976: 102.

coherent grasp of the distinctions and relations that structure their cognition (Chapter 2).⁹⁰ At the same time, the understanding facilitated by such an approach ultimately requires an immediate experience rooted in the most concrete layers of the person (Chapters 3 and 4). Thus, as I will argue, there is a combination of factors at play in Heraclitus' work, some of which involve the qualities of "oral discourse," and some of which involve the qualities of "literate discourse" (as Havelock characterizes these). One implication of this is that Havelock's view is an oversimplification: a philosophical discourse need not be the product of a literate culture, nor need its "core message" be communicated through its appeal to the rational faculties. Another implication is that the use of features of poetic discourse such as comparisons may serve more than one function. They may act as "analogies" – that is, they may offer reasons for the audience to accept a position by inferring from like to like,⁹¹ or offer ways to think about something unknown through something known.⁹² Yet in Heraclitus, the impact of these moves, and the quality of thought that they generate, is generally dependent not only on the explanatory force of the comparison, but also on the kinds of associations that it draws upon, as well as the kinds of

⁹⁰ The question of whether a discourse of this kind is an "argument" is more difficult to determine, in part because "argument," even when it's restricted to the philosophical context, is not a univocal term. On my view, Heraclitus discourse is carefully structured to convey certain ideas to his audience. These do not depend merely on the audience's passive acquiescence. Rather (to speak only of the first "step" in Heraclitus' epistemic method), Heraclitus shows the audience that a particular way of thinking about the relation between concepts offers them a way to make sense of their experience of the world. In doing so, they provide a new way of conceiving how the world fits together. The acceptance of this view of the world depends upon the audience's reflection upon and grasp of the model of conceptual relations that Heraclitus illustrates for them – a model which must compare to their existing mode of conceiving of the world and their experience. What is missing from this picture is, however, the kind of linearity which some might argue is a crucial part of argument. As Kahn 1979: 7 notes, the links between Heraclitus' ideas are not established through the sort of (comparatively) familiar argument sequencing that we find in Parmenides' Way of Truth, but through "interlocking ideas, imagery and verbal echoes." Yet Graham 2008: 182 recognizes "inference patterns and at least simple arguments" in the fragments within fragments where these arguments and the manner in which they are expressed are both necessary components in producing the experience that Heraclitus' composition aims at (181). Prier 1976:57-89 analyses Heraclitus' ideas as a logically developed but non-linear account expressed through the systematic relationship between symbols.

⁹¹ E.g., D105/B114.

⁹² Lloyd 1992: 187-190.

difficulties that it creates through the interweaving of similarities and differences.⁹³ I’ve chosen to speak of Heraclitus’ comparisons using terms from poetry, speaking of “simile” rather than “analogy” as this seems more apt for describing the distance between Heraclitus’ approach to comparison and the Aristotelean analysis of the logic of analogy. I do use the term “proportional analogy” to describe the logical structure of those fragments, discussed in Chapter 4, in which a given term (e.g., an ape) appears to stand in the same relation to a second term (e.g., a human) as that second term stands in relation to a third term (e.g., a god). I discuss Heraclitus’ use of proportional analogies in Chapter 3.

II: Scope and Limits of This Interpretation

The argument that I offer in this dissertation is a work of history of philosophy. As I see it, there are certain constraints placed on such an argument that would not exist for an argument within contemporary epistemology. By the same token, there are certain constraints on arguments within contemporary epistemology that do not apply here. With respect to the latter, I will not attempt to answer objections that might be obvious from our standpoint – or even from the standpoint of a philosopher a century or two later. For instance, when I discuss paradoxes in Chapter 2, I emphasize that they are not precisely logical paradoxes, in the sense that their primary purpose is not to invite a diagnosis and resolution in terms of logical or perceptual error. Heraclitus’ paradoxes – that is, those statements in which he demands that the audience adopt incompatible beliefs – are defined as paradox through the kind of response that they seem to seek

⁹³ See Halliwell 2019 for the important role of differences, as well as similarities, in Homeric simile. Lloyd 1992: 319 notes how “rudimentary” are the comparisons in Archaic philosophy – at least when one reads them (as Lloyd does) exclusively as explanatory devices. By “rudimentary” Lloyd means that they are not, or not quite, arguments from analogy as we understand it. His observation here is focused upon the Milesians. However, his earliest example of a more sophisticated analogy-rooted argument is from Empedocles. It’s also worth repeating here that Heraclitus’ use of language, imagery, and comparison, is unique in early Greek philosophy (see Granger 2002) and has more in common with the structures and techniques of the poets than can be explained merely with reference either to a lack of appropriately philosophical models or an impoverished conceptual vocabulary (see Kahn 1979).

from their audience. This impact is not only dependent upon the conceptual structure with which Heraclitus works, but is also bound up with the model of communication discussed in section I. The discourse itself is an object of experience in a robust sense: the impact of a paradoxical aphorism depends upon a set of intellectual, affective and physiological responses to a conflict located not only in the concepts used and the situation evoked, but also in the structural and other rhetorical elements of the aphorism itself. On this point, it's useful to contrast Heraclitus' approach to paradox with that of a 20th century analytic philosopher such as Austin. Austin attempts to disperse the implicit paradox that Ayer claims arises from “the fact that material things may present different appearances to different observers, or to the same observer in different conditions, and that the character of these appearances is to some extent causally determined by the state of the conditions and the observer.”⁹⁴ Austin attempts to show that the perspectival character of perception is neither puzzling nor philosophically significant, because no one is ever actually fooled by, for instance, the fact that a straight stick appears bent in water. On Austin's view, the formulation “the stick is straight in reality, but appears bent to us” gives the misleading impression of some gap between the reality and the appearance. The fact that the stick appears bent in water is as much a fact about reality as the fact that the stick appears straight out of water. This sort of perception is “a perfectly normal occurrence, completely familiar, and there is usually no question of anyone being taken in.”⁹⁵ The basic problem that Austin describes – that the same stick looks both straight and bent – would have had a different impact for Heraclitus' audience, for whom the opposites “straight” and “bent” are not merely

⁹⁴ Austin 1962: 20.

⁹⁵ Austin 1962: 26. Contrast Plato *Resp.* 602c-603a where the experience of the stick-in-water does “take us in” in the sense that it creates a divided response. Here, the paradoxicality – as I would term it – arises from our nature, and from the internal conflict that such an appearance creates. The rational part of our nature recognizes that this is merely how the stick in water appears and believes that the stick is in fact straight. The irrational part of our nature remains attached to our perception of the stick as bent, thus putting it in conflict with the rational part.

ways in which objects such as sticks can be qualified, but possess a degree of “separate and objective existence”⁹⁶ that is nonetheless manifest in phenomena such as the visible stick. This does not imply that a given phenomenon is (necessarily) recognized as paradoxical by Heraclitus’ audience before Heraclitus describes their experience of it in such a way as to bring out its paradoxicality. Many of Heraclitus’ paradoxes involve simple observations that are part of the audience’s everyday life; these would not have been experienced as paradoxes until the implicit presence of juxtaposed opposites was brought to the fore.⁹⁷

The unique character of philosophical communication that belongs to pre-Platonic philosophy in general,⁹⁸ and to Heraclitus in particular, is also a significant point of difference when it comes to the achievement of the perspectiveless view. Heraclitus’ options for dealing with the problem of perspectival limits differ from the options available to a modern (or even a late Classical) philosopher, for whom an argument might be more easily abstracted from its discursive form, and who has access to highly abstract forms of conceptualization (at least when compared with the Archaic Greek’s dependence upon concrete or image-based modes of thought). It’s true that, as I explain in Chapters 2, Heraclitus asks his audience to take a more abstract view of their experience in order to grasp a larger world picture. Yet unlike a 20th

⁹⁶ Emlyn-Jones 1976: 102.

⁹⁷ The most obvious example in this context is D52/B59: “The way of cloth-carders: straight and bent” (γνάφων ὁδὸς· εὐθεῖα καὶ σκολιή). This fragment may even have been an inspiration for Plato *Resp.* 602c-603a, which is presumably the direct or indirect source of Austin’s example.

⁹⁸ I do not mean to imply here that the direct experience of a carefully composed philosophical communication is unimportant for later philosophers. For one thing, the ancient Greek culture retained much of the framework of an oral culture long after literacy became a significant part of the educational process (see, e.g., Thomas 1992). Yet the rapid conceptual and cultural changes that marked the Archaic and Classical periods altered the options available to the philosopher. By Aristotle’s time, it was possible to treat an argument as something that could be communicated through a shared set of abstract concepts (even if these were seen as requiring clarification and re-shaping before they could serve as adequate building blocks for argument); in other words, one could, at least in theory, draw a distinction between the “dialectical” and “rhetorical” aspects of an argument. This distinction, at least as we usually construe it, was not available to Archaic philosophers; their communicative model did not involve the assumption that the philosophical substance of a communication could be extracted from their composition and re-stated in its “essentials”, with the latter understood as those features that are independent of the intended effect upon the audience.

philosopher such as Thomas Nagel – whose notion of the objective self does show certain affinities with Heraclitus logos-centred world view⁹⁹ – Heraclitus’ version of “abstract concepts”¹⁰⁰ remains in close contact with the concrete mode of thought that is standard for his time and place. If this prevents him from seeking a Nagel-like “view from nowhere”, it also, as I’ll show in Chapters 3 and 4, provides him with a different set of tools for overcoming the individual perspective.¹⁰¹

If a reconstruction of Heraclitus’ philosophy cannot be weakened by anachronistic objections, it also cannot be supported by the use of anachronistic concepts. One of the peculiarities of writing about a philosopher like Heraclitus, whose philosophy is conveyed indirectly, through “signs” (D41/B93) and through the experience that they evoke in the audience, is that very few of the concepts that are pervasive in the literature around Heraclitus are actually named by Heraclitus himself.¹⁰² For instance, the concept of opposition is central in the fragments, yet Heraclitus never uses the word “opposite” (ἐναντίατος). While he does have words for the key concepts of “unity” (“one”: εἷς, μία, ἕν; sometimes αὐτός, αὐτή, αὐτό, when

⁹⁹ As observed by Long 1992.

¹⁰⁰ See definition of “concept”, as the term will be used in this thesis, given on pp. 54-55 below.

¹⁰¹ This is different from the observation in Nagel 1986: 65 that because the “objective conception *has* a subject...it allows me to bring the subjective and objective views together,” since for Nagel, this involves bringing together the objective centreless view that encompasses all perspectives (objectively) with the view of an individual subject with a single perspective. Heraclitus, I’ll argue, recognizes the fact that the quasi-abstract concepts that constitute the building blocks of his audience’s thought are perspectival and context-dependent: abstraction doesn’t allow them to completely avoid this fact, though it does give them sufficient freedom to recognize the advantages of a non-perspectival view. It’s true that an increase in abstraction opens scope for thinking in ways less constrained by the immediate concrete frame of reference (see Chapter 2, section II). Yet the highly context-dependent nature of Archaic conceptual thought (see Chapter 2, section II, and Chapter 3, section I) keeps those concepts tied to their context in such a way that the attempt to grasp those concepts, as arranged by Heraclitus, ultimately brings the audience back to the experience of their concrete ground – that is, the perspectival basis by which they are differentiated and invested with meanings (see Chapters 3 and 4). For Heraclitus, unlike Nagel, it is ultimately through immediate and concrete experience, rather than through the achievement of increasing abstraction, that the perspectiveless view is achieved. (There are other differences, of course, in terms of aim and outcome; but this is perhaps the key methodological difference between what it looks like for a contemporary analytic philosopher vs. an Archaic Greek philosopher to apply the tools of reasoning and imagination to the problem of perspectival limits.)

¹⁰² This is, of course, also a problem associated with the lack of a conceptual vocabulary for many of the philosophical questions with which Heraclitus and his contemporaries are grappling. This is another reason for caution, since the lack of an explicit conceptual language may mean that a partially developed concept or conceptual distinction is either taken for a fully developed one, or, conversely, is overlooked entirely.

used with the sense “same”) and “plurality” (“all, every, the whole”: $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\zeta$, $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\sigma\alpha$, $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu$; sometimes “many, much”: $\pi\omicron\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\zeta$, $\pi\omicron\lambda\lambda\acute{\eta}$, $\pi\omicron\lambda\acute{\upsilon}$), he never speaks, for instance, of that “unity of opposites” which is recognized by nearly all commentators.¹⁰³ He does, however, give multiple instances of the relationship of mutual entailment between opposites¹⁰⁴ – and occasionally tells us that these opposites are “one” (D25a/B57) or even “one and the same” (D51/B60; more dubiously D52/B48). Still, a crucial difference between working with a philosopher like Heraclitus – given both his historical context, and his particular philosophical mode – and working with a philosopher such as Aristotle is that Heraclitus does not provide the commentator with a conceptual vocabulary (however slippery, multivocal, or problematic) that can be translated and analysed. Thus, concepts that appear throughout my dissertation, such as “unity-in-plurality” and “conceptual relations”, are never explicitly named by Heraclitus. Where these concepts appear, I have aimed to follow conventional best practices in Heraclitus scholarship. I explain these terms both by defining them and by illustrating and arguing for their applicability to the fragments and their fit within the framework of ideas within which Heraclitus works.¹⁰⁵

Given that Heraclitus’ approach to conceptual patterns and inferences remains within the still partially concrete mode of “conceptualization” of his time, this question of selecting an appropriate conceptual terminology is not a simple one. It has been a particularly significant

¹⁰³ Cf., however, Dilcher 2013.

¹⁰⁴ Again, he does not speak of mutual entailment. He does, however, put a great deal of emphasis on illustrating the nature of the relationship between opposites. It’s clear, both from his multiple illustrations of that relation, and the fragments in which he speaks of “higher order opposition” applicable in more general terms to the “lower order” instances of opposition (D49/B51, D47/B10, perhaps D50/B54), that he is interested in making sense of that relation on a more or less abstract level. In Chapter 2, I offer my interpretation of how he makes sense of this relation.

¹⁰⁵ This is not to imply that Heraclitus does not offer us terms that play a key role in his thought (the most obvious example is $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$), but merely to recognize that their meaning is built up through and bound up with the diverse contexts within which they appear, and so involve multiple (and in some cases, conflicting) denotations. Moreover, terms that are evidently important may appear only two or three times, and possess much of the same character as the illustrations or recurring imagery through which Heraclitus expresses his ideas outside of any consistent conceptual formulation. This means that while it’s important for an interpretation to trace Heraclitus’ use of these terms, it may not always be compatible with a faithful interpretation of the fragments to map the conceptual language for interpreting Heraclitus’ thought onto specific words that appear within the fragments.

issue within this thesis, in which one of the central issues is the nature of the conceptual and cognitive innovations achieved by Heraclitus. I have sometimes found it necessary to use concepts with problematic anachronistic baggage in order to clarify the issues for the modern reader. In such cases, my initial statement of the issues appeals to such anachronistic concepts, while acknowledging anachronism and pointing forward to later sections where the reader can expect to see the issues and the associated concepts adapted to a model that more precisely and accurately captures their scope of relevance for Heraclitus and his contemporaries. The most important example of this method is bound up with the terms and concepts that I use in speaking of issues around conceptualization and categorization. In section III below, I offer an initial definition of three models of unity as they apply to conceptualization and categorization. In order to maximize clarity and avoid unnecessary circumlocution, I employ admittedly anachronistic terminology. In Chapter 2, section I, a discussion of “character powers”-based approach to “conceptualization” will situate these models of unity within the context of Archaic thought, adapting this terminology and limiting and identifying its scope. Chapter 3, section I will also add a few nuances to more precisely locate Heraclitus’ place in the development of abstract conceptualization.

I’d like to address in advance, however, a concept that may raise questions for some readers. An essential concept in this dissertation is that of perspective and “perspectivism.” These terms, as I use them in this dissertation, denote a complex of responses (physiological, cognitive, affective) associated with one’s physical-perceptual context. In the narrow sense, “perspective” refers to one’s immediate external situation and internal state, including its more idiosyncratic features (e.g., I am at the bottom of a road, which I have to climb because I want to go home to Miletus; I am at the top of a road, which I have to descend because I want to go

home to Ephesus). In the broad sense, “perspective” refers to the fundamental features of one’s nature – those prescribed by the kind of creature that one is (human, fish, pig, etc.) I claim that the notion of perspective is epistemically significant for Heraclitus – that is, that he addresses the idea that one’s perspective may dictate how one experiences and conceives of the world, thus constraining one’s epistemic possibilities. All this may have a suspiciously modern flavour, perhaps even suggesting to the reader some of the starting points of Nietzschean perspectivism. While I will enlarge upon these concepts and argue for their application to Heraclitus in greater detail over the course of this dissertation, I want to address here the narrower question of anachronism. How plausible is it to claim that Heraclitus might possess such concepts? What exactly does “perspective” look like from an early Greek vantage?¹⁰⁶

The primary mode in which “perspective” appears in an epistemologically freighted sense in Archaic philosophy and poetry is through the distinctions between the way in which humans and gods see and experience the world, and the resultant distinctions between human and divine knowledge. In the tradition of Archaic poetry, human beings, by virtue of their nature, are epistemically weak compared to the gods. Human knowledge is constrained by the brevity of human life, the susceptibility to all kinds of suffering against which divine power protects (or at

¹⁰⁶ I’ve restricted the discussion that follows to Heraclitus’ contemporaries and predecessors. This does not mean that later philosophers did not engage with these questions. “Perspectivism” is a key preoccupation for ancient Greek philosophers, many of whom express a recognition of the epistemic limits created by perspective, and attempt to use the recognition of those limits as a way of overcoming them (at least to some extent). The limitations of the human perspective remain a source of concern for later philosophers; for instance, Empedocles deals not only with the epistemic limitations of the human perspective, but also those of various animal perspectives (as we might expect, given his belief in cross-species transmigration; see Tor 2017). The sophists appear to have been particularly concerned with the relationship with the way in which our social context and conditioning impact perspective (Barney 2006). The ways in which limitations of human nature and social conditioning form a starting point for epistemic inquiry is, of course, a major theme in Plato; the perspectivism question is one that he explicitly links to Heraclitus in the first definition of knowledge in the *Theaetetus* 151e-187a. (On the issue of perspective-constrained epistemic inquiry in Plato, see, among others, Collobert 2020, Gonzalez 2017; McCoy 2017; Van Riel 2017.) In the face of such an abundance of material, then, I chose to restrict my discussion to Heraclitus’ predecessors and contemporaries, simply because their preoccupation with perspective has the most immediate bearing for our understanding of Heraclitus’ approach to the issue.

least limits),¹⁰⁷ and by the spatial constraints on human experience (both because humans see things at “ground level,” and because they are unable to travel great distances at the speed of thinking¹⁰⁸). Their conception of the world is constrained to their immediate experience – often described in terms of a range of thoughts and beliefs dictated by what is encountered in a single day.¹⁰⁹ The gods, by contrast, have a much greater range of knowledge, given the spatial and temporal breadth of their experiences. Often, it is the “far-seeing” perspective from which the gods observe events (a product both of the heights from which they watch, and of their superior perceptual capacities) that is responsible for their superior understanding.¹¹⁰ Occasionally, as Curd argues, they may approach the condition of the “omnitemporal and omnipresent.”¹¹¹ The visual component is pervasive in the poets’ conception of this issue, and perhaps gives additional reason for using the word “perspective” to speak of Archaic Greek ideas about the epistemic significance of one’s nature and experience.¹¹² In Archaic poetry, the gods know things because of all that their nature permits them to “see.” While this conception of seeing actually incorporates all direct perceptual experience, sight provides an important touchstone for the folk epistemology of the poets, since it expresses the crucial distinction between direct experience (what I see) and hearsay (what I hear), with the former generally understood as epistemically

¹⁰⁷ See, e.g., *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 190-194.

¹⁰⁸ As the gods can. See, e.g., *Il.* 15.80-83.

¹⁰⁹ See, e.g., *Od.* 18.136-7; Archil. fr. 131.

¹¹⁰ E.g., *Il.* 8.51-52; Hes. *Op.* 267. See also Lesher 2009: 2; Lesher 1992: 92; Wians 2009: 184-185.

¹¹¹ Curd 2013: 220. While Curd makes this claim for divine beings in general, her evidence is restricted to the Muses.

¹¹² See also Halliwell 2019 for an exploration of the role of what the author calls “perspectivism” in the Homeric simile. The perspectivism that, as Halliwell shows, permeates Homer’s use of the extended simile is not primarily epistemic. It does, however, involve illustrations of interests, emotions, and thoughts which are rooted in different identities and experiences (and even in different natures, as when the perspective is implicitly that of a god) and which are also associated with a different physical and perceptual vantage.

superior to the latter.¹¹³ The connection between seeing and knowledge is even expressed in the language itself: the word οἶδα, “I know”, means “I have seen.”¹¹⁴

With Xenophanes – the first philosopher for whom we have a number of verbatim fragments, and perhaps Heraclitus’ most significant philosophical influence – we begin to see explicit reflection upon the epistemic implications of perspective, so that terms such as “perspectivism”¹¹⁵ and “relativity of viewpoint”¹¹⁶ or “epistemological relativism”¹¹⁷ are part of the vocabulary of mainstream commentary. In Xenophanes, we also have a tight connection between visual perception/representation, how one cognises the world, and one’s physical-perceptual context. For instance, he speaks of the fact that the visual representations of the gods offered by the Thracians and Ethiopians mirror their own physical traits (D13/B16), and claims that even oxen and horses, if they could draw, would draw gods with the bodies of oxen and horses (D14/B15). The tendency to conceive of the world in terms of one’s experience and nature is not, of course, limited to the visual sphere. Xenophanes also stresses the fact that the human notion of the god is of a being who acts as human beings act, and on the basis of the same kinds of desires and customs (e.g., D12/B14; D8/B11). This does not imply that Xenophanes (or Heraclitus) believes that truth is perspective-dependent. For Xenophanes, it is precisely the fact that “human cognition [is] essentially perspectival” and is “formed in response to specific

¹¹³ See, e.g., Herodotus’ repeated use of the distinction between, on the one hand, what he has seen for himself and knows to be the case and, on the other hand, what he has merely heard, and refrains from putting complete confidence conviction in (Hartog 1988: 261). He treats this distinction as a truism when he places it in the mouth of Candaules at Hdt. 1.8.2: “For it happens that the ears are less trustworthy to men than the eyes” (ὅτα γὰρ τυγχάνει ἀνθρώποισι ἔοντα ἀπιστότερα ὀφθαλμῶν). See also Wians 2009:184 on the hierarchy of epistemic reliability of experiences in Archaic folk wisdom, with sight at the top.

¹¹⁴ This model of knowledge, as we’ll see, is one that Heraclitus challenges. It is, however, a key part of the background framework with which he works.

¹¹⁵ Wilcox 1994: 112; Bryan 2012: 50.

¹¹⁶ Long 1992: 266.

¹¹⁷ Babut 1994: 227 (“le relativisme gnoséologique”).

circumstances or comparisons”¹¹⁸ that prevents us from obtaining knowledge of a god who is emphatically unlike anything within our limited context of experience.¹¹⁹ However, the concepts of “perspectivism” and “relativism” are useful here for two reasons. First, both Heraclitus and Xenophanes draw attention to the perspectivism that follows (unacceptably) from their contemporaries’ unreflective attitudes towards knowledge (for instance, their willingness to believe two contradictory things to be true at two different times from two different contexts, without recognizing the contradiction). Second, both Heraclitus and Xenophanes must motivate the view that truth is equally present in one’s own perspective and in an alien perspective – even though this move ultimately serves the purpose of undermining one’s own perspective, rather than supporting the alien perspective. Third, the idea that knowledge can be acquired by adopting, and seeking unity among, a diverse range of perspectives – including those of animals – is one that can be found among pre-Platonic philosophers, including the Pythagoreans¹²⁰ and Empedocles.¹²¹ On the view of the latter, there *is* truth to be found in each of these various perspectives, though it is a limited truth, and one often distorted by a tendency to overgeneralise on the basis of one’s immediate experiences.¹²² Even Xenophanes claims some epistemic authority on the basis of the extent of his experience – appealing not only to the length of his life but to the diversity of contexts from which he has experienced the world.¹²³

¹¹⁸ Bryan 2012: 50.

¹¹⁹ Reading D49/B34 with D16/B23; D17/B24; D18/B25; D19/B26.

¹²⁰ Pellò 2018 emphasizes the epistemic, rather than purificatory, significance of Pythagorean metempsychosis (and the connection between Pythagoras’ reputation for wisdom and the accounts of his many lives).

¹²¹ Tor 2017: 324-327.

¹²² Tor 2017: 324.

¹²³ As in, e.g., D66/B8. The epistemic importance of this kind of experience seems to be suggested by D53/B18 and perhaps D54/B22 and D52/B38. See Tor 2017: 104-154. The epistemic model that Xenophanes appeals to here is a traditional one, according to which knowledge is equal to the length and breadth of one’s experience. Yet Xenophanes goes beyond the traditional model, in that, for him, passive experience is insufficient. One must make comparisons between different experiences and contexts (e.g., D52/B18), taking a critical attitude towards new contexts of experience (as the people of Colophon fail to do in their encounter with the Lydians in D62/B3) and using those new contexts to reflect critically on one’s existing beliefs (e.g., D13/B16).

III: Key Terminology and Concepts

In this section, I define and explain some of the key terminology and concepts for this dissertation. The most important concepts discussed in this section, and the ones that will take up the greater part of the discussion, concern three different ways in which an object or structure might be said to be unified. I consider how Heraclitus critiques the view of unity as a feature either of independent categories (e.g., “water”, “gold”, “just things”) and of objects insofar as they belong to a single such category. I suggest that he presents a model in which unity is instead achieved by the relation between interdependent categories.

In what follows, I speak of “categories”, “types”, “qualities”, “relations” and “concepts”. I understand types, relations, and qualities as kinds of categories. I assume, however, a slightly atypical model of “types”, that includes qualities such as “red”, where such qualities are understood largely as substantives (“red things” or that curious entity “the red”) and even, in some cases, includes relations such as “different”, where these are understood largely as substantives (“different things”). This, in the context, seemed to me to offer the best approximation to a picture of early Greek thought, which made no sharp grammatical¹²⁴ or ontological distinction between ordinary nouns and substantive adjectives or verbs.¹²⁵ These initial definitions will bring us somewhat closer to the conceptual¹²⁶ framework within which Heraclitus works. Heraclitus, as I argue in Chapter 2, nudges the audience away from a conceptual model centred on immediately experienced individuals, in which types, qualities, and relations are understood through such individuals, and towards a model attentive to patterns and

¹²⁴ Adjectives were a very late “discovery” in ancient Greek, absent even from the systematic classifications of parts of speech offered by Hellenistic grammarians such as Aristarchus (Robins 1966: 4).

¹²⁵ See, e.g., McKirahan 2010: 45-46; Mourelatos 2008: 324-332.

¹²⁶ I use the term “concept” in a very broad sense in this dissertation. See my definition below.

conceptual relations – that is, relations that obtain among types, qualities and individuals and that structure the way in which we connect one concept to another.

The vocabulary of types, qualities and individuals is, of course, alien to Heraclitus – as, in fact, is much of the vocabulary that I use in this section. In particular, I’ve employed Aristotelian concepts such as “substance” and “essence” which are outside Heraclitus’ conceptual repertoire.¹²⁷ Even for Heraclitus, who, as I argue in Chapter 2, offers a considerably more abstract approach to concepts than his predecessors, qualities are more akin to “natures” than to “attributes”, with respect to the closeness of their bond to that in which they inhere or which they help to constitute.¹²⁸ However, in order to offer the clearest possible introduction to my main concepts, I’ve chosen in this section to employ a philosophically convenient, but historically imprecise terminology. Over the course of the next two chapters, I will qualify this terminology as I re-introduce the complexities of the historical context and apply the relevant concepts to Heraclitus.

I understand the term “concept” to denote a sign (usually a word) or set of overlapping signs that do not simply pick out a particular category – that is, a type, relation or quality – but

¹²⁷ Moravcsik 1991: 558, for instance, is unequivocal on this point, arguing that the conception of an attribute was not conceptually available to Heraclitus. In other words, Heraclitus was not operating with a clear conceptual distinction between the changing qualities or states of a thing and that which underlies them (Dilcher 2013: 265 observes). Kahn 1979: 279 similarly rejects, as tainted by Aristotelian presuppositions, the substratum-based interpretation of changes between opposites. The notion of a “substratum” in its most general form, is probably implicit in Archaic Greek philosophy, but requires that we adapt the Aristotelian model before we can arrive at it. Most importantly, in order to apply this concept to early Greek thought, we probably need to give up on any clear distinction between form and matter (and even between substance and attribute; on this difficult issue, see Chapter 3, section I). For Anaximenes, for instance, the equation of air with the material substrate requires us to think of the material substrate in a manner very different from the one that Aristotle offers at *Metaphysics Z*, since Anaximenes’ air possesses definite characteristics and nature. This nature also belongs to those things such as rocks or fire, that arise from condensation and rarefaction, so that air is not merely what they are made of, but also what they are (in other words, the nature of a rock *is* condensed air). Even Anaximander’s Apeiron is probably not indefinite in the sense of Aristotle’s material substratum, since it seems to include all the opposites mixed or dissolved together, rather than being truly without characteristics (see, e.g., Heidel 1906: 22-23, who notes that this vision is perhaps akin to the “theogonic conception of a Chaos”).

¹²⁸ Compare Mourelatos 2008: 326-327 on the lack of a clear distinction in this period between the “is” of identification and the “is” of attribution.

structure that category more specifically through the organizing principle of a conceptual domain.¹²⁹ A conceptual domain implies a set of related signs and areas of pragmatic experience onto which those signs map; it also, as Greeno notes, implies relationships between the concepts within that domain, prescribing rules for determining “where [the concepts] are in relation to one another, how to find them, and how to move about from one concept to another.”¹³⁰ In other words, concepts differ from categories not only in having a more robust cognitive component (while possessing the same ontological implications as categories), but also in the degree to which they imply specific kinds of connections to other concepts and categories. These connections, in turn, imply (but also are implied by) specific approaches to inference. As I highlight in Chapter 2, Heraclitus’ primary divergence from the “traditional Archaic” approach to concepts lies not in the way in which he represents sets of corresponding linguistic and pragmatic items, but – more strikingly – in the way he approaches the “rules” prescribed for interactions among those items. More specifically, as I show in Chapter 2, Heraclitus’ concern with these “rules of interactions” is visible in his interest in conceptual relations.

In the present section, I also refer to “identity.” As I apply this term to individual objects, it refers to the set of characteristics which render a given thing: (1) numerically distinct from other things (that is, it is an individual); (2) self-consistent or unified in character (in other words, its characteristics locate it within a single, unified category or within a unified composite of interdependent categories). I also use the term “identity” in speaking of relations among categories or concepts. The term “identity,” understood as a conceptual relation, involves the

¹²⁹ Caravita & Halldén 1994: 98.

¹³⁰ Greeno 1991: 177. The idea of conceptual domain partially overlaps with the account of Cornford 1957: 45 of a “framework of conception” that dictates the kinds of intellectual moves that a mind possessing such a framework can make.

relation of a thing to itself.¹³¹ Specifically, identity as a conceptual relation involves sameness in nature (in the case of categories) or number (in the case of objects). Both as applied to objects, and as applied to relations among objects or categories, identity implies alterity. This is not simply because identity and alterity, like all opposites, are conceptually interdependent. Rather, in the former case, an object *x* acquires its identity, in part, through differentiation from what is not-*x*, since we must be able to recognize *x* as distinct from other things. In the latter case, the conceptual relation of identity implies alterity simply because it is a relation – the fact of a self-relation implies that sameness in number or nature must co-exist with some kind of conceptual distinction.

Finally, in what follows, I use the terms “unity-in-plurality”, “unity-without-plurality”, and “plurality-in-unity”. By “unity-in-plurality”, I mean the relation between distinct but interdependent parts that together create an organic whole.¹³² In the case of Heraclitus’ unity-in-plurality, this is not simply a unity that incorporates heterogeneous elements, but one in which the opposition and tension among those elements is a key feature. By “unity-without-plurality”, I mean a unity that is wholly without internal distinctions (including conceptual distinctions) – that is, a unity in which neither plurality nor (consequently) the composition of parts is present. While it is unity-in-plurality that the logos articulates, it does so, as I argue in Chapter 4, in order to point the audience towards an understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality. In addition, as I discuss in Chapter 5, since such an understanding cannot, strictly, be conceptualized, Heraclitus uses expressions of unity-in-plurality in order to point his audience towards unity-

¹³¹ Harte 2002: 3.

¹³² Compare, for instance, the characteristics connected to a whole in the opening argument of the third deduction of Plato’s *Parmenides*. What is whole is “some one thing” (ἐνός τινος), which is “complete” (τέλειον) and comes together out of multiple parts (157d-e; see also Harte 2002: 124-127).

without-plurality.¹³³ Both unity-in-plurality and unity-without-plurality stand in contrast to the notion of plurality-in-unity. The chief distinction between unity-in-plurality and plurality-in-unity is that, on the former model, the unity of both tokens and types arises through the interdependent relationship among types (and among their tokens), while on the latter model, the types exist as unities which are independent of one another, and impart a consistent character to each of their tokens (i.e. every numerically-distinct token of the same type is, in some sense, the “same” as every other token of that type).¹³⁴ This means that, on the unity-in-plurality model, both types and tokens are interdependent to a much greater degree than on the plurality-in-unity model. The most familiar example of this aspect of unity-in-plurality is the organic body.¹³⁵ The organs of a given body are interdependent, in the sense that each organ belongs to the distinct categories of heart, lung, liver, etc. only insofar as each exists in a dynamic relationship with the others. Similarly, the identification of a given set of tissues, as present in humans, giraffes, and snakes, as belonging to the category “liver,” depends on those tissues manifesting the same kind

¹³³ The notion that unity-in-plurality (or wholeness) might serve to conceptualize unity-without-plurality seems to be implicit in the third deduction of Plato’s *Parmenides*, where the many parts that compose a whole are said both to participate in the One and to be other than the One (157b7-c8). Harte argues that this contrast/connection between unity and unity-without-plurality should be understood as the distinction between a unified whole made of parts, on the one hand, and a “mereological atom” or unity-without-parts, on the other (Harte 2002: 131). See also Plotinus’ conception of the “composite dualistic synthesis of the one-many” as a kind of image of the One (Nikulin 1998: 337). Plotinus may, in fact, have seen the ἐν πάντα of Heraclitus’ logos (D46/B50) as serving a similar purpose (Stamatellos 2012: 44-48).

¹³⁴ The use of plurality-in-unity in Archaic Greek thought is actually more complex than this, involving a form of identification between a particular, or a set of particulars, and the category from which they derive their character and their unity. For instance, Zeus acts as an image-based category that allows the sky with which he is identified to be conceptualized. In this aspect, he characterizes and expresses the unity of the various skies we experience in the changes of weather and time of day (Wilson 2017: 419, 426). See pp. 104-105, for a discussion of the issues.

¹³⁵ I do not mean to imply that Heraclitus uses the image of the living body, though I am sympathetic to the view of those of Heraclitus’ interpreters and imitators (in particular, Cleanthes and the author of *On Regimen*) who articulated his unity-in-plurality using the model of the organic body (see Long 2001: 53 and Kouloumenos 2018: 55-56, 53-54 on the features of these comparisons that would recommend them to interpreters of Heraclitus). Heraclitus’ fire is his primary image of the ordered whole (i.e., κόσμος) of unity-in-plurality, and he invests this fire with the qualities of a living thing – for instance, by calling it “everliving” (ἀεὶζῶον) and by giving it agency (e.g., D84/B66, D82/B64). However, this image of fire-as-organic-body differs from the familiar use of the organic body as a model of unity-in-plurality in one crucial feature. In Heraclitus’ hands, the organic body that is the cosmic fire is united in and through conflict. This is fundamental to his model of unity-in-plurality – since for Heraclitus, unity-in-plurality is embodied in the unity of opposites.

of dynamic relation to other tissues within the different kinds of organisms. The corollary of the dependence of each part upon the whole system is the dependence of the whole upon the parts: the organism's survival depends upon this dynamic relationship among sets of tissues – that is, if the organism loses any of these essential organs, it ceases to be this specific organic whole (in other words, it loses its identity). At the same time, it ceases to belong to a particular category or type, such as human being or snake.¹³⁶

The key difference between identity understood in accordance with plurality-in-unity and identity understood in accordance with unity-in-plurality is that, in the former case, unity involves the presence of an essential sameness that makes something what it is – both as an individual “thing” (that is, a discrete, unified, self-identical being), and, at the same time, as a thing of a particular type (that is, an individual that possesses a particular generic nature, such as the nature “human”). This sameness-based essence provides the boundaries that differentiate a given thing from another, making it “something and not something else.”¹³⁷ It achieves this by providing a given individual with a characteristic mode of unity which renders it numerically distinct from other individuals, while being shared with other individuals of the same type (such that these individuals, while numerically distinct, together comprise another sort of unity, in the sense that they possess the same nature).¹³⁸ Thus, on the plurality-in-unity model, unity involves an internal sameness of nature within any given category, defined against an external alterity (along with the plurality in the form of the many numerically distinct members of the category). This allows for categories to be imagined as relatively static and independent of other categories.

¹³⁶ This latter observation may seem to imply that this example of unity-in-plurality can ultimately be reduced to plurality-in-unity. However, the different categories of organism – human, snake, giraffe – themselves depend upon an understanding of organic wholeness. In other words, the characterization of organic wholeness in each creature depends, conceptually, on how that creature's relation to other creatures is understood. This doesn't necessarily imply a systematic biological taxonomy – it simply requires a framework of thought that makes it possible to make decisions about whether some particular thing is alive (or what we would call a “living organism”) or not.

¹³⁷ Halper 2005: xxiv.

¹³⁸ Halper 2005: xxi.

On the unity-in-plurality model, however, the unity and sameness in nature of an individual or type depends upon internal alterity in nature – both the sameness and the difference are recognized as part of the internal structure that gives a thing its identity. As I argue in Chapter 2, Heraclitus’ logos, in accordance with unity-in-plurality, draws the audience’s attention to the impossibility of grasping a single category (or individual) in isolation, focusing, instead, upon the relationship among categories – differences and oppositions, similarities and identities. More specifically, it shifts attention to conceptual relations, since it foregrounds these relations *as* relations, as patterns essential to the natures of things (as conceived by human thought). This also allows him to draw attention to the fundamental role played by sameness and difference in categories and in thought – and, more specifically, in the logos – as the two conceptual relations that allow us to order our thought and perception in accordance with the distinctions between things (i.e., differences) and connections (i.e., sameness), permitting us to see things as in one sense unified (through some kind of commonality or sameness) and in one sense plural (through the presence of distinctions or differences).¹³⁹

In the above, I have to some extent run together different kinds of dualities. It will be useful to clarify briefly both how I use terms such as “duality”, “opposition”, “contrary” and “contradictory” and how I understand these concepts to function within Heraclitus’ thought. Duality, as I’ve suggested above, is rooted in the primary set of opposites “sameness” and “difference,” which, at its most rudimentary, takes the form of the pair of “opposites” “this” and “not-this.”¹⁴⁰ This model of “opposition” seems the most appropriate one for Heraclitus, whose

¹³⁹ For the role of sameness and difference in the logos, see pp. 67-68, 85-87, and 116-124 below.

¹⁴⁰ Mourelatos 2008: 326-329 argues that Parmenides’ arguments against what-is-not takes “not-X” as encompassing a far broader range of phenomena than our usual use of “not-X.” For us, the phrase “not blue”, for instance, would normally mean “not blue but some other colour”, while the phrase “not Tom” would mean “not Tom but some other man.” The notion of the more rudimentary pair of contradictories “this” and “not-this”, where “this” is an individual, and “not this” is everything that is not this individual maps onto the starting point of discrimination, where we pick an individual out of a perceptual field as an object of desire or fear. Mourelatos

paradoxes and instances of the unity of opposites encompass a wide variety of relations, ranging from contrariety (e.g., up and down) to contradiction (e.g., wholes and not-wholes) to physical incompatibility (e.g., wet and dry) to cultural or evaluative polarity (e.g., gold and refuse) to symbolic or associative conflict (e.g., bow and lyre). On my interpretation, developed at length in Chapter 2, the crucial commonality that renders all these sorts of relations as “oppositions” for Heraclitus is that they appear as both conflicting and yet interdependent. In some cases, they might appear this way only under Heraclitus’ own description – that is, within the context that the fragment evokes – though Heraclitus also tends to appeal to his audience’s intuitive sense of the terms as opposites, meaning that the terms involved are usually recognizable as physically incompatible, culturally polar, or semantically conflictual. In this thesis, I will occasionally differentiate between various kinds of dualities. It is far from clear that Heraclitus made such distinctions – or, to the extent that he did, that he believed it to be a significant one.¹⁴¹ However, this distinction can be a necessary one for the modern interpreter, if only for the purposes of addressing the secondary literature. When I speak of contradictory terms, I follow the definition from classical logic: two terms are contradictory if: (1) both terms cannot apply in the same case

perhaps over-simplifies Parmenides’ argument by limiting his use of negation exclusively to this more rudimentary kind, but he brings out an important feature of Archaic Greek conceptualization of “sameness” and “difference” – and one that continues to be important for Heraclitus. Just as, in the development from perceptual to perceptual-conceptual discrimination, there is a continuum between the conflict between “x” and “not-x” where x picks out some particular individual, and the conflict between “x” and “not-x” where x picks up some particular type of individual, so there is a continuum between a model of opposition rooted in simple difference (where the opposition between “x” and “not-x” is simply the opposition between things that are not strictly identical) and a model of opposition rooted in logical contrariety. This becomes important when we consider how Heraclitus conceives of and illustrates sameness and difference. His recognition of their centrality, for all its relative sophistication, did not involve his formulating the conceptual distinction between the sameness of identity and the sameness of similarity. A clear-cut distinction of the kind introduced by Aristotle was unlikely to have been conceptually available to any Presocratic thinker. What we do have, starting with Heraclitus and Parmenides, is a recognition of the close connection between unity and difference. For Parmenides, and ultimately for Heraclitus, sameness in the sense of what is a (true) unity excludes difference. Yet Heraclitus (and likely Parmenides as well) also recognizes that our *conceptualization* (i.e., thinking “as mortals”, in language) of sameness and unity depends upon difference.

¹⁴¹ See, e.g., Barnes 1979: 80; Marcovich 1967: 108.

or to the same thing; and (2) one of the two terms must apply to each case or each thing.¹⁴² (In applying the definition to Heraclitus, it's necessary to add a qualifier such as "it *appears* that both terms cannot apply," etc., since not only do his paradoxes challenge the certainty that these contradictories are incompatible, they even occasionally allow for doubt about whether they are exhaustive of the field of possibilities.) Polar terms, on the other hand, encompass a broader range of relations than their classical logical counterpart, contraries. Like classic contrary terms, polar terms represent "extremes" of some kind, but unlike classic contraries they may not represent opposite ends of a continuum.¹⁴³ Often, their polarity depends upon traditional usage, and/or upon the specific manner of the evocation. For instance, "left" and "right" are complementary polar terms derived from epic poetry, where they are not only opposed to one another, but also act to express the field of possibilities (e.g., "from the left and from the right"); "gold" and "refuse" appear as evaluative polar terms in D79/B9, expressing traditional ideas (as well as physiological realities). The complementarity of such terms in certain contexts does not diminish the polarity of their cultural associations (as indicated, for instance, by the marked opposition between the associations of "left" and "right" in the context of ornithomancy in early epic). For this reason, Heraclitus can easily draw out the conflictual element in such oppositions – especially when he attributes them to one and the same object.

For Heraclitus, I'll suggest, the relations of sameness and difference play an essential role in unity-in-plurality,¹⁴⁴ which, for him, takes the form of the unity of opposites. The latter involves an expression of the idea that neither concepts nor that to which they are applied can function or be grasped without their opposites. These interdependent yet in some sense mutually

¹⁴² Parry & Hacker 1991: 216.

¹⁴³ Parry & Hacker 1991: 216.

¹⁴⁴ For the centrality of opposites "sameness" and "difference" in Heraclitus, see also, e.g., Moravcsik 1991: 560-561.

exclusive opposites share the same limited field or “resources” (as day, for instance, shares the same physical space with night, and cold exists in the same object as warmth). For this reason, they are necessarily in conflict with one another; the only possible resolution of this conflict would seem to involve a single opposite permanently seizing this common, limited ground (as if, for instance, day suddenly ceased to give way to night). Such a resolution, however, would not only mean the extinction of the permanently defeated opposite, but, given the interdependence of opposites, the extinction of the permanently victorious opposite as well.¹⁴⁵ The sameness of opposites such as the route upwards and the route downwards (D51/B60) is such that we cannot encounter either without reference to the other, and it is only together that the two constitute something that can be said to possess an identity, or to be “the same” as itself. Yet, as noted above, this sameness is possible only because of the presence of opposition within that thing – that is, the fact that it contains internal differences and distinctions.¹⁴⁶

At the same time, because we understand these opposites through their relation to other opposites, the unity of individual pairs of opposites leads towards a view of a complex whole that goes beyond the relation between any particular pair.¹⁴⁷ The dynamic interweaving of widely differing pairs of opposites is given perhaps its most global and direct expression in D48/B67. The fragment runs: “The god is day night summer winter war peace satiety hunger. It changes

¹⁴⁵ This is indicated not only by Heraclitus’ explicit statements concerning war, which contain claims such as “all things come to be in strife and necessity” (πάντα κατ’ ἔριν χρεών) in D63/B80, but also by his insistence that the opposites are “one” (e.g., day and night in D25a/B57) or “one and the same” (e.g., up and down in D51/B60). For further discussion of the role of “war” in Heraclitus and its intimate connection with the unity of opposites, see pp. 277-279 below.

¹⁴⁶ D65b/B12 is perhaps the most frequently cited example of this feature of Heraclitus, often seen as an expression of the idea that the persistence and identity of a river depends upon the fact that it is constituted by continually changing waters (so, e.g., Wiggins 1982: 24-26; Barnes 1979: 77-78; Moravcsik 1991: 561). In this fragment, the expression of the nature of a river is, in fact, framed around the opposed terms “same” (αὐτός) and “different” (ἕτερος). See pp. 289-292 below for a discussion of this fragment.

¹⁴⁷ For discussion of the relation between the unity of opposites and unity-in-plurality, see pp. 233-236 below.

just as [fire?], when mixed with spices, is named according to the pleasure of each one.”¹⁴⁸ As commentators frequently observe (and in accord with the gloss offered by Hippolytus, our source for this fragment) the variety of the oppositions that Heraclitus runs together in this fragment suggests that he means to refer to all the opposites.¹⁴⁹ On the one hand, these opposites are taken from widely varying spheres, with two of the pairs (“day night summer winter”) taken from the sphere of cosmic or natural changes, and the other two pairs (“war peace satiety hunger”) taken from sphere of social or human changes. On the other hand, their juxtaposition invites us to seek the links between them despite their divergent spheres. Day and night are intimately connected with winter and summer, not just because both are temporal divisions, but because the limit that defines and distinguishes day from night is determined by the seasons, which alter the time of the sun’s rising and setting, while the line between winter and summer is determined by the heliacal rising and setting of particular stars (thus, by both the diurnal and nocturnal heavenly bodies). Hunger and satiety (or, on an alternative translation, famine and surfeit) are, similarly, connected to these natural cycles, not only because these seem to be words by which Heraclitus described the fire of the cosmos (D88/B65), but because they are tied to the natural cycle and to the abundance or scarcity of food at different times of year.¹⁵⁰ In fact, there is reason to think that hunger and satiety helped to structure how Heraclitus’ audience would have thought of winter and summer. For an Archaic Greek – even one well enough educated to have been exposed to the astronomical calculations or speculation likely engaged in by the Milesians – the concepts of winter and summer, and day and night, were shaped in important ways by the common “almanac” *Works and Days*, in which the seasons, and the work belonging to them, are described

¹⁴⁸ ὁ θεὸς ἡμέρη εὐθρόνη χειμῶν θέρος πόλεμος εἰρήνη κόρος λιμός· ἀλλοιοῦται δὲ ὅκωσπερ <πῦρ> ὀκόταν συμμιγῇ θυώμασιν ὀνομάζεται καθ’ ἡδονὴν ἐκάστου. I discuss the details of this fragment’s interpretation, and address some of the difficulties of text and translation on pp. 194-197 below.

¹⁴⁹ See, e.g., Robinson 1987: 128; Marcovich 1967: 415; Kirk 1962: 185.

¹⁵⁰ Kirk 1967: 186.

throughout in terms of abundance or scarcity. War, like hunger and satiety, appears elsewhere in Heraclitus as a principle of the cosmic order (D63/B80; D64/B53), yet even in their “everyday” meaning, war and peace are intimately tied to the natural order. This is because the summer – or, more specifically, the time between the ploughing and the reaping of fields – was also the time of invasions and battles.¹⁵¹ In the Archaic period, such invasions were mostly small-scale raids aimed at seizing property and land from neighbouring cities¹⁵² – and might, in this sense, thought to be expressions of “satiety and hunger” (or, more precisely, abundance and need/greed). Heraclitus brings out these different connections through a stark use of asyndeton, running together the four pairs of opposites in such a way as to demand that we imagine the god’s transformation not merely as a change between one term and its opposite, but between and among all the other, interconnected opposites with which it is juxtaposed.¹⁵³

Heraclitus, then, challenges the model of plurality-in-unity, questioning the idea of individuals, and individual categories, as independent unities, and illustrating the ways in which they achieve their character and meaning from a dynamic interweaving of categories. As I argue in Chapter 2, both the challenge to plurality-in-unity and the redirection of the audience’s thinking towards unity-in-plurality depend upon the action of the logos.

Again, the correspondence between, for instance, contemporary approaches to types and tokens, on the one hand, and the Archaic approach to categories and individuals, on the other, is imperfect. For this reason, the above description of the nature of unity-in-plurality and plurality-in-unity should be taken as provisional only. At the end of Chapter 2, section I, I address the

¹⁵¹ Lavelle 2019: 64.

¹⁵² Lavelle 2019: 64.

¹⁵³ See, however, Kahn 1979: 279, who argues that we must see the alteration in question as involving the change from one opposite to another, and Kirk 1962: 199 who argues that the changes in question are only between different pairs of opposites. In broad outline, however, the argument given above is compatible with the views of Kirk and Kahn, both of whom understand this fragment as an expression of the interconnections between all the opposites.

nature of Archaic conceptual thought, discuss the structure of plurality-in-unity as it applies to such thought, and explore the innovations Heraclitus brings to it through his logos-based model of unity-in-plurality.

Before turning to this stricter historical view, there are two further sets of terms that it will be useful to define at the outset, since they appear throughout this thesis. The first set of terms is “reality”, “cosmos” and “world”. “Reality” serves, in this thesis, as an overarching term that can apply to what exists as encountered from within different vantages and conceptual structures. That is, while I will argue that there is a sense in which reality as such is not encountered except from the perspectiveless “vantage” that understands reality as unity-without-plurality, other vantages still involve the assumption that what one encounters and organizes in various ways is reality (in the sense of “things as they really are”). For this reason, I’ve chosen to use the word “reality” to refer to what an agent attempts to grasp or believes that he knows, even where his mode of belief or his epistemic strategies rule out any genuine understanding of reality. “Cosmos”, similarly, refers to any structured or organized model of the whole of reality or the universe (excepting unity-without-plurality, which, since it is without parts, cannot be “structured” or “organized”). This definition of “cosmos” does not pretend to map onto the late Archaic meanings of κόσμος, which are primarily (though not exclusively) concerned with organized configurations of items on a much smaller scale.¹⁵⁴ I use the word “world” in a broader sense than “cosmos”, for any context or set of phenomena making up the domain to which pertains the thought of a species, group, or even an individual, and which their conceptual framework serves to organize. In some cases, that sphere may include the whole of reality (as

¹⁵⁴ Nor, for that matter, does it map onto later uses of κόσμος, among which would be included the meaning, “world” in the broad sense in which I use the latter here.

they construe “reality” from their vantage) – in these cases, “world” simply means “cosmos.” In other cases, the sphere of thought may be more limited. I’ve defined “world” and “cosmos” separately in this way to allow for the possibility of a mode of thought which has little or no interest in, and a limited capacity to cognize, the notion of reality-as-a-whole.

The final “set” of terms is, in fact, just one term that requires some explanation, since it serves multiple functions within the text. This is the word “experience” and its adjectival form “experiential”. The term is used from three different angles in the text. In order to avoid any confusion as I use this word in different contexts, I’ve labelled these different usages experience¹, experience², and experience³. Experience¹ is the traditional Archaic Greek idea of experience – specifically, something which one has undergone in a direct perceptual and physical level. I will also use experience¹ to capture our everyday, intuitive sense of the word “experience”, since the Archaic Greek concept of experience maps fairly well onto this word, in denoting both the idea of what one has encountered, undergone, been acquainted with, and the idea of what one has become seasoned in, perhaps implying the development of some form of know-how. Experience² is Heraclitus’ own, paradoxical idea of “experience”. I’ll explain Heraclitus’ “experience paradoxes” in the coming chapter, but in outline, Heraclitus’ notion of experience includes a high degree of reflection upon what one takes in on a perceptual and even an intellectual level (including, for instance, one’s direct encounters with and participation in discourse). Experience³ is the term I use to speak of an audience’s mode of thinking or engaging with discourse or phenomena, where this is understood as including all the various aspects of a person that impact the cognitive process – perceptual/physiological, emotional, intellectual, etc. This usage overlaps with experience¹ to some degree (and in this sense, is also very close to our everyday use of the term), except the fact that it serves as the term of contrast with

abstract/intellectual/conceptual thought and engagement (or rather, it marks the re-engagement with the more immediate perceptual-physical elements of experience¹ that the reflective aims of experience² initially seeks to dampen or attenuate). I've resorted to the awkward solution of stipulating three different usages of "experience", rather than choosing a different term, because these three usages are not separate from another – rather, experience² responds to, critiques and incorporates experience¹, while experience³ emerges as part of my interpretation of experience¹ and experience². More specifically, Heraclitus' paradoxes around the idea of experience work because they are genuinely engaged with the various facets of the concept of experience¹, in its traditional formulation, and with questions concerning what it means to encounter things and to be seasoned in them. Similarly, the word "experience³" draws out the overlap with experience¹ (from which it differs primarily in the sense that it is consciously undertaken and involves a reflective return to experience¹'s emphasis on immediate perceptual-physical elements, after the movement away from these in experience²).

Conclusion

The study of Heraclitus presents an array of problems and controversies that arise even before one has made any claims as to his philosophical positions. Many of these problems are philological issues concerning the verbatim fragments. As I've indicated, this dissertation will be somewhat limited in offering solutions to most of these problems – though I hope that I've offered a plausible account of how I have navigated them, and my reasons for taking this approach. A second problem concerns the doxographies. I've argued for a very cautious approach here, noting the range of contradictory positions that the doxographers can support, and suggesting that the choice between those positions finally depends upon the analysis of the

fragments themselves. As will by now be clear, my own methodological starting-point rules out dependence upon the doxographies for another reason – I take the “rhetorical features” of Heraclitus’ sayings to be an integral part of their meaning. That is, my approach to the sayings assumes that the interpretation of Heraclitus’ philosophy requires close consideration of both his mode of expression, and the kind of impact he might have expected it to have on his audience. I discussed this approach from two different angles. First, the sayings are evidently grounded in a literary tradition which they invoke with both originality and virtuosity, and which would have been a significant factor in the impact that they had on the audience. These facts, I suggested, support the view that the ambiguities and multiple interpretations invited by Heraclitus’ sayings are not only a deliberate strategy, but, as in their literary models, constitute an essential part of how the sayings function as communications. Second, Heraclitus lived and worked within an oral culture – specifically, a culture where the written word supported, rather than supplanted, traditional oral conventions and practices. This contributed to a model in which linguistic compositions were understood as performances, and, more precisely, as experiences to be undergone by the audience. Understanding Heraclitus’ work from this vantage, the mode of expression becomes all the more significant, since it constitutes a key part of the experience that the composition generates.

A final set of problems arises from the need to resort to key terms that do not map onto a conceptual terminology used by Heraclitus himself. In this chapter, I outlined my methodology for introducing and applying conceptual terms. I also discussed the question of anachronism. I looked at my basic strategies for establishing the likely parameters of Heraclitus’ conceptual framework, and I considered the conceptual scope of this dissertation. On the one hand, I have attempted, in this dissertation, to avoid the application of anachronistic concepts and conceptual

frameworks. On the other hand, I have not attempted to defend Heraclitus against objections that might themselves arise through the application of anachronistic concepts and frameworks. I considered in detail the concepts of “perspective” and “perspectivism” and argued that these terms can be applied to a late Archaic philosopher without anachronism. Finally, I provided initial definitions of the other key terms for this dissertation, while illustrating my own methodology for dealing with “alien” conceptual terms. Some of these definitions, as I noted, employed an anachronistic conceptual framework – which, however, allowed me to provide an initial “snapshot” for the reader with greater clarity and concision. In the next chapter, I offer a more nuanced understanding of the application of these terms to the conceptual thought of Heraclitus’ time, and of their significance for the reorientation involved in logos-grounded thinking.

Chapter Two: Heraclitus' Logos

Introduction

In this chapter, I argue that Heraclitus' logos is an epistemic method that leads human beings towards an understanding of the nature of reality by drawing upon the kinds of conceptual relationships implicit in our use of *logoi* or discourses – where the latter concept, in Heraclitus' usage, encompasses much of what humans create through the medium of language, including stories, numerical reckonings, traditional maxims and riddles, and explanations. The Heraclitean logos incorporates the tools of familiar human speech, using these in a way that draws attention to the connections and paradoxes within and between various kinds of human discourses – along with the phenomena that those discourses reflect and with which they are bound up. In this way, the logos allows us to comprehend (ξυνίημι) what is implicit in what we say and experience¹, and to escape the private, idiosyncratic perspective, by “bringing together” (ξυνίημι) the *logoi* in such a way as to conceptualize reality as a unity of simultaneously conflicting and interdependent parts. More specifically, it invites a particular orientation towards thought and perception by highlighting the kinds of connections that discourse at once makes possible and depends upon. Such an orientation towards discursive connections enables the audience to see the world as an interrelated unity rooted in the essential conceptual relations of sameness and difference.

This implies that the logos is intimately bound up with the *logoi* it brings together – even those of the poets and philosophers whom Heraclitus excoriates – since the logos is already implicit in *logoi*, requiring only the right kind of orientation to the nature of discursive connections. At the same time, the logos can be identified neither with any particular discourse –

even Heraclitus' own – nor even with the tools of discourse and discursive connections in general. This is because the logos also implies an active use of these tools that, in foregrounding these connections and their implications, reveals the structure of the universe as apprehended by a mind that thinks and perceives accurately from the vantage of the shared or “common” (human) nature. Some of the paradoxicality of Heraclitus' statements concerning the logos can, I argue, be understood in terms of the fact that the logos involves a play between three key elements: (1) an actual discourse, or actual discourses, to which an audience can listen and with which they can engage; (2) a reflective orientation towards both discourse and other phenomena, guided by the specific nature of discursive connections and by the shared or “common” nature of human thought as structured by these connections; and, implicitly (3) the view of reality resulting from such an orientation. I express these elements, together, by interpreting the logos as “relation in discourse”, understood as both discursive connections and the relation that they reflect and reveal. I argue that the specific relation revealed by the logos is bringing-together-in-conflict.¹⁵⁵ Since these discursive relations belong, not simply to language, but to things as they are “by nature” (or, more specifically, to the way in which human beings, by their own nature, cognize things¹⁵⁶), this bringing-together-in-conflict acts as an expression of human beings' “common” conception of the nature of reality – to which, however, most humans, with their tendency to make inconsistent, idiosyncratic connections, remain generally oblivious.

¹⁵⁵ The term “bringing-together-in-conflict” is one I've adopted somewhat reluctantly, since it is, essentially, a much clunkier term for the unity of opposites (widely accepted as the primary relation revealed by the logos). The difference between the two terminologies is largely one of emphasis. By replacing the term “opposite” with “conflict”, I allow for the much larger range of “experiential oppositions” that can be evoked in an audience on the level of psychological response, rather than on the level of the strictly conceptual (e.g., typically incompatible poetic techniques or associations). Similarly, the phrase “bringing together” helps to mark the fact that the unity of opposites is not simply a static relation, but is also a sustained, active part of Heraclitus' technique. Finally, the phrase “bringing together” echoes Heraclitus' term for comprehension (ξυνίημι), thus signalling the primary goal of the logos. I will use the term “unity of opposites” as shorthand wherever this is possible without loss of clarity.

¹⁵⁶ See discussion of this aspect of D1/B1 at p. 253 below.

I begin, in section I, with a very brief look at Heraclitus' epistemic vocabulary. I examine the centrality of the term "logos" in Heraclitus' fragments concerning epistemology, note some of the general characteristics of *logoi* highlighted by these fragments, and consider the range of meanings for "logos" active within the Archaic period. I examine two overlapping sets of meanings applicable to the term during this period – specifically, those involving quantities and magnitudes, and those involving speech. I argue that Heraclitus' logos takes in both sets of meanings, while, at the same time, expressing what they have in common. Specifically, I suggest that the logos reflects the notion of discourse used to place things in an ordered relation with one another. I present a view of the logos as an orientation towards discourse that emphasizes the role of "conceptual relations" in the common structure of human thought. I show how Heraclitus contrasts this approach with the private pseudo-thought of those who do not attend to the logos. I show how this model of the logos, and the view of reality it promotes, is related to the approach to "conceptual"¹⁵⁷ thought we might expect to find in a late 6th century audience. In section II, I examine how Heraclitus' fragments concerning the epistemic significance of the senses support this interpretation of his logos. Finally, I look at how this interpretation of the logos is bound up with notions of unity and plurality, and thus, to a particular way of conceiving reality in both its unity and its plurality.

I: The Logos, Comprehension, and Words for Knowing

In this section, I offer and justify an account of the function and character of Heraclitus' logos. Building on the work of J.H. Lesher, I argue that we can obtain crucial insights into the nature of Heraclitus' logos through his use of the verb *ξυνίημι*, or "comprehend". I claim that for Heraclitus, the logos involves an awareness of the juxtaposition and interweaving of sameness

¹⁵⁷ I use the term "concepts" and "conceptual" in accordance with the stipulative definition offered on pp. 54-56.

and difference,¹⁵⁸ and that this awareness arises from the attempt to make sense of the world through the consistent, relatively abstract use of conceptual relations, rather than through an idiosyncratic use of physical-perceptual connections grounded in our encounters with individual particulars. This juxtaposition, in turn, supports the transition away from a view of reality as plurality-in-unity, and towards a view of reality as unity-in-plurality.

I begin this section with a brief discussion of Heraclitus' epistemic vocabulary, followed by a sustained examination of the word "logos", its connections to the concept of comprehending or "bringing together" (ζυνίημι), and the importance, for Heraclitus, of moving away from a model of comprehension preoccupied with physical-perceptual connections and towards a model that emphasizes conceptual relations. Next, I consider the nature of concepts within the framework of Archaic Greek thought, and the kinds of developments and challenges that Heraclitus offers within such a framework. In doing so, I provide an account of the link between, on the one hand, the model of comprehension as rooted in conceptual relations, and a view of the world as organized through unity-in-plurality, and, on the other hand, a model of comprehension rooted in physical-perceptual connections, and a view of the world as organized through plurality-in-unity. At the same time, I reframe these concepts so as to show the nature of their application within Archaic Greek thought.

In this thesis, I argue that Heraclitus' epistemology is concerned with two connected epistemic accomplishments: first, the achievement of a logos-grounded orientation which organizes its

¹⁵⁸ I use the terms "sameness" and "difference" for the sake of simplicity and clarity. "What is the same" and "what is different" might be somewhat more appropriate terminology, since they do not imply some kind of clear-cut differentiation between these concepts and the objects of which they create a patterned interwoven network. Similarly, while Heraclitus' insight in highlighting the unity of opposites involves a recognition of the interweaving of the relations of sameness and difference, he lacked much of the conceptual language to describe this interweaving in the same schematic manner as his 21st century interpreters.

world, in accordance with the common nature of human thought and discourse, as unity-in-plurality; second, the achievement of a genuine understanding of the nature of reality as unity-without-plurality. These two main epistemic accomplishments can be loosely mapped onto sets of terms within his epistemic vocabulary.¹⁵⁹ The most significant distinction within this mapping is between the aspect of Heraclitus' epistemology concerned with "comprehension" and "recognition" and the aspect of his epistemology concerned with "wisdom" and "understanding." The former set of terms is reflected, for instance, in Heraclitus' use of γινώσκω (frequently translated "recognize"), συνίημι (frequently translated "comprehend"), and, to a lesser extent, μανθάνω (frequently translated "learn").

My argument aligns "comprehension" and "recognition" with the kinds of insights we gain through "listening to the logos" – that is, through an orientation to the world informed by the logos, one of the functions of which (as I'll argue in Chapter 5) is to point towards unity-without-plurality via unity-in-plurality. I align "wisdom" and "understanding," by contrast, with a state that is achieved through the process of comprehension, recognition, and learning. On my reading of Heraclitus, "understanding" will turn out to be, specifically, an understanding of unity-without-plurality. In Chapter 4, I will argue that this understanding lies, in a sense, outside the reach of the logos – even though it is only through the mediation of the logos that we arrive at this state.

"Comprehension" and "recognition" seem to reflect an epistemic achievement modelled on our ability to make sense of patterned relations among specified sets of things. We comprehend or fail to comprehend a heard discourse (D4/B34: συνίημι), an individual's identity

¹⁵⁹ Heraclitus' epistemic vocabulary is rich, and, like all his vocabulary, involves equivocal, paradoxical, and even ironic usages. I do not intend to claim that Heraclitus' vocabulary maps strictly onto the distinction that I make here in my own usage. This brief discussion of Heraclitus' epistemic vocabulary is meant only to suggest that such a distinction is not necessarily at odds with Heraclitus' own word choice.

(D9/B97: γιγνώσκω),¹⁶⁰ or a thing's nature (D49/B51: συνήμι; D25a/B57: γιγνώσκω; D15/B5: γιγνώσκω). We comprehend things or recognize them through observing linkages – though these linkages are often such as to illustrate or suggest the presence of a larger pattern. In D3/B17, people do not recognize (γιγνώσκω) what they have already encountered because they fail to fit together past and present experience¹.¹⁶¹ Similarly, those who lack comprehension in D49/B51 fail to attend to the ways in which things are (and are not) connected. “Wisdom” or “understanding”, by contrast, reflects a state towards which repeated experiences² of comprehension may point us, but which involves a different kind of orientation that emphasizes the overarching reality even over and above the patterned phenomena/discourses that might be our only way of cognizing that reality. This is suggested by the fact that “what is wise,” or the “wise thing” (σοφόν), is consistently described in terms of a relation to “all things”¹⁶² (D43/B108, D44/B41 and D46/B50).¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Heraclitus' use of this form of simple object recognition is closely tied to his notion of knowing a thing's nature – that is, he questions whether the former can be achieved without the latter.

¹⁶¹ I take this to be one level of the fragment's meaning. Heraclitus is, of course, saying more than this – people do not comprehend what they encounter because they do not know how to make the right sort of connections; the link between past and present experience is only the most obvious example of such connections. See below (pp. 94-95; 99) for further discussion of this dual aspect in the final simile of D1/B1.

¹⁶² Exactly what this relation is and what it implies will, of course, constitute a key question in this thesis – but it is a question with which I will not engage in depth until Chapter 4, where I look in detail at Heraclitus' conception of understanding, as well as his conception of the “one wise”.

¹⁶³ It can't be over-emphasized that this very quick and broad division does not capture and is not meant to capture either the multiplicity of roles that a single term can play in Heraclitus' thought, or the complexity of the interrelations among those roles. For instance, the neuter singular positive adjective σοφόν appears to be Heraclitus' term for an epistemic level that involves direct contact with, and perhaps even identification with, reality as a whole (see pp. 197-198). But the noun form, σοφία, applied to Pythagoras and the comparative masculine adjective σοφώτερος, applied to Homer, appear to mean something closer to the expected late 6th century meaning of expertise or skill (assuming, of course, that the term is not meant ironically in these fragments). A similar division might be thought to exist between the noun γνώμη and its cognate verb γιγνώσκω. The former is associated with divine insight or power either explicitly (D74/B78) or implicitly (D44/B41) beyond the scope of human cognition. The latter, on the other hand, refers to cognitive accomplishments that would seem to be well within reach of the human mind – for instance, in D9/B97, where the word refers to simple object recognition in D9/B97 (here, probably, to be understood as corresponding to an audience's failure to “recognize” [on a superficial level available even to animals] in Heraclitus' unfamiliar mode of expression the deeper, implicitly familiar patterns of the human thought that it brings out. [See also Dilcher 1995: 24-25]). This is perhaps somewhat complicated by the fact that γιγνώσκω is used only negatively, as an expression of the ignorance of Heraclitus' audience, or of human ignorance generally (see D15/B5, D3/B17; D38/B86; D9/B97; D25a/B57; D22/B56; D43/B108; the possible exception is D30/B116,

“Logos” is one of the central words in Heraclitus’ work; it is the element of his epistemic vocabulary that has occasioned the greatest amount of commentary. Its centrality is not merely a function of the frequency with which it appears in the extant fragments – although it appears relatively frequently, particularly in what might be termed the epistemically-oriented fragments.¹⁶⁴ Rather, this centrality is primarily signalled by the logos’ possession of characteristics sufficiently striking as to suggest to some commentators a quasi-divine status.¹⁶⁵ In D1/B1, the logos is described as “holding forever” (ἐόντος ἄει); in D2/B2 it is presented as a form of thought or sense (φρόνησις) that is “common”,¹⁶⁶ as contrasted to the private mind that people (mistakenly) believe that they possess;¹⁶⁷ in D46/D50 it prompts those who listen to it to

depending on the attitude one imagines Heraclitus taking to the notion of the “common” here, and what is implied by the dividing up of the common recognition into shares.)

¹⁶⁴ Of the eleven appearances of the noun form (according to the Laks & Most’s conservative reckoning of authentic verbatim citations), the epistemic context is explicit in five (D1/B1 [where the word appears twice]; D2/B2; D43/B108; D46/B50; D98/B45) and implicit in two (D9/B97; D99/B115).

¹⁶⁵ E.g., Kahn 1979: 97; Brann 2011:28; Freeman 1966: 116.

¹⁶⁶ ξυνός appears in epic and lyric in roughly the same sorts of contexts as κοινός in later Attic prose, though with a slightly more limited range of meanings. It suggests responsibilities, benefits, possessions, interests etc. shared among many. Its opposite is ἴδιος (“private” or “personal” or “one’s own”). The word frequently has a social and political meaning – ξυνός, like κοινός, could mean the state. Both ξυνός and κοινός imply a specific community or membership in a group – even if this community can sometimes be quite large or general (see Macé 2014). For instance, Homer tells us that ξυνός Ἐνυάλιος (“war is common”; [*Il.* 18.309]). The word ξυνός here suggests impartiality, indifference and even generality – but not universality. The *Iliad* repeatedly reminds us that war is *not* universal but is specifically a feature of the fate of human beings, and in some sense, the fate of free adult males alone – that is, those who can share not only in the suffering also in the glory, and the prizes that Ares can offer. The gods quarrel, of course, and they do briefly join in on the field of battle – though this has almost a quality of playacting, of an imitation of the human drama (see, especially, their brief faceoff at the end of Book 21). The crucial difference between the quarrels among the gods and the battles among humans lies in the fact that in human battle, killing and being killed appear as two sides of the same coin (the full line at *Il.* 18.309 is ξυνός Ἐνυάλιος καὶ τε κτανέοντα κατέκτα, and “War [Ares Enyalios] is common, and kills the one who would kill”). This, I think, brings Heraclitus’ notion of ξυνός very close to Homer’s in this context (as suggested by Heraclitus’ allusion to *Il.* 18.309 in D63/B80). For Heraclitus, however, the field of the “common” is wider – it is the field in which the opposites contend. Insofar as one thinks in, possesses, is constituted by, or is subject to, opposites, one belongs to the community that Heraclitus’ ξυνός picks out. This is, of course, a very wide field, and certainly it represents a community far wider than any community of reciprocal and proportionally distributed goods (and evils) signified either by Homer’s use of the term “common”, or by the variety of community- or group-specific “commons” that might be signalled by the term in its ordinary Archaic and Classical Greek uses. It need not, however, converge with our term “universal” – although of course it would do so if the war between opposites turned out to be inherent in the ultimate nature of reality.

¹⁶⁷ See also D29/B113, which states that the action of φρονέω, like logos, is common (ξυνός).

agree that all things are one. Moreover, the word receives marked structural and rhetorical emphasis. D1/B1 represents, according to Aristotle and Sextus Empiricus, the opening of Heraclitus' discourse.¹⁶⁸ If this is so, it seems significant that he begins with the words "Concerning this logos" (τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδε[ε]). The word is further emphasized by "a fine piece of systematic ambiguity",¹⁶⁹ which allows the audience to understand the opening phrase as meaning either, "Although this logos holds forever, people prove uncomprehending," or "Concerning this logos, people forever prove uncomprehending" (τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος αἰεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι). If we miss the emphasis here, the partial parallel offered by D2/B2, which likely followed shortly after B1,¹⁷⁰ and which contains the parallel opening τοῦ λόγου δ' ἐόντος, reiterates it. The word "logos" is also the focus of both paradox and wordplay in D46/B50.¹⁷¹

Yet if the importance of "logos" within Heraclitus' work is clear, its meaning is not, superficially, obvious. In Heraclitus' time, the word "logos" encompassed a range of meanings, many of which are active within his fragments. Although the noun form is uncommon in Homer, the verbal cognate λέγω appears frequently, with meanings ranging from "collect",¹⁷² "reckon up",¹⁷³ "tell over in order"¹⁷⁴ – all of which have in common the notion of a gathering and organizing of a set of things (whether words in a discourse, or physical objects in space).¹⁷⁵ This overarching notion of setting in order continues to inform later noun-based uses. In early Ionic prose, and particularly in Herodotus, "logos" appears most frequently where the reference is

¹⁶⁸ Arist. *Rhet.* 3.5 1407b12-17; Sext. Emp. *Math.* 7.132. For the translation of σύγγραμμα in these citations as "writing" rather than the usual "book", see Tejera 1991: 491.

¹⁶⁹ Robinson 1987: 74.

¹⁷⁰ Kirk 1962: 59.

¹⁷¹ See Chapter 4.

¹⁷² E.g., *Il.* 23.239; *Od.* 18.359; *Od.* 24.224.

¹⁷³ E.g., *Od.* 4.452; *Od.* 4.452.

¹⁷⁴ E.g., *Od.* 11.151; *Od.* 5.5.

¹⁷⁵ Fattal 1986:144.

either to organized speech in the form of a report or reckoning of events¹⁷⁶ (including the report that the author's own work constitutes) or to the esteem that such a report might be expected to yield.¹⁷⁷ Early lyric poets also use "logos" to speak of "relation" and "tradition", but also "rumour" and "talk" in the sense of "mere talk" (as opposed to reality or deeds).¹⁷⁸ As Nussbaum notes, the primacy of the notion of *ordered* speech in "logos" is signalled in part by the infrequency with which the term is used in Archaic compositions with the meaning "word," in the sense of a single unit of speech. Instead, early poets used the term ἔπος in such contexts, reserving "logos" for the speech that organizes those units into a larger connected whole.¹⁷⁹

The contemporaneous meanings for logos can be grouped into two rough sets. On the one hand, we have meanings concerned with ordered or systematic speech (e.g., "report"), and, on the other, those concerned with the ordered or systematic application of number (e.g., "reckoning"). The division is, to some degree, artificial, since even the number-oriented meanings imply the use of language, so that the number meanings are not well-separated from the speech-oriented ones.¹⁸⁰ A reckoning-up, for instance, depends upon language use, as does the expression of a quantitative relation. It seems, moreover, a somewhat problematic division insofar as it implies the use of number as a symbol system distinct from the kind of symbol system represented by word use. Numbers in Archaic Greek thought implied not only quantitative significance and relations, but also the kinds of qualitative significance and relations

¹⁷⁶ E.g., 2.43.1; 2.33.1; 2.120.1.

¹⁷⁷ E.g., 1.117.2; 1.19.2.

¹⁷⁸ See LSJ, s.v. λόγος.

¹⁷⁹ Nussbaum 1972a: 3. For the primacy of this meaning in Heraclitus' logos, see also McCabe 2015: 42. Dilcher 1995: 33 emphasizes the unity that this order gives to a logos.

¹⁸⁰ Robinson 2019: 96 notes that both the use of numbers and the use of words "are clearly grounded in our ability to describe the world in various ways, whether by using human language or a natural substitute for it, like arithmetic or geometry." See also Johnstone 2014: 14.

that in modern thought are generally ascribed to words alone. In other words, numbers, too, possessed “word-like” connotations and associations.¹⁸¹

At the same time, the use of words involves traits associated with the basic operations of number in counting. Such operations depend upon the organization of things according to categories, since the possibility of counting is contingent upon our ability to recognize things as both the same and different – that is, as possessing such distinctions among them as make of them a plurality, and as possessing such sameness as to allow us to count them together in a single group. Moreover, one of the primary social functions of a systematic, ordered use of number is to provide a means by which individual privileges and obligations can be judged together with and against one another within the public sphere – as, for instance, in the use of currency in the emerging institutions of the early polis to provide a single value measure that could allow for both distinctions and a common standard in domains ranging from the legal to the religious to the economic.¹⁸² Speech, too, is intimately connected with the sameness and difference that make it possible to set things in relation to one another. This is, in part, because language itself involves the engagement of categories, which also give us the basis for considering one thing in relation to another by virtue of their shared classification as, for instance, “children”. This means, though, that speech requires not only the use of duality,

¹⁸¹ On the connotations of numbers in Archaic Greek thought, see e.g., Thomson 1954-1955:126, 129. As many recent commentators have observed, this is an important point against the attempt to make a sharp distinction between those aspects of the Pythagorean thought that should be understood as a matter of “mystical” numerological dogma, and those that should be classified as “rational” inquiry into the arithmetical relations among numbers (Gregory 2013: 149ff).

¹⁸² See, e.g., Kurke 1999: 22 for a particularly strong statement on this phenomenon. The legal domain provides a clear example of this use of the quantitative – specifically, currency – to set different things in relation to one another on the basis of a common standard. Nearly all the punishments prescribed by Archaic legal codes were in the form of fines – which, in theory, constituted an expression of the relative gravity of a variety of different crimes. The Gortyn Code in Southern Crete – a body of law inscribed in the early fifth century, but likely in use for at least a century before – uses currency with a high degree of specificity in this way, with penalties varying depending not only on the crime itself, but the relative social value of the perpetrator and the victim. For instance, the rape of free man or woman by a slave was punishable by a fine of 200 staters, while the rape of a non-virginal female house-slave by a free man was punishable by a fine of one or two obols.

incorporating the basic pair of conceptual relations (i.e., sameness and difference) that allows for a category to exist in the first place, but also engages the kinds of relations by which categories are related to one another.¹⁸³ Moreover, speech provides a common basis by which it becomes possible to compare our encounters with the world against those of other people – that is, to place these encounters in relation to one another. It also provides, through accounts of our actions and characteristics, a common basis by which we can be judged against one another, allowing our value and our claims to be judged according to a shared standard (as seen in the use of *logos* to mean “esteem”).¹⁸⁴ Such accounts are crucial within the legal contexts that supply an important part of Heraclitus’ vocabulary.¹⁸⁵ This kind of language use is also foregrounded within Archaic Greek poetry, in which poets frequently remind patrons that their *κλέος* – the way in which they are valued and judged both by their contemporaries and by posterity – depends upon the arrangement of those actions into memorable verse, by poets who make use of the shared patterns of tradition.¹⁸⁶ For this reason, it is perhaps unsurprising that some of the meanings of *logos* (e.g., “rumour”, “report” and “esteem”) overlap here with those of *κλέος* (“report”, “fame”, “rumour”).¹⁸⁷ Again, these meanings, insofar as they are connected to both relation and order, imply both sameness and difference. If we possess only sameness without difference, nothing can be set in relation to anything else – a purely homogeneous thing cannot even be set in relation to itself, since the relation of self-identity implies at least a conceptual

¹⁸³ For instance, the relations “generator” and “generated” for “child”, understood in terms of the relation between parent and child; the relations “process” and “product” for “child” understood as an unfinished and unrealized creature whose social value is predicated on its ultimate formation into a man (this sort of conception of childhood seems to be implicit in D75/B79 and B104/B117; see also Beaumont 2012 for the prevalence of such an attitude in Greek society in general).

¹⁸⁴ The fact that such a basis may prove to be misleading in some cases, as Nussbaum 1972a: 3 reminds us, is signalled both by the use of the word *logos* to mean “rumour” or “[deceitful] tale”, and by Heraclitus’ own use of the word (in plural form) in a context which suggests the unreliability of the *logoi* in question (D43/B108).

¹⁸⁵ For instance, in his reference to law (*νόμος*: D105/B114, D106/B44, D108/B33; *δίκη*: D55/B23, D63/B80; D89c/B94), judging (*κρίνω*: D84/B66), and witnesses (*μάρτυς*: D4/B3, D33/B7).

¹⁸⁶ Schur 1998: 29, 35.

¹⁸⁷ See LSJ, s.v. *κλέος*.

difference or distinction – nor can it be ordered, since the notion of order implies an arrangement of more than one object or part. If we possess only difference without sameness, then, again, nothing can be placed in order or set in relation to anything else, since order and relation depend upon points of contact and commonality – that is, areas of sameness.

How does this more general view of “logos” bear on Heraclitus’ own use of the term?

Heraclitus’ logos has been understood, variously, to refer to ratio/relation,¹⁸⁸ Heraclitus’ own book,¹⁸⁹ the structure of the cosmos,¹⁹⁰ formula or pattern,¹⁹¹ truth,¹⁹² true speech¹⁹³ cosmic law or the law of reason,¹⁹⁴ the faculty of reason,¹⁹⁵ and the nature of objective reality as implicit in rightly-used language.¹⁹⁶ What these diverse interpretations share is an attempt to make sense of a term that evidently plays a role in human knowledge,¹⁹⁷ yet possesses an external and even alien quality that makes it seem like an odd candidate for an epistemic vehicle intimately connected with our own thought. They also share, in many cases, a conviction that the various appearances of the word “logos” in Heraclitus do constellate into a single concept – despite the range of dissimilar contexts in which the term appears.¹⁹⁸ For instance, “logos” in D43/B92¹⁹⁹ might be translated with any one of several “speech-oriented” options – e.g., “tale” or “report” – but does not easily lend itself to quantitative meanings such as “ratio” or “measure”. On the other

¹⁸⁸ Brann 2011.

¹⁸⁹ Burnet 1963; West 1971; von Fritz 1993.

¹⁹⁰ Kirk 1962; Kahn 1979.

¹⁹¹ Taran 1986.

¹⁹² Marcovich 1967.

¹⁹³ Conche 1986.

¹⁹⁴ Hussey 1999.

¹⁹⁵ Pradeau 2002.

¹⁹⁶ Snell 1953.

¹⁹⁷ For instance, as the common φρόνησις in D2/B2 and as an invitation to wisdom in D46/B50.

¹⁹⁸ As noted by Hussey 1999: 92; Brann 2011: 11; Kirk 1962: 39.

¹⁹⁹ “Of all those whose logoi I have heard, not one has come so far as to recognize that what is wise is separated from all.” (ὁκόσων λόγους ἤκουσα, οὐδεὶς ἀφικνεῖται ἐς τοῦτο ὥστε γινώσκειν ὅτι σοφόν ἐστι πάντων κεχωρισμένων. Trans. Laks & Most, with modifications).

hand, while fragment D86/B31 can yield sense for these same number-oriented meanings, we will have greater difficulty understanding how the stuff of various elemental changes can, for instance, be “measured by the same tale” (μετρέεται εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον) at different points during those changes.

The shared characteristics of the “number meanings” and the “speech meanings” do, at least, offers some initial suggestions as to the significance of Heraclitus’ claim that the logos is “common.” In both cases, there is the implicit presence of things brought together and organized. In both cases, this organization involves a consistent use of relations among categories – if only the most basic relations of sameness and difference. The specific contexts in which “logos” appears in Heraclitus suggest that it is through the act of bringing together and organizing that we engage in a mode of thought or judgement which is common rather than idiosyncratic (D2/B2), which is necessary in comprehending both events and speech (D1/B1), and which guides us towards wisdom (D46/B50). Comprehension of the logos, D1/B1 suggests, is what allows us to learn from our experience¹ – since those who remain ignorant of the logos also remain oblivious of everything else that they encounter. Heraclitus’ own logos, according to him, involves a particular use of and orientation towards speech that points towards an existing reality (διηγεῖν, φράζω), by dividing (διαίρεω) both things and words (ἔπεα καὶ ἔργα) so that they may be brought together or comprehended (ξυνίημι): “I analyse each thing according to nature and point out in detail how it is constituted.”²⁰⁰ Heraclitus’ focus on the operations of division

²⁰⁰ ἐγὼ διηγεῖν κατὰ φύσιν διαίρεων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅπως ἔχει. I take ὅπως ἔχει (“how it is”) to imply a thing’s condition as well as its “holding together” or containing (LSJ, s.v., ἔχω). Compare the translations of Brann 2011: 27: “dividing each thing according to nature and declaring its relation [to others]” and Patrick 1889: “describing each thing according to its nature and explaining how it is ordered.”

and bringing-together emphasizes the two key conceptual relations that allow us to gather things together in some kind of order, through the interaction between difference and sameness.²⁰¹

In other words, the logos presents us with an epistemic tool – or rather, it presents us with *the* epistemic tool, since those who fail to comprehend the organization of words and events offered through the logos remain oblivious of the world at large (D1/B1). Given the role of language in both the number-oriented and speech-oriented meanings of logos, and given that Heraclitus twice specifically refers to the logos as something that is heard (D1/B1, D46/B50), it seems likely that this epistemic tool centrally involves the operations of language. This claim is supported by other fragments in which Heraclitus draws attention to the connection between comprehension and a proper grasp of the language.²⁰² For instance, in D33/B107, he states: “Eyes and ears are worthless witnesses for those with barbarian souls.”²⁰³ The term “barbarian” should be understood to mean a foreigner, specifically one without competent knowledge of Greek; the connotations of brutality and boorishness do not become part of the term’s meaning until after the Persian war.²⁰⁴ As Nussbaum argues, the main epistemic advantage offered by ordered discourse is that it permits us to work out relations and connections – thus permitting eyes and ears to become useful, trustworthy witnesses.²⁰⁵ In other words, this fragment suggests that perception unaided by language is without value. While the aphorism provocatively challenges the epistemic primacy of the senses within traditional Archaic thought,²⁰⁶ it need not

²⁰¹ On the parallels with Platonic collection and division (*Phdr.* 265d-e, see Brann 2011: 99; Mourelatos 2008: 322.

²⁰² His interest in the names of things, and the oppositions and paradoxes to be found in those names, might be another expression of key role played by language in his epistemology. See, for instance, D53/B48; D55/B23; D45/B32.

²⁰³ κακοὶ μάρτυρες ἀνθρώποισιν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ὄτα βαρβάρους ψυχὰς ἐχόντων.

²⁰⁴ LSJ, s.v. βάρβαρος.

²⁰⁵ Nussbaum 1972a: 3, 5, 12-13. I follow Nussbaum and Hussey in holding that the use of language is at the core of the meaning of Heraclitus’ logos, and that the latter, more specifically, involves the use of connected, ordered discourse to “relate and judge.” See also Hussey 1982: 51, 56.

²⁰⁶ On this primacy, see, this section, along with the discussion at pp. 181-183 of the experience-knowledge ratio in Archaic “folk epistemology.”

imply something like Sextus Empiricus' reading of the fragment.²⁰⁷ We need not assume, with Sextus, that Heraclitus subscribes to a view of wholly distinct faculties of sense experience and reason, whereby the former is arational, and the latter, as expressed in language, must be applied to it to remedy this deficiency. B107 does, however, suggest that, for Heraclitus, a *passive* absorption of experience¹ has little or no epistemic value on its own. What gives such experience¹ epistemic value – what turns it, ultimately, to experience², is the relation-making and ordering that discourse models and that allows us to reflect upon our experience¹.²⁰⁸

An alternative view of this fragment takes the role of language to be purely metaphorical (or, at least, dispensable in our efforts to make worthwhile witnesses of our eyes and ears). The language that barbarian souls fail to comprehend is the language of the senses – or, perhaps, the language in which the world “speaks” to the senses.²⁰⁹ Implicit in this reading is the idea that comprehension requires interpretation, clarification, and unification of the immediate experience¹ provided by the senses.²¹⁰ In this sense, it is not really at odds with my own reading – save that I put a greater emphasis on the linguistic significance of the notion of “barbarian souls.” As I read it, language is not simply a metaphor for the significance implicit in sensory experience¹. It is also an expression of the fundamental role played by language in active engagement with the order implicit in that experience¹.²¹¹ It would, of course, be anachronistic to

²⁰⁷ Sext. Emp. *Math.* 7.126.

²⁰⁸ See the definitions of experience¹, experience² and experience³ on pp. 66-67.

²⁰⁹ See, for instance, Marcovich 1967: 47. Following Diels, Marcovich takes this fragment as referring to the language of the senses – that is, he takes language as a metaphor for the use of reason to interpret sense experience. Robinson 1987: 150-151 bridges the “language of the senses” interpretation with a more literal, linguistically-oriented reading by suggesting that this language is the same as that spoken by the [one] wise. Our linguistic capacities are one expression of the rational capacity that we have in common with the one wise (Robinson 1991). This does not mean that what we seek to understand is simply a linguistic account: it is, rather, the “real qua rational everlasting uttering an account of its structure and operations” (485) and doing so “in some cosmic equivalent to speech” (486).

²¹⁰ See also Rankin 1995: 246. Rankin accepts the “procedural witness” reading of this fragment (see below).

²¹¹ The issue of whether Heraclitus had a full-fledged conceptual distinction between “thought” and “perception” is separate from the question of whether he distinguished between a cognitive mode actively attentive to discursive relations and a cognitive mode restricted to the passive, immediate experience¹ or perception. Heraclitus may well

imagine the process of interpretation and clarification as a kind of syntactic or abstract conceptual analysis;²¹² on my reading, what is crucial about speech and discourse is that its (shared) standards of sustained connection-making provide us with the necessary basis for recognizing and reflecting on relations that are present even at the level of passive perception (e.g., as sameness and difference).

Heraclitus' use of the word "witness" (μάρτυς) seems to support the view that βάρβαρος should be read as invoking a literal, rather than an (exclusively) metaphorical, use of language. This word – along with its verbal cognate μαρτυρέω – appears three times in Heraclitus' fragments on sense perception. Given Heraclitus' interest in the law, and the prominence that he gives legal vocabulary within his sayings,²¹³ it seems reasonable to expect that Heraclitus' use of this word will draw in some way on its legal meaning.

have thought that discourse-grounded reflection used the same faculties as passive perception, albeit with a different orientation (and his own use of, for instance, assonance and imagery, seems to offer evidence that the perceptual continues to permeate the cognitive mode bound up with the logos). Such an orientation, more specifically, involves a degree of reflection and abstraction from one's own immediate experience that sets the cognitive mode with which it is associated apart from the direct, physical cause-and-effect model of perception-thought (see below, pp. 93-95). Laks 1999: 255-262 describes the distinction between perception and thought for Heraclitus as a functional distinction – that is, a distinction between very different ways of using the same faculties. Lak's functional distinction roughly maps onto my distinction between, on the one hand, the purely passive taking-in of speech and phenomena that marks the audience and composer of (mere) logoi, and, on the other, the active attention to the organization of words and things that marks the audience and composer of logoi that engage directly with, and can even serve in some ways to represent, the logos. It seems likely that Laks is correct, and that the full-fledged distinction between thought and perception did not exist for Heraclitus. See also Wilcox 1993. Laks 1999 believes that the distinction was first clearly formulated by Democritus (where the distinction would seem to be implied by the gap between the perceived qualities of objects and their true, intellectually grasped nature as atoms and void), though even in this case, some blurring together persisted. See also Taylor 1999: 196 who argues that even "for Democritus, thought is a form of [perceptual] experience, or, more precisely, the categories of thought and experience are insufficiently differentiated to allow one to be characterized as more fundamental than the other."

²¹² That a kind of conceptual analysis through ways of speaking is possible even from within a relatively concrete mode of thought is illustrated by the reading of Parmenides offered by Mourelatos 2008: 324-332. The possibilities suggested by Mourelatos' analysis are illuminating for this time period whether or not we agree with his precise application of such possibilities to the interpretation of Parmenides. Mourelatos' Parmenides comes to recognize that we can learn about the nature of things by reflecting on what we say, but does so without departing from substantivizing intuitions about predication and conceptualization: in other words, we can use what we say to try to understand the world even without trying to make subtler distinctions such as the distinction between substance and attribute, or between the "is" of identification and of attribution. Some of the earliest examples of allegoresis might offer further illustrations of an analysis of language use that involves only an incremental increase in abstraction over the Archaic Greek "character powers" model (on the "character powers" model, see below, this section).

²¹³ See, e.g., Gagarin 2016, Vlastos 1947, and above (current section).

As Kevin Robb points out, our primary evidence for the role of the μάρτυς in late Archaic Greek law is from Crete's Gortyn Code,²¹⁴ which was recorded sometime in the early fifth century, though large sections of the code appear to be at least a century older. There are no references to what Robb calls "accidental witnesses" in this code – witnesses who happen to see something or overhear something, and whose immediate experience¹ of the event then provides basic data that, perhaps, must be interpreted in order to be correctly understood. Rather, the witness in early Greek law is a procedural witness – someone who provides the living record of a legally binding oral act – for instance, the making of a contract.²¹⁵ If we understand μάρτυς in this way, then the statement "Eyes and ears are worthless witnesses for those with barbarian souls" is so obvious it seems hardly worth saying. If you lack knowledge of the language in which an oath is sworn, you can hardly give reliable testimony as to whether or not the oath was sworn in accordance with the proper procedures. Yet, as Nussbaum points out, when we consider

²¹⁴ There are, of course, other models of witnessing to be found within early Greek texts. In particular, the early tribal law, insofar as we can reconstruct it from the Homeric texts, seems, at least at times, to favour the accidental witness model over the procedural witness model – that is, it is concerned with eyewitnesses, rather than witnesses to binding speech acts (Hartog 1988: 261). For instance, at *Il.* 2.302, Odysseus calls upon the Achaeans as μάρτυροι to an omen they saw years earlier on Aulis and the prophecy that Calchas gave in response (*Il.* 2.299-329). Yet such instances of accidental eyewitness in Homer often also involve elements of procedural witnessing. When Agamemnon invokes the gods as witnesses to his oath that he has had no sexual contact with Briseis, he invokes them simultaneously as accidental witnesses to his previous actions, and as procedural witnesses to his binding speech act, since he also calls upon their punishment if his oath should be false (*Il.* 19.258-265: the word he uses here is ἴστω, the literal meaning of which is see/know, but which here has the meaning of "witness" or "judge", in line with its cognate noun, ἴστωρ). Pritzl 1985: 306 notes multiple instances in Homer (*Il.* 3.276-281; 1.338; 2.302; 14.274; 22.51) where the word μάρτυς implies the need for the combination of "hearing (of the spoken oath or promise) and seeing (of the actions consequently performed) in order to function as a witness." In any case, while the importance that Homer has for Heraclitus' language use is certainly not to be overlooked, the Archaic law courts that formed a part of the civic life of Heraclitus and his audience, and which provided a model of unity and consistency absent from the tribal version of adjudication depicted in Homer (Smith 1922), seem likely to have primacy in Heraclitus' legal metaphors. (See Vlastos 1947 and Gagarin 2016 on the influence of the structure of the 6th century legal system on Heraclitus' thought.) The use of μάρτυς in *Works and Days* – a work similarly steeped in preoccupation with the Archaic law courts – seems also to imply a procedural witness (see *Op.* 370-372. Note that the use of δίκη in this poem lies in marked contrast to the Homeric one in the sense that it invokes a notion of established legal process. See Gagarin 1973: 89-94.)

²¹⁵ Robb 1991: 642. The significance of the Gortyn Code, in this context, lies in the fact that it is the only Archaic Greek law code about which we possess a substantial body of evidence – in fact, it is the largest extant body of ancient Greek law from any period (Smith 1922). Other early law codes, as these survive in later testimony, also seem to have focused on the procedural element of witnessing. For instance, the law of Pittacus, as reported in Stobaeus *Flor.* 44.22 speaks of the rules for the witnessing of contracts.

that this obvious statement is made in Greek, to a Greek-speaking audience, it comes to sound less like a truism and more like a criticism and a challenge. We may need linguistic competence in order to benefit from our immediate perceptual experience¹, but the kind of orientation to that linguistic competence that Heraclitus thinks we need, the kind implied by the word “logos”, involves a degree of awareness and reflection far more demanding than would have been involved in the ordinary conception of “comprehension” of statements made in the Greek language.²¹⁶ In other words, it is not merely language in general, but a specific use of language, that acts as an essential epistemic tool. Without this, we are barbarians, foreigners, ignorant not only of our own language, but also of our immediate perceptual experience¹. This reading, then, ultimately incorporates the “language of senses” reading. As on latter reading, we are out of touch with our own encounters with the sensible world if we cannot orient ourselves to it in the right way such that its meaning becomes legible. At the same time, as on the procedural witness reading, my interpretation allows for the full significance of Heraclitus’ use of two words, μάργς and βάρβαρος, associated with an understanding of the Greek language. On the latter reading, the failure to properly interpret our perceptions through reflective use of logos not only leaves us oblivious to that which we see and hear, but also oblivious of the language we speak.

Any account of what kind of language use constitutes “logos” must address certain paradoxes. While the logos is “common,” it is also almost universally overlooked (D1/B2). While the logos seems to be present in the Greek language that Heraclitus’ audience speaks, most of that audience are as ignorant of it as Greekless barbarians (D33/B107). Heraclitus’ paradoxes are rarely, if ever, mere riddles to be solved – rather, they tend to suggest important points in which things are both connected and in conflict, such that the paradox cannot simply be reduced to an answer and “dissolved”. For this reason, we might anticipate that there is some

²¹⁶ Nussbaum, 1972a: 10.

deep sense in which the logos is common, and is, specifically, present in the common language spoken by Heraclitus' audience (and even in the common language "spoken" by their senses). This common language is both understood by the audience (in that they possess a superficial grasp of discourse) and not understood (in that they fail to recognize what the language, through its very nature and structure, implies, and how it fits things together in accordance with a common pattern). As I argue later in this section, Heraclitus emphasizes both the distinction and the continuity between, on the one hand, the many logoi that constitute and derive from his audience's usually passive and unreflective orientation both towards the world and towards discourse, and, on the other hand, the logos, which is at once the basic structure of connection-making inherent in all thought and discourse, and an active, reflective engagement with the patterned conceptual relations that make up connected speech. Thus, the logos is common because, as Tarán observes "men could see the logos in language itself even apart from hearing it from Heraclitus" (at least in theory).²¹⁷ Yet in practice, few people adopt the necessary reflective engagement with the relations that inhere in and are expressed by the operations of connected discourse. As I argue below, "the many" absorb both discourse and other phenomena passively, as immediate physical-perceptual experience¹. Thus, the logos, while common, is something to which most humans remain oblivious. For them, every discourse – including Heraclitus' own – is simply one logos among many. The sense in which Heraclitus' own discourse might be regarded, derivatively and equivocally,²¹⁸ as "the logos", rather than as one of the logoi, is a function of its potential impact on the audience's own orientation towards what is said and the experiences¹ it organizes – though it also depends on the structure of the discourse itself.

²¹⁷ Tarán 1986: 10. See also Osborne 2003: 89.

²¹⁸ See the use of paradox and equivocation in D1/B1 and D46/B50, where Heraclitus plays with the question of whether his discourse is or is not the logos to which he refers.

Again, the commonality, as it exists in the “everyday” logoi of Heraclitus’ audience, seems to be found in categories, and relations among categories –those structures that allow discourse to operate at all – that organize our shared view of reality, much as laws organize and unify the city (D105/B114). It is on the basis of these structures that we are able to enter into relation with other people at all (whether in agreement or conflict) and to share a world with them. Yet the manner in which most people use logoi is, for Heraclitus, profoundly idiosyncratic (D2/B2), and closely tied to epistemic failure (D43/B108). On the one hand, Heraclitus regards the usual shared logoi as “common” only in the sense that they are generally accepted. He is deeply critical of the familiar, shared logoi that make up the shared (aristocratic) education²¹⁹ by virtue of which his audience, as self-described comprehending συνετοί, possess a shared outlook and belong to a shared world,²²⁰ which permits them to contrast themselves to the ignorant ἰδιῶται.²²¹ In fact, these “common” logoi of the so-called συνετοί seem to be implicated in the fact that most human beings are, in fact, ἀσύνετος (D1/B1; see also D49/B51), and, implicitly,

²¹⁹ See, for instance, Heraclitus’ criticisms of Homer and Hesiod (e.g., D20/B40; D22/B56; D25a/B57). Heraclitus’ highly critical attitude towards the poets needs to be read in concert with his use of imagery and language borrowed from them, and his appropriation of recurrent themes found in the *Iliad* (for instance, the repeated association between measure and strife between equal opposed parties [e.g., 15.410-413; 12.432-436; 13.358-359; 16.658-662; 11.336-337]). Such appropriation is consistent with the idea that the logos is inherent in these logoi, which, however, neither organize their ideas in such a way as to fully bring out the pattern of discursive connections, nor elicit from their audience attention to that pattern. One of the implications of this has to do with what might be called (somewhat misleadingly) the “content” of the logos – that is, the view of reality as unity-in-plurality that a logos-grounded orientation towards discursive relations yields. Just as the discursive structures essential to the logos are already present in all logoi, so the view of the world as unity-in-plurality is also already implicit there, once the basic structure behind all logoi (which is to say, the basic structure of human thought and perception) is laid bare. Thus, despite the fact that the Homeric worldview assumes that concepts/phenomena are organized through plurality-in-unity, Heraclitus is able to isolate from the *Iliad*’s depiction of war a partial and implicit vision of the world as unity-in-plurality. Compare Havelock 1982: 241, who describes Heraclitus speaking via “the kinds of events which are woven into the flow of the Homeric and Hesiodic pictorial consciousness, but they have now been somehow distilled out and concentrated.”

²²⁰ Battisti 1990: 8-9, 13, notes that συνετοί was used by the aristocracy to describe their social status and the shared outlook, knowledge and traditions by which they signalled that status. See pp. 31-36 on the likelihood that Heraclitus’ primary audience is the aristocracy, and on the nature of their shared knowledge base with respect to the poetic tradition.

²²¹ Battisti 1990: 6. For the social (and derogatory) meanings of ἰδιώτης, see LSJ, s.v.

ἰδιῶται, behaving “as if they had their own (ἴδιος) thought”²²² (D2/B2). One reason for this may be that an education in the “common” logoi simply teaches them to “follow the people’s bards”²²³ (D10/B104), and, like those bards, to be “deceived...concerning the recognition of things that are evident”²²⁴ (D22/B56). In one sense, then, these logoi offer only a kind of distorted reflection of the logos. The latter allows us to genuinely grasp the patterns and relations implicit in our experience¹ (both discursive and perceptual), thus helping us to transform it into actively engaged-with experience². The logoi of the bards, by contrast, merely presents the generally accepted, consensus views for passive reception, leaving us mired in experience¹. Nonetheless, just as the discursive structures common to all logoi allow us access to the (ultimately idiosyncratic) consensus view, so, when used in such a way as to facilitate comprehension, they may lead us towards what is *genuinely* common (to humans). One of the implications of this is that the problems associated with misleading logoi does not rest entirely with the logoi themselves, but should also be ascribed to the audience’s orientation. This is supported by Heraclitus’ assertion in D1/B1 that people fail to comprehend the logos even after they have heard it. It is also, more dramatically, reinforced by his exhortation to the audience in D46/B50 to “listen not me, but to the logos.”²²⁵ Again – and regardless of how we interpret the relation between Heraclitus’ own logos and the logos to which his audience is asked to listen – these two fragments imply that in order to comprehend the “common” logos, the audience must attend to it in a way that is distinct from their ordinary manner of approaching logoi.²²⁶

²²² ὡς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν.

²²³ δῆμων ἀοιδοῖσι πείθονται

²²⁴ ἐξηπάτηνται...πρὸς τὴν γνῶσιν τῶν φανερῶν

²²⁵ οὐκ ἐμοῦ ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου ἀκούσαντας

²²⁶ See, e.g., Tor 2018: 25 for the view that “listening to the logos” involves, in part, a change in our orientation toward ordinary speech.

The orientation that Heraclitus demands of his audience would seem to require attention to a common, pervasive feature of logoi – their use of discursive structures that place things in relation to one another. Specifically, it involves using such structures in a consistent, rather than idiosyncratic, manner. This, in turn, means that the audience must attend to the conceptual relations among things rather than simply to the connections that appear in some immediate perceptual-physical context – that is, they must look for relations that are general and “common”, rather than particular and idiosyncratic. Since it is these conceptual relations that ultimately structure human discourse and thought, the shift demanded by the logos is, in fact, a shift that brings the audience into closer alignment with the structure of the human mind – a structure which is “common,” despite the human tendency to act as though it is private and individual (D2/B2). This is, of course, one of the peculiarities of the logos – the fact that it is both “common,” and almost universally overlooked. It is also associated with various paradoxes around hearing/deafness and waking/sleeping with which Heraclitus illustrates this peculiarity. In particular, as Lesher observes,²²⁷ Heraclitus’ counter-intuitive use of the negated and privative forms of ξυνίημι and its cognates for those who fail to listen to the logos (or rather, those who listen not to the logos but to Heraclitus) helps to illustrate what the logos is and why it is so difficult for his audience to listen to it. The word is repeatedly correlated with the in-contact/out-of-contact state that not only is characteristic of most people’s relation to the logos, but also underscores a constitutive feature of the order that the logos presents – that is, unity through the strife between opposites.

²²⁷ Lesher 1983: 155-170.

In D1/B1, Heraclitus says that “Of this logos, which is forever, humans are forever uncomprehending (ἄξύνετος).”²²⁸ In a nearly parallel construction at D2/B2, he says “Although this logos is common, most people act as if they had their own thought.”²²⁹ These two assertions, particularly when read in light of their parallel syntax and the phonic echoes between ἄξύνετος and ξυνός, draw attention to the link between the widespread failure to comprehend the logos and the widespread tendency to retreat from what is common into private or idiosyncratic modes of thought. It also, implicitly, affirms that the act of comprehension is marked by thought that adheres to what is common. The significance of the word ἄξύνετος (uncomprehending) to Heraclitus’ logos is further supported by the fact that its verbal root ξυνίημι can also mean “I hear.” In other words, ξυνίημι is also associated with the primary perceptual modality through which the audience would attend to the logos (as in D1/B1, D46/B50 and, probably, D4/B34).

The role of hearing here is not simply a resonant but inessential connotation. Comprehending the logos *does* involve listening to the logos – especially since, in the oral culture of late 6th century Ionia, discourse and the spoken word went hand-in-hand.²³⁰ Yet “listening to the logos” is not, or is not exclusively, a state of literal listening. As D46/B50 makes clear, if we are to listen to (and comprehend) the logos, it isn’t enough to satisfy the usual conditions that suffice for listening to a discourse (that is, by listening to the words spoken by a particular person). Moreover, D4/B34 tells us that the uncomprehending, when they hear things, resemble the deaf. The paradoxicality of this would have been reiterated for Heraclitus’ contemporaries in the notion of hearing without comprehending, since the Archaic Greeks lacked a clear conceptual distinction between hearing and comprehension. That is, in hearing a

²²⁸ τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ’ ἐόντος ἀεὶ ἄξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι. I read the ambiguous placement of ἀεὶ as deliberate, implying that it should be read with both ἐόντος and ἄξύνετοι.

²²⁹ τοῦ λόγου δ’ ἐόντος ξυνοῦ ζώουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ ὥς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν.

²³⁰ See, e.g., Thomas 1992: 125-127; Robb 1983: 155-157; Havelock 1983: 232-233; Tejera 1991: 491.

discourse, one absorbed the thought of the speaker via an immediate perceptual-physical process. This is because, as Onians has demonstrated, thought existed as words physically present within the thinker's φρένες, while speech involved the shaping of breath by the speaker to transmit those thoughts, through the air, via the ears, to the φρένες of the listener.²³¹ As Leshner argues, Heraclitus' use of the term ξυνίημι helps to illuminate one of the functions that this paradox serves in the fragments, since it underscores the shift that Heraclitus makes away from a familiar model of comprehension rooted in such physical-perceptual connections, towards a new model of comprehension rooted in conceptual relations.²³²

In Archaic Greek poetry, comprehension occurs within the context of direct perceptual apprehension – involving, for instance, the recognition, based on (broadly speaking) perceptual cues, of who a specific person really is, of what's really going on in a specific situation.²³³

²³¹ Onians 1988: 67-71. The Archaic Greeks, of course, recognized that it was possible to hear something without fully attending to it – the epic formula according to which characters are said to put some piece of advice into their φρένες (e.g., *Od.* 1.361) suggests a particular concern with a failure to heed or remember what one hears. Yet the failure of the hearer to comprehend still appears to involve a truncated physical-perceptual process in which, as in *Simon.* 8.3-4, listeners “receive [the words] with their ears, but [fail to] store them in their breasts” (οὔασι δεξάμενοι/στέρνοις ἐγκατέθεντι).

²³² Leshner 1983: 163-167. I follow Leshner closely in my own argument, and have, for the sake of clarity, retained his language, even though this has the unfortunate effect of suggesting that conceptual relations and physical-conceptual connections were wholly distinct. This distinction, and the associated distinction between discursive vs. physical-perceptual experience¹ or ² is to some degree an artificial one. As I showed in Chapter 1, section I, the reception of discourse, for the Archaic and early Classical Greek, is a deeply physical-perceptual experience¹: this, as I argued there, is true even of the philosophers, and is particularly true of Heraclitus – if only because of his skill in exploiting sound and imagery. For Heraclitus, the crucial distinction is between passive experience¹ and actively reflected upon experience². Yet the latter can only be achieved through the engagement with discourse (and the discursive faculties) – which is at once an object (or faculty) of physical-perceptual experience¹ or ² and a means by which the audience may be able to overcome some of the constraints that such experience¹ places on thought (via the immediate pressure experience¹ places upon inferential moves and the recognition of salient connections among different contexts). In other words, Heraclitus' focus on conceptual relations helps diminish – but does not wholly overcome – the pull towards a concrete model of thought where the relevant conceptual moves are those dictated by a single physical-perceptual context. See Chapter 3, section I for further discussion.

²³³ See also Leshner 1981: 11-12 on νοέω and γινώσκω as a matter of “becoming aware of the true identity or nature of the object (or person) one perceives, or the true meaning of the situation one has encountered” which is “a matter of what one makes of one's immediate surroundings.” This need not imply a restriction of epistemic processes to a single specific perceptual process, at least as we understand the latter. Rather, the context of “direct perceptual apprehension” might be thought of simply in terms of cognitive and physiological processes grounded in an immediate physical and experiential¹ context, and might include all of the cognitive processes encompassed by Onians' “primal unity of mind” (perception, thought, emotion, volition) (Onians 1973:16).

Prior to Heraclitus, Leshner observes, the word ζυνήμι followed a model in which the connections between ideas or concepts (or what I’ve described as the inferential moves of the conceptual domain to which they belong) are firmly rooted in physical contact. This could, for instance, involve the immediate perceptual contact between an individual and what he perceives or hears,²³⁴ heeds,²³⁵ or notices.²³⁶ Yet it might also involve other kinds of contact between two physical objects – for instance, the confluence of two rivers²³⁷ or the clashing of armies in battle.²³⁸ In Heraclitus, Leshner points out, the word is used in a new way, which emphasizes the insufficiency of physical contact for comprehension. In D1/B1, for instance, he speaks of how humans fail to comprehend an object of perception – that is, the heard logos. Similarly, he tells us that most people undergo experiences yet remain like the inexperienced. That is, insofar as they fulfil the literal physical conditions for experience¹, yet fail to grasp the significance of what they encounter, they do not fully “take it in” and thus do not truly experience² it. Such people are like sleepers even when awake²³⁹ – that is, they are in physical contact with the shared waking world, yet in some sense fail to perceive or recognize that world. In D4/B34, Heraclitus again places “uncomprehending men” (ἄξύνετοι) in physical contact with something with which they are, in some sense, out of cognitive contact (since “having heard, they resemble the deaf”²⁴⁰ and since they are “absent while present”²⁴¹).²⁴² As Leshner observes, Heraclitus’ emphasis upon

²³⁴ E.g., *Od.* 4.76-77.

²³⁵ E.g., *Od.* 1.271.

²³⁶ E.g., *Od.* 18.34.

²³⁷ *Od.* 10.515.

²³⁸ E.g., *Il.* 1.8; *Il.* 7.210; Hes. *Theog.* 667.

²³⁹ Sleep and waking are complex and sometimes equivocal concepts in Heraclitus. I consider them in greater detail at pp. 201-203.

²⁴⁰ ἀκούσαντες κωφοῖσιν εἰκόασι.

²⁴¹ παρόντας ἀπείναι.

²⁴² Leshner’s casting of this issue as involving physical contact without cognitive contact is helpful in bringing out the nature and import of the paradox, but misleading in that it analyzes away a paradox that Heraclitus likely intended his audience to encounter as a more sustained challenge. For Heraclitus and his audience, as I’ve suggested (and will discuss in greater depth in Chapter 3), the conceptual is much more bound up with the perceptual than it is for us. What this implies is that the failure to comprehend is also a failure to hear – what we fail to experience² reflectively,

physical contact that falls short of the requirements for comprehension seems to go hand-in-hand with the fact that his own model of comprehension involves a kind of “bringing together” that requires something more than immediate and passive perceptual contact – specifically, it involves a “bringing together” based on conceptual relations that apply across a range of physical-perceptual contexts. It is this latter model that allows us to recognize unification in things that are not only opposed, but are, in some cases, incapable of being present in the same temporal-physical location – for instance, winter and summer (D48/B67) or life and death (D53/B48; D70/B62). In this sense, Heraclitus’ use of the word *ξυνίημι* serves two overlapping functions. On the one hand, it highlights the gap between mere perceptual contact and comprehension. On the other hand, in doing so, it offers a model of comprehension less circumscribed by the specific and immediate contexts within which perception occurs, and the kinds of physical connections between objects that occur within such contexts.²⁴³

One obvious advantage, for Heraclitus, of conceptually-rooted connections is that they give us a way to connect things that is consistent and continuous – or, in other words, “common”. This is in contrast with the idiosyncratic kinds of patterns that result from the physical contact model of connection, since, on the latter model, the common factor among any accumulated set of connections is the individual who has experienced¹ those connections. That is, the connections are related to one another *through* the individual, and are brought together on the basis of the significance they have for that specific individual and his community in a particular context at a particular moment. Thus, the reason that the physical-perceptual contact model of connection and comprehension leads to idiosyncratic modes of thought is that the kinds

we fail, in some sense, to experience¹ at all. On the other hand, the fact that we use our senses as humans and use discourse implies that we are in contact with the *logos* (cognitively as well as perceptually), which underpins these, so that there is a minimalist sense in which even the uncomprehending possess experience².

²⁴³ Leshner 1983: 163-167.

of “experiences¹” that form the basis for connection are inseparable from an immediate context that is itself made up of objects of direct perceptual apprehension, along with the specific physical connections among objects that might appear salient in that context. As a result, relation is understood in terms of specific instances of connection that appear in discrete, specific contexts rather than in terms of the consistent pattern that all connections follow. This means that the same two terms might follow very different rules of inferences or connection at different times. For instance, Hesiod in his *Theogony* provides two different models of the relation between Day and Night. Early in the poem, he tells us that Night gives birth to Day (124). Later, he describes Night and Day perpetually changing places: “The one is about to go in and the other is going out the door, and never does the house hold them both inside, but always the one goes out from the house and passes over the earth, while the other, in turn, remaining inside the house, waits for the time of her own departure, until it comes”²⁴⁴ (743-757). In the first passage, Night and Day are distinct entities, and exist in a relation of asymmetrical dependence.²⁴⁵ In the second passage, Night and Day are interdependent in the sense that both occupy the same spaces in cyclical alternation, with neither present in the same space at the same time. In this second passage, Day and Night, in the incompatibility of their physical presence and the interdependence of their motions, are a unity²⁴⁶ – yet this fact, as Heraclitus complains in D25a/B57, goes unnoticed by Hesiod. In other words, Hesiod’s own discourse reveals the unity of opposites, in a sense, yet Hesiod himself fails to learn from that discourse, remaining “like the inexperienced, although having had experience”²⁴⁷ (D1/B1).

²⁴⁴ ἡ μὲν ἔσω καταβήσεται, ἡ δὲ θύραζε ἔρχεται, οὐδέ ποτ’ ἀμφοτέρως δόμος ἐντὸς ἔργει, ἀλλ’ αἰεὶ ἑτέρη γε δόμων ἔκτοσθεν ἐοῦσα γαῖαν ἐπιστρέφεται, ἡ δ’ αὖ δόμου ἐντὸς ἐοῦσα μίμνει τὴν αὐτῆς ὥρην ὁδοῦ, ἔστ’ ἂν ἵκηται. (Trans. Most).

²⁴⁵ Robinson 1987: 120.

²⁴⁶ See, for instance, this model of what it for the opposites to be “one” or “the same” via cyclical alternation in D67/B126 and D68/B88.

²⁴⁷ ἀπείροισιν εἰκόασι, πειρώμενοι

The problem is not so much a failure to use *any* conceptual relations at all. As this example suggests, even discourses that base their view of connection upon physical contact make implicit use of conceptual relations – in particular, those primary conceptual relations, sameness and difference – that underpin discourse, thought, and perception and volition. Such relations are necessary to all distinctions and all category-making, including those that employ even the most rudimentary forms of plurality-in-unity. What Hesiod fails to do is to recognize the inconsistency among these relations – he fails to connect the Night-Day relation in the context of one narrative (the narrative of the coming-to-be of the ordered world) to the Night-Day relation in the context of another narrative (the narrative of the upholding of the order of the world). The problem, specifically, is not the inconsistency as such, but an obliviousness to any overarching relation that would make it possible to bring together these two narratives into a single frame. The consistency that conceptual relations afford does not imply lack of contradiction, but rather offers the possibility of attending to such contradictions where they occur. In fact, one of the important characteristics of conceptual relations is the degree to which they allow us to locate more than one form of relation in the same place at the same time – especially since, for Heraclitus, one of the most important functions that they serve is in allowing us to recognize that things may be at once exclusive of and interdependent with one another. This latter function permits us to conceptualize the relation between categories as unity-in-plurality – that is, as a unity made from the interdependence of distinct (specifically, conflicting) parts. By contrast, the idiosyncratic model of relation-making can only be sustained on the plurality-in-unity model, in part because it remains tied to the types and tokens relevant to one’s immediate physical-perceptual context. Moreover, as long as one remains within the perceptual-physical model of contact, the independent unity of each type, like the “sameness” of all the numerically distinct

tokens of a given type, remains unchallenged because the only standard by which sameness of the tokens is measured, and the only source of the unity of the types, is the limited range of tokens that are salient within a specific perceptual-physical context.

In D25a/B57, Heraclitus presses his point even further, since he ultimately casts Hesiod's failure to recognize the unity of opposites as a failure to make use of the fundamental conceptual relations necessary to discourse. He says that Hesiod failed to know night and day. This is not just any pair of opposites – it is, for the ancient Greeks, as for us, an emblem of contrast, and thus the most widespread and evident instance of the basic relation of difference. The sameness or oneness of day and night might also have had some immediate appeal to the audience, since it is a paradox that appears within an everyday operation – that of the counting of days, whose structure as a single unit of day and night would have been particularly evident for the ancient Greek, who reckoned days by the onset of night (that is, from sunset to sunset, rather than from sunrise to sunrise).²⁴⁸ Heraclitus' claim that Hesiod fails to recognize day and night, then, is paradoxical, since in using discourse at all, Hesiod necessarily makes use of these basic relations. This paradox is, in fact, at the core of Heraclitus' talk of human thought and human discourse, since all humans make use of the discursive connections upon which language depends – although most fail to comprehend these connections, and thus fail to understand their own language (D33/B107). More precisely, they fail to comprehend what they are saying, perceiving or even thinking – just as they passively absorb the Homeric narrative pervaded by illustrations of the strife that binds together opposed forces,²⁴⁹ and just as they undergo the reality of constant

²⁴⁸ Ydit 1981: 25.

²⁴⁹ See, for instance, the repeated imagery of strife as a rope or line (or even a circle) that binds together the two opposing armies equally: *Il.* 11.336-7; 13.358-361; 17.389-400; 12.432-436; 15.410-413; 16.658-662.

conflict both among internal forces and against external ones,²⁵⁰ while remaining so absorbed in their own immediate, unreflective experience¹ of these things that they fail to recognize in them the common structure of human thought.²⁵¹ That is, they fail to achieve the kind of orientation that constitutes listening to the logos – an orientation capable of recognizing a consistent pattern rooted in the interdependence of difference or opposition and sameness or unity.

In other words, the same accusation Heraclitus levels against Hesiod is, equally, applicable to Hesiod's audience. Even the most idiosyncratic "thought", and even the most superficial grasp of discourse, depends upon the conceptual connections afforded by the logos. Yet as long as the audience's use of these connections remains implicit – as long as their basic approach is that of the physical contact model of comprehension – the inconsistency goes unnoticed, because the relations are organized in accordance with immediate experience¹ and are allowed to shift in accordance with the shifting context and responses of the relation-maker. In this way, the implications of Hesiod's different characterizations of the relationship between Night and Day go unnoticed by an audience that is carried along from one (imaginative) perceptual-physical context to another by the familiar flow of sound, image and narrative – and which is thus in the position of the uncomprehending men of D1/B1, who, like sleepers, fail to recognize in one moment what they have encountered the moment before. This failure is both metaphoric and literal. On the one hand, on the physical contact model of comprehension, according to which knowledge accrues to us simply through the accumulation of physical-

²⁵⁰ Hussey 1982: 46-47 emphasizes the way in which Heraclitus draws on the reality of "constant internal struggle" (for internal conflict, see e.g., D116/B85), which also involves the conflict between human aspirations and the "way things are as matter of brute fact" (59). Hussey notes that Heraclitus not only alludes to the human reality of perpetual conflict in articulating the structure of things, but actually evokes it, so that "even his generalizing statements about the cosmos are conveyed in the vivid language of felt experience" (58).

²⁵¹ Compare D2/B2.

perceptual experience¹,²⁵² the most basic kind of comprehension might be the recognition of the same object from one moment to the next.²⁵³ Heraclitus' claim that most people prove incapable of such a recognition would seem, then, to illustrate the epistemic impoverishment of those who fail to grasp the conceptually-rooted connections of the logos, comparing such people to those who fail to make even this rudimentary kind of perceptual connection. On the other hand, Heraclitus suggests that those who cannot attend to conceptual connections may be quite literally unable to bring together their experiences from one moment to the next, especially when there is conflict between the perceptual-physical frameworks to which each belongs (as in the case of the two Night-Day narratives – and as in the case of night and day themselves).

A mode of relation-making wholly rooted in physical contact among particulars is, then, insufficient for “listening to the logos.” The logos uses the common conceptual tools of discourse to draw out the patterns to be found in our manner of connecting things to one another, on the assumption that all things must be connected using the same pattern or mode of relation, regardless of who is connecting them. By contrast, the traditional model of comprehension requires no consistent mode of connection, since it derives its “pattern” of connections from physical contact. In other words, an individual will establish his own idiosyncratic mode of connecting a given set of objects depending on the ways in which he has come into contact with those objects and the significance that they have for him within his immediate context of experience¹. This latter factor suggests that his (current) needs, preferences and values will be the

²⁵² For the primacy of this model of knowledge in traditional Archaic epistemology, see Snell 1953:137. Snell describes this view of knowledge as the “knowledge-experience ratio.” On such a view, knowledge increases proportionally with one’s range and number of immediate physical-perceptual experiences¹, such that age and extensive travels appear as sufficient conditions for wisdom. I examine this model in greater detail in Chapter 4, section II.

²⁵³ So Fränkel 1973: 391, who notes that the background here is “the memory, which is responsible for continuity.” See also Taran 1986: 9-10.

guiding impetus behind these sorts of connections, urging him to turn aside from “the logos that is common”, and live “as if he had his own thought” (D2/B2).²⁵⁴

Up to this point, I’ve offered a certain amount of historical context in order to give some sense of the starting point of Heraclitus’ audience – and thus, of the significance of the shift that he demands of them in the substituting the conceptual relation model of comprehension for the physical-perceptual contact model. Yet the nature of this shift, and the character of Heraclitus’ project, cannot be clearly indicated without some discussion of the nature of “conceptual thought”²⁵⁵ in this period (insofar as we can now reconstruct it). Such a discussion also helps us to see the intimate connection between, on the one hand, the shift from the physical-perceptual contact model of comprehension to the conceptual relation model of comprehension, and, on the other hand, the shift from an approach to concepts (and the phenomena they describe) rooted in plurality-in-unity to an approach rooted in unity-in-plurality. My discussion of Archaic thought and conceptualization follows Mourelatos’ “character powers” model of Archaic thought and conceptualization (itself a refinement of Heidel’s landmark 1906 study on the substantializing

²⁵⁴ Heraclitus was not the first to recognize that when inferences are grounded wholly or primarily in the specific physical-perceptual context of an individual’s experience, this leads to a highly circumscribed epistemic scope. The Archaic poets describe the human knowledge as restricted to almost nothing by the fact that the human mind and thought are formed by the immediate objects of fleeting experience. Thus, as Archilochus puts it: “The mind of mortal man is of the same sort as the day that Zeus brings, for he thinks such things as he meets with” (τοῖσι ἀνθρώποισι θυμός...γίνεται θνητοῖς, ὅποιον Ζεὺς ἐφ’ ἡμέρην ἄγῃ, καὶ φρονέουσι τοῖ’ ὅποιοις ἐγκυρέωσιν ἔργμασιν. Archil., fr. 131 and 132 (West), as combined by Jacobs. Text follows Gerber; trans. Leshner. For very similar sentiments see also *Od.* 18.130-137 and Semon., fr. 1; citations in Leshner 1999: 225-226). It’s true that Archaic “folk epistemology” allowed that the accumulation of experience¹ led to a proportional increase in knowledge, so that past experience could be brought to bear on the present. Yet even for the poets, the most important function of this knowledge-experience ratio is often to emphasize how little human beings know, since it places our limited range of experiences¹ in implicit or explicit contrast with the much wider scope of the gods (Wians 2009: 182-183). Moreover, as Archilochus (with the parallel passage in the *Odyssey*) implies, even our ability to benefit from previous experience¹ is skewed by what we happen to be experiencing¹ now – just as, for Heraclitus’ uncomprehending humans, the network of connections based on previous experiences¹ shifts in relation to their current physical-perceptual context, so that they do not recognize even the things that they encountered a day or a moment before (D1/B1; D3/B17). A crucial difference, of course, is that Heraclitus points to a solution by suggesting that attention to the common conceptual relations may make it possible to think in a manner less restricted by one’s immediate context.

²⁵⁵ Again, see the stipulative definition of “concept” provided at pp. 54-56.

character of Presocratic ideas of “qualities”).²⁵⁶ This model, discussed in detail in the final part of this chapter section, highlights the highly concrete character of Archaic thought. While such concrete thought does allow for a kind of “conceptualization”, it involves the (for us, highly counterintuitive) use of concrete individuals as a means by which other concrete individuals might be categorized and understood. This is, in turn, closely associated with the kinds of unfixed, highly context-sensitive modes of connection arising from models of comprehension and connection rooted wholly in physical-perceptual contact. Insofar as such a conceptual structure can be understood as having rough analogues of “tokens” and “types”, these can only allow for a plurality-in-unity model of thought and phenomena, since they lack the kind of coherent interrelations that allow for – and, in Heraclitus’ hands, push towards – a conception of the world as unity-in-plurality.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ As Mourelatos 2008: 306 observes, the general outlines of Heidel’s approach are widely accepted in the scholarship (with extensive list of examples, ranging from Vlastos to von Fritz to Kahn, at 306-307n12; more recent examples include Moravcsik 1991 – who follows Heidel 1906 in speaking of the qualities as ingredients in the more complex individuals to which they belong – and McKirahan 2010 – who follows Cornford 1930 in speaking of them as “quality-things”).

²⁵⁷ The attempt to give an account of conceptual thought in this period presents certain difficulties. The late Archaic philosopher occupies a strange and liminal position in relation to, on the one hand, the highly concrete thought of the Archaic poets, and, on the other hand, the rapidly increasing levels of abstraction achieved by early Classical philosophers, by the sophists and by Plato. As I explore in greater detail in Chapter 3, section I, Heraclitus’ emphasis upon discursive and conceptual relations is not the sudden leap from concrete to abstract thought that even his most rigorous interpreters tend to imply through the sorts of conceptual and terminology shorthand sometimes required in order to describe the very real conceptual innovations that he makes. The difficulty presented by this sort of conceptual thought is in many ways even greater than the difficulty presented by the Archaic poets – if only because we are faced not only with the alien character of Archaic concrete thought, but also with the intermediate forms of concrete-abstract conceptualization that begin to appear at this time. There are serious difficulties involved in locating a given thinker of the Archaic and early Classical period at a precise point along the continuum between concrete and abstract thought. While my discussion below – and, especially, my account of these issues in Chapter 3, section I – will provide as specific an account of Heraclitus’ location on the concrete-abstract continuum as can be justified by our evidence, the most important features of this “location”, as I understand, are as follows: (1) an increasing movement towards abstraction that looks for patterns of relation-making across different perceptual physical contexts, emphasizing “common” inferential or relational modes while diminishing (though never completely extinguishing) the attention to and interpretive centrality of one’s own, immediate physical-perceptual context; (2) the fundamentally experiential^{1/2/3} character of the audience’s relation to discourse involved even where that discourse invites a comparatively abstract orientation; (3) the presence of a continuing pull towards the immediate concrete experience¹ which Heraclitus not only tempers (as I show in this chapter) but also exploits (as I show in Chapter 4).

In what follows, I speak not only of “types” and “tokens”, but also of “qualities” and “relations.” Yet, as the following account should make clear, these categories were not present – or, at least, were not at all well-defined – within traditional Archaic thought. In fact, although (as I argue) we have reason to believe that Heraclitus had a fairly advanced conception of relation, his conception of the distinction between an object and a quality or attribute may have been rather less well-defined.²⁵⁸

On the Archaic “character powers” based approach to the world, the notion of being is univocal: if something (whether an individual, type of individual, quality or relation) exists, then it exists in physical space.²⁵⁹ Categories of things – types of things, qualities of things, and relations between things – must be understood as existing in the manner of objects in physical space. Relations do so by being embodied in the connections between objects in physical space.²⁶⁰ Qualities do so by constituting the “stuff” out of which an individual object is made.²⁶¹ In other words, the fearfulness, speed and grace of a deer act as ingredients or “character powers” of the deer, which are mixed together to give us both the nature and the material existence of the deer, as salt and water (or “saltiness” and “fluidity”) are mixed to form the

²⁵⁸ So, e.g., Kirk 1962: 154; Moravcsik 1991: 558, 560; Heidel 1906: 337.

²⁵⁹ Mourelatos 1973: 16-17. See also Moravcsik 1991 on the “constitutive model” of the world in early Greek thought. I follow Mourelatos here in understanding the “character powers” model as a “broad strokes” picture of the conceptual mode that dominated through most of the Archaic period, as attested in the extant poetry of this period; this would likely have been the general starting point of such thinkers as Heraclitus and Parmenides (though my suspicion is that Parmenides was able to draw upon the work of Heraclitus – but not vice versa – in crafting his own philosophy). The character powers model is resisted in different ways by both Heraclitus and Parmenides, and I do not mean to imply that the latter, any more than the former, is wholly circumscribed by it. Xenophanes might also be seen resisting it – though perhaps less by successful moves towards abstraction than by different expressions of the insufficiency of purely concrete thought based in one’s own physical-perceptual context. Given the impoverished state of verbatim evidence for other Archaic philosophers, it is difficult to determine to what degree the Milesians, for instance, moved beyond this model.

²⁶⁰ See above, p. 53.

²⁶¹ See also McKirahan 2010: 45-46 for the conception, in pre-Platonic thought, of qualities as “things” or subjects, rather than as attributes of things or subjects.

sea.²⁶² Thus we know these qualities through our direct acquaintance with the individuals in whom they are mixed together and whom they constitute.

There is a sense in which qualities, or types formed by particular mixtures of qualities, can function as “concepts”²⁶³ that are independent of specific, known individuals in whom specific qualities are found, or whom those mixtures of qualities constitute. However, the paradigmatic instance of such a concept is the imagistic one, which still requires concrete thinking rooted in a specific, (imagined or real) physical-perceptual context.

Within this model, “concepts” of qualities and types depend upon “archetypal individuals” whose possession of particular character powers is sufficiently marked as to make it possible for that individual to actually imbue other individuals with a particular “power” or for that individual to be identified with the general category to which they belong. For instance, the warmth of the sun, or the beauty of Aphrodite, is “contagious” in such a way that those whom they touch also become warm or beautiful.²⁶⁴ Thus a particularly seductive or beautiful person is imbued with some of the constituent elements of Aphrodite. Similarly, a particular “type” such as woman (γυνή) is expressed through an “archetypal individual” constituted by exactly the right mixture of character powers. For instance, the “type” man might be represented by an individual, such as Helen, who possesses to the highest degree the appropriate character powers such as age

²⁶² Mourelatos 1973: 18.

²⁶³ Again, I follow the sense of this word stipulated at pp. 54-56.

²⁶⁴ Mourelatos 1973: 18-19. There is a range of possible forms of “physical contact” involved here; even our earliest Archaic texts require us to understand such contact broadly. For instance, one important form of conceptualization in the Homeric poems is simile. The likeness between a deer and a soldier suddenly struck with fear may not imply physical contact of the most immediate kind; nonetheless, as Lloyd 1992: 180-182 argues, resemblance does involve an assumption of a physical connection (rather than, for instance, a set of abstractable characteristics shared by two objects). Such a belief, Lloyd points out, underlies Greek religious practices such as portent reading and homeopathic rites, since such a physical connection supports the view that what happens to a given object will also happen to another object that resembles it. Cornford 1957: 132 argues that the notion of likeness for the Archaic Greeks involved the notion of a “continuous vehicle or medium” linking like to like.

(childbearing years), sexual magnetism/appetites, marital status,²⁶⁵ and the ability to conduct herself as mistress of a household.²⁶⁶ In this way, it becomes possible, in a sense, to classify individuals as “tokens” of a particular “type” through their resemblance to the archetypal individual, without those types having a different ontological status than the individuals, since the types themselves *are* individuals. Such archetypal individuals thus provide the basic psychological and logical material for thinking about categories, and about relations between categories – that is, for constructing a kind of conceptual domain on the basis of types and qualities.

This model of types and qualities suggests that some qualifications need to be added to the account of plurality-in-unity that I sketched in section I above. The key features of plurality-in-unity, as described in Chapter 1, section III, are that individuals that belong to the same category are: (1) numerically distinct, independent entities (and therefore a plurality); (2) uniform with respect to some common nature (and therefore a unity). If we apply these two criteria to the character powers model, we find that here, too, the individual-type relation is conceived of in terms of a “plurality-in-unity.” We can’t, of course, claim that the collective unity of the numerically distinct individuals belonging to a given type arises from their possession of an essence in the sense of a clear defining characteristic. Nor can we strictly ascribe the unity of such a set of individuals to their sharing a common, static set of characteristics which is reproduced in each and every individual, by virtue of which we can view them, at least from a certain level of abstraction, as interchangeable members of a single set.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Helen’s “infidelity” is irrelevant here. In fact, Homer’s depiction suggests that she is in some sense married twice over.

²⁶⁶ Some of these are, in turn, gifts bestowed upon Helen by Aphrodite, who, however, lacks those “wifely” characteristics that Helen possesses and that are bound up with her humanity (notably, her observance of the domestic rituals). See below for caveats on Helen’s capacity to represent the type marked by γυνή, and how it points to the more general issues associated with the classification through an archetypal individual.

²⁶⁷ Bortoft 1996: 83-85.

The character powers model depends upon a view of the world as made up entirely of numerically distinct individuals, each of which is real or existent in the same way. Again, although the character powers model does involve rough analogues to “types” and “qualities”, enabling those who use the model to structure their world according to organizing principles of a conceptual domain, these categories are not at all well-defined, since they are not abstractions, but are, in each case, individuals, possessing the same characteristics as the individuals who belong to these categories (though they usually possess those characteristics to a much higher degree). The paradigm for character powers based concepts, as Mourelatos observes, are “partitive, empirically homogeneous substances such as gold, salt, honey and wine.”²⁶⁸ These are concrete, yet, owing to their uniformity, make it possible for us to think of them as materials with a generalizable nature – that is, we think of quantities of honey stored in different jars as, in a sense, the “same thing”, yet also as individuals, in the sense that particular jars or other “units” of honey are numerically distinct. They offer us, in other words, a clear illustration of the way in which the plurality-in-unity model operates even in the absence of such concepts as “defining essence.” They are, in this way, more proximate (compared to the archetypal individuals) to a structure of thought on its way towards abstraction.

The role of homogeneous materials as a paradigm for the type-token relationship on the character powers model underlines the fact that the character powers model of individuals, like the substance-essence model, depends upon a certain sort of uniformity.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ Mourelatos 1973: 18, 21.

²⁶⁹ This uniformity is further illustrated by the fact that the comparisons that serve to pick out particular “character powers” often incorporate highly static “archetypal individuals.” For instance, Archaic poets frequently use animals such as deer, lions, and donkeys to express various psychological states or traits. The traits that these animals serve to express are highly consistent in early Greek poetry. As Lloyd 1992: 184 puts it “the lion is *always ferocious*, and the deer is *always cowardly*. It seems that the early Greeks held that animals not only symbolised certain characteristics, but *permanently manifested* them.”

In general, however, the materials or individuals that perform the “categorizing” function on the character powers model generate categories whose boundaries are more fluid and less consistent than those of more “abstract” categories, inviting a more idiosyncratic and context-dependent application.²⁷⁰ Those who are missing some of Helen’s character powers may or may not be seen as belonging to the class γυνή – no trait seems to constitute the “essence” of “woman” as such. Γυνή, in a general sense, means “woman” as opposed to “man” – though since marital status was a central feature of what it meant to be a woman, it also implied “wife” (as distinct from “maiden”/“unmarried woman” [παρθένος] or as distinct from “female companion”/mistress/prostitute [ἑταίρα]). Since the life of a female child, from infancy on, was directed towards the fulfillment of her function in becoming a wife,²⁷¹ both a maiden and a mistress or prostitute is in some sense an incomplete γυνή. A παρθένος is a potential wife; a ἑταίρα is a wife whose wifedom lacks both the important legal features of that institution (that her husband’s family, rather than her father’s, possess the rights over and responsibilities for her), and, as a consequence, cannot fulfil her central (if ambivalent) role in providing offspring to her husband.²⁷² In *Works and Days*, Hesiod’s references to “woman” (γυνή) lay particular emphasis on the sexual and appetitive features of the archetypal individual woman-as-wife,

²⁷⁰ There are, of course, problems in determining the boundaries of more abstract categories as well – even here, it can prove difficult to provide a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for identifying an object as a token of a given type. The problems presented by abstract types in which, as Wittgenstein holds, “no common element is to be found” in each and every token of a type (cited in Hallet 1977: 33) are however, different in kind from the problems associated with types understood as archetypal individuals. In both cases, one might argue, with Wittgenstein, that the model of categorization is based upon a kind of “family resemblance” involving a cluster of shared traits that need not appear in any consistent configuration in all of the tokens. Our determination of a thing’s membership in an abstract category, however, does not require us to compare two individuals (the “token individual” and the “type individual”) as individuals in whom the relevant traits are uniquely blended. Rather, we are able to separate out the traits belonging to the cluster, noting that one token of a given type resembles another token of that same type by virtue of traits x, y and z.

²⁷¹ Beaumont 2013.

²⁷² Silver 2018 interestingly argues for a use of ἑταίρα to refer to an unmarried woman who possessed independent legal status – who was the burden/property of neither husband nor father.

while using the term γυνή also refers to women as a whole class in his Pandora myth²⁷³ (with Pandora, of course, functioning as an archetypal individual woman). Here, the marital status of a γυνή is central to how the term (and the archetypal individual) is understood. In line with the Pandora myth, Hesiod's uses of the term γυνή emphasize the woman-wife as a passive destructive force, describing how she (and the children that she bears) lay waste to the fruits of her husband's agricultural labours.²⁷⁴ Yet at *Op.* 405-406, Hesiod uses γυνή to mean something like "mistress" or "concubine", and the term loses some of its negative aspects. In this case, he explicitly distinguishes between "woman" (γυνή) and "wife" (γαμετή). In counselling Perses to remain single, he tells him to seek out a γυνή - not a γαμετή but a female slave, who can satisfy his sexual needs. Thus, the lack of a particular character power such as wifeness or powerful (destructive) appetites might keep someone from being a "woman" in one case, but not in another. This kind of instability in the application of categories provides additional motivation for Heraclitus' shift away from a focus on classification by archetypal individuals, and towards a focus on the conceptual relations that underpin all classification and categorization. Since character powers-based concepts depend upon a paradigmatic individual which is a perceptible object in physical space, and which is in some sense physically linked to that which it categorizes, such concepts are entirely circumscribed by the physical-perceptual connection model of comprehension, and, as such, invite an idiosyncratic elaboration of concepts. The idiosyncratic aspect of character powers-based concepts is particularly unavoidable given that inferential moves between categories are made on the basis of particular instances of resemblance between two perceptible, physical individuals (for instance the token-individual and the type-individual). As a result, one's immediate physical-perceptual context (that is, the

²⁷³ E.g., *Op.* 80.

²⁷⁴ E.g., *Op.* 374-376.

perceptible, physical individual with which one is in contact²⁷⁵ and the specific details of the situation within which that individual appears) will play a disproportionate role in structuring one's thought. For instance, in the case of the "type" γυνή, discussed above, the immediate context in which categorization occurs, and the personal experiences¹ of the categorizer, dictate what kinds of traits might be most salient to a given category, and what traits might be dispensable. In Hesiod's general account of womankind in the Pandora myth, the marital status of a γυνή is central (along with the responsibility of the husband for offspring which that status brings). Yet he is also able to treat the category along exclusively biological lines, using the word in such a way that it stands in distinction to "wife".

Concepts based in the character powers model share in common with the Heraclitean logos the fact that they too, are structured with reference to oppositions – as noted above, opposition implicitly structures even the logoi of those who fail to attend to conceptual relations. For instance, the concept γυνή as "woman(-wife)" depends upon its contrast with its opposite "man," but also with other opposites, such as "maiden" and "mistress". Key character powers of the mature woman include a social identity rooted in wifedom and a "physiological identity" rooted in the tendency either to display or draw out base appetites. Such character powers help to distinguish "woman" from its opposite, "man", whose social identity is rooted to a far greater extent in the polis, and whose physiological identity is less moored to the appetitive. On the character powers model – in which conceptual domains are organized by relations to archetypal individuals (either as representative "types" or representative "qualities") who exist in physical

²⁷⁵ The immediate physical-perceptual context might be an actual or an imaginative one. The conditions of physiological arousal associated with the familiar phonic patterns, movements, imagery etc. of a poem (for instance) could be a source of physical-perceptual context as immediate as any deriving from one's personal experience¹. Havelock 1963 argues that the multi-dimensional sensory experience¹ of poetry for the Archaic audience transformed the immediate personal experience¹ of the poem's character(s) or speaker(s) into the immediate personal experience¹ of the audience (see especially 145-160).

space and in some form of “physical contact” with their “tokens”²⁷⁶ – relations among concepts are firmly tied to contact between things in physical space.²⁷⁷ At the same time, the application of concepts depends upon the specific physical-perceptual context within which they are used. Yet given that this model makes use of opposition in its structure, it already contains the seeds that will lead towards a more abstract approach to conceptual thought, since the recognition that a given “concept” depends upon the opposed concept carries with it (implicitly) the recognition of a conceptual structure that leads away from a purely physical organizing principle based on connections among objects in physical space – specifically, the conceptual structure based on organizing principles of mutual exclusion and mutual entailment. In other words, any use of opposition as an organizing principle implies the use of the relations of sameness and difference, where the latter implies the conceptual and/or physical incompatibility or mutual exclusion of two things (at least in some aspect or in some respect), and the former implies their conceptual or physical interdependence, identity, or invariable succession – that is, their mutual entailment.

Nonetheless, while the character powers based model of conceptual thought is at least partly organized by opposition, the importance of opposition as a relation goes largely unrecognized, since the key feature in determining the nature of the relation, and its logical implications, is the context to which it is applied and the particular individuals for whom the opposites act as “character powers” within that context. As a result, opposition is cognized first and foremost as a physical-perceptual relation between particular pairs of types, tokens, or qualities, with the significance of the relation closely bound up with an epistemic agent’s immediate physical-perceptual context. Yet, as I argued above, a model of category relations

²⁷⁶ This is only derivatively true in the case of “types.” As a token of the type “woman”, I am in physical contact with the archetypal individuals Aphrodite, Athena, and Pandora in that the various characterological elements or “ingredients” that the former two placed in the latter (devouring desire and a deceptive and crafty disposition: *Op.* 65-80), were, at the same time, placed in me.

²⁷⁷ Mourelatos 1973: 19.

rooted in such perceptual-physical connections does not allow for recognition of the consistent interdependence of the primary conceptual relations, sameness and difference, nor can it acknowledge the necessary presence of both of these relations in opposition (or, by extension, the simultaneous presence of mutual exclusion and mutual entailment). Since it is the interweaving of these two relations that makes up the Heraclitean unity of opposites, and since the latter acts as the primary basis for and expression of unity-in-plurality, this means that a character powers-based approach to opposition cannot provide the conceptual tools necessary for a comprehension of reality as unity-in-plurality.

Thus, the recognition of the interconnected character of opposites serves to facilitate the movement towards a view of the world as unity-in-plurality. This is the work of the logos: it teaches us to separate the things which had been blended together on the character powers version of plurality-in-unity – or, rather, which had not been distinguished with the kind of attention and consistency that allows us to see the significance of that separation. At the same time, it is this approach to separation and distinction that allows us to bring things together, to comprehend them. In other words, it teaches us to see the nature of the opposites, emphasizing their division from one another in such a way that we can, at the same time, see their unity, recognizing, in the whole that they make through their difference, the presence of unity-in-plurality.

It's important to reiterate that the “abstraction” of this mode of thought is relative to the highly concrete mode of the existing framework: we shouldn't view the opposites as fully abstract concepts belonging to a schematized inferential structure. Beyond the usual dangers of anachronism, we risk losing sight of one aspect of the context-dependence of “character powers”

that remains central for Heraclitus' use of the opposites to articulate unity-in-plurality: the fact that the oppositions can be used in different ways, and even in apparently contradictory ways.²⁷⁸

The Heraclitean unity-in-plurality is primarily expressed through the *implicit* connection between (1) the unity of opposites as constitutive of the nature of individual (kinds of) things; and (2) the unity of opposites as constitutive of the nature of all things taken as a whole – that is, the cosmos itself.²⁷⁹ Yet the absence of a conception of essential attributes as such allows for a somewhat more context-dependent approach to the nature of things, whereby more than one pair of unified opposites can describe the nature of something.²⁸⁰ This allows Heraclitus to develop a conception of unity-in-plurality that draws attention to the interdependence of multiple pairs of opposites, yet to do so from within a conceptual framework that still feels the tug towards concrete thought from within a specific, physical-perceptual context.

II: Getting from Experience¹ to Experience²: The Logos-Grounded Orientation

As section I above highlights, the logos' attention to conceptual relations does not simply teach the audience to recognize the way in which discourse, or even their own thought, operates.

Rather, it offers a new orientation to the world by drawing attention to the structure of their own discourse and thought, teaching them to see “both words and things according to their nature”²⁸¹ (D1/B1). This seems to invite an objection. If Heraclitus wishes his audience to turn away from perceptual contact, and towards conceptual or discursive relations, then what are we to make of

²⁷⁸ For instance, D100/B36 creates an opposition between water and soul and invokes the expected opposition between water and fire directly in D86/B31. Yet in D116/B85, fire and soul appear themselves as opposed forces.

²⁷⁹ See, however, Chapter 5, section, for some discussion of how Heraclitus moves from (1) to (2).

²⁸⁰ On this point, and on the opposites as constituting the nature of individual things in the absence of Aristotelean essences, see further Chapter 3.

²⁸¹ καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων...κατὰ φύσιν.

the apparent primacy that Heraclitus seems, at times, to give to perception?²⁸² In this section, I'll address some of the fragments that purport to support the picture of Heraclitus-as-empiricist, while showing how the orientation towards conceptual relations facilitated by the logos is intimately bound up with audience's orientation towards the empirical world. This orientation, which I label "bringing-together-in-conflict" is an expression of the structure of human thought, and, as such, of the structure of things in the world (specifically, their arrangement as unity-in-plurality) as the human mind, thinking in accordance with its own nature, experiences² them.

While I would not deny that Heraclitus is concerned with the value of the senses, rightly used, I would suggest that such "right use" includes language-mediated reflection, so that perception (understood as immediate perceptual-physical contact) functions as a starting-point that overlaps with discursive reflection, but must be ordered and disciplined by the latter before it becomes a means of accessing what is common.²⁸³ In fact, as I emphasize in Chapter 3, section II, perception overlaps with thought for Heraclitus, determining our discursive categories. Yet it is only by reflecting on these categories with the aid of connected discourse that we are able to see their consistent relations and thus come to comprehend things in a unified manner. This is compatible with the view expressed by Laks 1999 that, for Heraclitus, thought and perception are not so much different faculties as different functions of the same faculty or faculties. Perception, for Heraclitus, might be thought of in terms of the immediate absorption of experience¹, while discursive thought is the reflective arrangement of experience¹ that allows for true experience².

Without such reflection, Heraclitus paradoxically denies that audience's experience even

²⁸² I've left aside one obvious objection: given the absence, for Heraclitus, of a strong distinction between the world of things and the world of concepts, and given the fact that discourse, for Heraclitus, among the objects of perception in non-trivial ways, the notion of favouring language over perception (or, more strictly, over other objects of perception) cannot be pushed too hard without danger of incoherence.

²⁸³ See analysis of D33/B107 in section II above.

qualifies *as* experience (D1/B1), their perception as perception (e.g., D4/B34), or their learning as learning (μανθάνω, D3/B17).²⁸⁴

Heraclitus' statements concerning sense perception do not suggest that he assigns the senses a special or distinctive primacy.²⁸⁵ The two main fragments cited in support of the view of Heraclitus as empiricist, D31/B55 and D32/B101a, both follow a pattern akin to the statement concerning the senses in D33/B107²⁸⁶ – that is, each presents a surface truism from Archaic “folk epistemology,” which is then complicated by other, less obvious readings. One common interpretation of D31/B55 follows the plausible translation: “All things of which there is sight, hearing, learning, these things I honour most.”²⁸⁷ On this first-pass reading of the fragment, Heraclitus seems to be mouthing a traditional commonplace. Archaic “folk epistemology” places sight, hearing, and learning on the same cognitive level, since all three can be identified with simple perceptual experience¹ and can, as such, can be identified with knowledge. This is in keeping with the fact that traditional Archaic thought neither clearly nor consistently distinguished between the immediate physical process of perception and knowledge.²⁸⁸ In other words, such a model does not recognize learning as a higher-order form of sight and hearing. Yet the grammar of this fragment is – as often with Heraclitus – less than straightforward. We can also read it as saying, “All things of which sight and hearing are learning, these things I honour most.”²⁸⁹ On this reading, sight and hearing have only a provisional value; they are honoured only insofar as they are in fact transposed into learning.

²⁸⁴ See the discussion of these “in contact/out of contact” paradoxes above, section I, this chapter.

²⁸⁵ As claimed by Barnes 1979: 147.

²⁸⁶ See analysis of this fragment p. 83ff above.

²⁸⁷ ὅσων ὄψις ἀκοή μάθησις, ταῦτα ἐγὼ προτιμέω. On the complexities raised by the grammar and terminology of this fragment (including the translation of the term μάθησις), see discussion below.

²⁸⁸ See also Chapter 4, section I on the knowledge-to-experience¹ ratio of Archaic “folk epistemology.”

²⁸⁹ This is the grammatical structure favoured by Laks & Most in their translation (though they acknowledge the ambiguity of the phrasing).

The interpretation of the fragment also seems to turn in important ways upon the translation of the word μάθησις. Marcovich translates it as “perception” in the sense of “one’s own experience.”²⁹⁰ This translation of μάθησις as “one’s own experience” points towards a subtler engagement with traditional Archaic epistemologies. It challenges the default equation of sight and hearing with knowledge. Yet insofar as μάθησις may mean at once “knowledge” and “perception”, it also creates the familiar Heraclitean paradox that perception itself may in fact fail to qualify as perception, and even outlines the conditions under which this might be so – specifically, where it involves only immediate and unreflective physical-perceptual contact, thus failing to count as experience² truly grasped for oneself. Sight and hearing are bound up with the faculty of thought for the Archaic Greek – in this sense, the unthinking use of these faculties has the effect, for Heraclitus, of cancelling out their power. These conditions are, however, highly counterintuitive, since, for an Archaic Greek, the question of whether a perceptual experience¹ was truly “one’s own” – whether it was truly within one’s cognitive grasp – would have made little sense. In fact, the epistemic importance of perception in Archaic “folk epistemology” lay precisely in the fact that it is, by definition, one’s own, that it yields direct access to the relevant epistemic objects.²⁹¹ In other words, Heraclitus may be drawing upon the traditional epistemic value of personal perceptual experience¹, while challenging the identification between genuine personal experience² and (mere) perception. This offers a further instance of the in-contact/out-of-contact paradoxes found throughout Heraclitus’ statements concerning sleeping/waking, perception/lack of perception. In all of these paradoxes, Heraclitus suggests that it is possible for

²⁹⁰ Marcovich 1967: 21. Nehamas 2002: 52 objects to Marcovich’s interpretation of μάθησις, yet he comes to a largely similar conclusion by taking μάθησις as the subject, and translating the sentence as “I prefer those things whose learning comes from seeing and hearing.” On Nehamas’ interpretation, the fragment signals a contrast between what one experiences directly, and what one encounters only through hearsay.

²⁹¹ This is a crucial factor in the “epistemic pessimism” of early Greek poetry, since the identification of knowledge with perception severely curtails our epistemic range. See, e.g., Pind. *Nem.* VI. 5-6, XI.42-46; *Od.* 18.136-7; Semon. fr. 1. See also Leshner 1999: 225-249.

people not to experience² something, even when they meet all of the perceptual-physical conditions for experience¹. Reading the fragment in this way has the advantage of retaining the various meanings that μάθησις would have had for an Archaic Greek, for whom translations that seem to us very different – “perception”, “one’s own experience”, “learning”, “knowledge” – would have been different shadings or angles on the same general concept. At the same time, it draws out the fact that Heraclitus’ paradox both retains the fundamental unity of the underlying concept and exploits the distinctions among different shades of meaning.

D32/B101a, like D31/B55 and D33/B107, seems, on the surface, to present an Archaic truism. The claim that “eyes are better witnesses than ears”²⁹² would, again, have been unproblematic for Heraclitus’ audience, restating as it does the traditional epistemic hierarchy of Archaic folk wisdom, with its emphasis upon the greater degree of credence to be found in first-hand experience¹ (or “seeing”) as contrasted with hearsay.²⁹³ Yet this fragment, like D33/B107, makes use of the word μάρτυς. The word might, of course, be understood as referring to a witness in the sense found in early epic – in which case the traditional epistemic hierarchy is undisrupted. Yet as I argued in section I above, there is reason to think that Heraclitus’ audience would also be reminded of the use of the word to refer to a procedural witness, whose primary role is to hear and understand (in the everyday sense) the spoken contract and to see and identify those involved in the contract. On this reading, the single term μάρτυς transforms the fragment from banal truism into paradox. If we understand “witness” as procedural witness, eyes cannot possibly be better witnesses than ears, since in the absence of hearing, the eyes are themselves

²⁹² ὀφθαλμοὶ τῶν ὧτων ἀκριβέστεροι μάρτυρες.

²⁹³ William Wians argues that Archaic Greek folk epistemology organized experience¹ according to a hierarchy of relative reliability. Signs are at the bottom of this hierarchy, hearing in the middle, and sight at the top (Wians, 2009:184; while the various forms of prophecy seem to complicate such a hierarchy, there are indications that the inspiration of both prophets and poets involves an experience¹ that is either explicitly visual, or corresponds to sight in its immediacy). Herodotus implicitly invokes this hierarchy when he has Candaules say to Gyges at Hdt. 1.8.2: “For it happens that the ears are less trustworthy to men than the eyes” (ὥτα γὰρ τυγχάνει ἀνθρώποισι ἐόντα ἀπιστότερα ὀφθαλμῶν).

useless for the purpose. The paradox serves to disrupt the truism, so that from one angle, hearing, through its connection with language, has epistemic primacy over sight. In this sense, it reiterates some of the ideas found in D33/B107, where the value of sense perception is contingent on reflective engagement of linguistic capacities.

At the same time, the wording of the fragment does suggest a reaffirmation or appropriation of the traditional privileging of first-hand over second-hand experience¹ (expressed within the tradition as a preference for direct visual experience¹ over hearsay). However, given that the fragment also places language at the centre of this reaffirmation, Heraclitus' notion of "first-hand experience²" is unlikely to be constituted, as on the traditional model, merely by the agent's presence for and perceptual-physical apprehension of events occurring within a specific context. Rather, as in D36/B101, it requires a kind of cognitive presence and active reflection in which language plays a central role. In other words, it suggests a model of "first-hand experience²" that coincides with the conditions for the comprehension of the logos – especially since the latter involves an orientation towards discourse that rejects the passive reception of the words of another (physical-perceptual contact) and requires the epistemic agent to actively engage their own language capacities (conceptual relations). This model of first-hand experience² also receives support from the notion of "listening to the logos" in D46/B50. In the latter fragment, too, the audience is presented with a model of "listening" for which the mere perceptual act – that is, the act of listening to a particular speaker give a particular discourse – is insufficient for comprehension. Rather, "listening to the logos" requires an active discrimination and judgement that leads to agreement (ὁμολογέω) with the logos. Here we have a double instance of the in contact/out-of-contact paradox. First of all, the audience might hear (ἀκούω) Heraclitus' individual logos without heeding (ἀκούω) its exhortation to the active reflection

demanding by the impersonal (or at least extra-personal) logos. Second, insofar as the logos coincides with the fundamental structure of human thought and discourse, the audience is automatically, unreflectively in agreement (ὁμολογέω) with the logos – yet until they reflect upon it using the common, consistent conceptual relations that constitute that structure, they remain at odds with it, mired in idiosyncratic modes of connection-making.²⁹⁴

Again, as the analysis of ξυνήμι and of D32/B101a and D33/B107 suggest, the distinction between passive perception and active reflection is a crucial one for Heraclitus' epistemology,²⁹⁵ and one in which discourse, and the conceptual relations that it facilitates, plays a central role. Yet there is no hard division for Heraclitus between our discursive thought and our sense perception, since the latter also reveals the basic dualities that make conceptual relation-grounded comprehension possible. Even before they are disciplined and set into order by the logos, our immediate perceptual-physical responses tell us, for instance, that health is to be desired over sickness, placing the latter in contrast with the former (D56/B111): the distinctions that we make even on a basic physiological level already depend upon the use of opposition and duality. As we'll see in Chapter 3, this is our default mode, and to some degree, our conceptual thought is genuinely restricted to a kind of physical perceptual context, since our sense perceptions, and thus our categories, are dictated to us by the kinds of creatures that we are (fish or human, for instance). Nonetheless, there is a distinction here between, on the one hand, the kind of thinking (or "inferential moves") that emphasizes patterns common to humans, grounded in the ways of perceiving and cognizing that humans have *as humans*, and, on the other hand, the

²⁹⁴ Compare Leshner 1994: 14 who argues that learning is acquired for Heraclitus "not simply in perception, i.e., not simply in hearing the individual words which made up his λόγος (or in gaining an awareness of individual perceptible qualities of various kinds), but rather through a process of reflection on the overall structure and meaning of what he said (or of what is perceived generally)."

²⁹⁵ See Wilcox 1993 on Heraclitus' play between the notions of what is "evident" and what is "hidden" as formulating a new distinction that, while it does not fully establish the contemporary thought/perception dichotomy, nonetheless opens a rift among traditionally undifferentiated faculties.

kind of thinking dictated by specific, immediate and idiosyncratic ways of perceiving and cognizing that humans have as *individual* humans.²⁹⁶

Unless our orientation towards a discourse (or any other experience¹) is in accordance with the logos – that is, unless we use the consistent conceptual relations afforded to us by discourse, reflecting upon logoi in such a way as to hone in on the consistent patterns found there – our experience¹ of that discourse will be the idiosyncratic experience¹ of individuals. We will be like an audience that fails to heed the exhortation of D46/B50, electing to listen not to the logos, but to its speaker, expecting that what is “wise” will come to us through the immediate reception of his word. For such an audience, the logos will simply be Heraclitus’ particular discourse – and as such, will not be importantly different from the many logoi that are tied to epistemic failure (D43/B108, D8/B87²⁹⁷). Such logoi – and, more importantly, such an orientation to logoi – fail to seek unity in multiplicity, since the complete absorption in the immediate impact of any given logoi (B8/B87) is at odds with the reflective approach involved in relation-seeking. If the audience is completely absorbed in particular logoi, this puts them at odds with the logos which, as in D46/B50, guides those who heed it to the recognition that all things are one. Idiosyncratic logoi, and those who listen idiosyncratically to logoi, fail to attend to the patterned relations found in and revealed by discourse, and consequently remain stuck in the highly concrete thinking of the character powers framework, with its inferential moves dictated by the immediate requirements of a given physical-perceptual context. As such, their categories and their world can only be structured in accordance with (a rudimentary version of) plurality-in-unity, with each category appearing as a freestanding unity, rather than as part of a

²⁹⁶ I address these issues at length over the course of Chapter 3.

²⁹⁷ Logos appears in the singular here, but since it is modified by πᾶς, the multiplicity is emphasized. Following Tor 2017: 15, 28, I read ἐπτοῖσθαι φιλεῖ as meaning (on one level) “loves to get excited.” The stupid man is stirred up in an immediate and unreflective manner which leads him to “welcome every account indiscriminately” (28).

larger unity composed of interdependent categories. If, however, “one thing” and “all things” are considered, not with attention narrowed to some immediate perceptual context, but with reflection upon the patterns of relations, an audience can recognize that “one thing” and “all things” are interdependent concepts like night and day²⁹⁸ – though with the important difference that the interrelation of “all things” and “one thing” is a higher-level unity that incorporates all other pairs of opposites.²⁹⁹ D46/B50 is generally taken as the closest thing that we have to a direct expression of the nature of the insight offered by the logos. Thus, it is perhaps significant that we find in this fragment’s “all things are one thing” of D46/B50 an expression of unity-in-plurality. Moreover, it offers a relatively direct expression of what would seem to be the guiding methodology of Heraclitus’ work – and, by extrapolation, of the logos itself – that is, a “bringing-together-in-conflict” that expresses unity between apparently disjoint things, and conflict between apparently similar things. It forces the audience to confront in a particularly direct manner the simultaneous presence of sameness and difference, as the two relations that underpin all conceptual thought – relations that the logos foregrounds by both sharply distinguishing the opposites and bringing them together.

In D47/B50 this process of distinction and connection is illustrated in two main ways.³⁰⁰ First, the pair of opposites brought together in this fragment – “one thing” and “all things” – are themselves expressions of sameness and difference. The plurality of “all things” implies some sort of difference, since no plurality is possible without at least numerical differentiation. The indefinite character of the neuter *πάντα* – the fact that it doesn’t modify a noun or another

²⁹⁸ For Heraclitus’ use of *πάντα* and *ἓν* as *both* an interdependent set of opposites and an expression of the unity of all opposites, see Chapter 5, section II.

²⁹⁹ Kirk 1962: 143 suggests that Heraclitus believed that in proving that opposites – that is, the most disparate things – to be united, he had already proved that all things were united. This would, of course, be reinforced where the opposites in question were “one thing” and “all things.”

³⁰⁰ For other major expressions of the methodological principle of distinction and unification, see D1/B1 and D47/B10. These, again, are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.1.

adjective to tell us what kind of things make up the plurality – reinforces this impression of difference inherent in the term, since it brings to mind the motley assemblage of things that we encounter in our day-to-day lives without necessarily seeing them as connected. On the other hand, the word ἔν emphasizes the kind of sameness that constitute the conditions of identity.³⁰¹ This is reinforced by the fact that ἔν and αὐτός (in the sense “same”), while not interchangeable for Heraclitus, are used in similar contexts.³⁰² In this sense, the terms in which the unity of all things are expressed also involves the bringing together of the opposed-yet-interdependent conceptual relations that underpin the process of distinction and connection that makes it possible for us to conceive of unity at all.

Yet there is another, more experience³-driven paradox that the audience confronts in these fragments, in which the conflict and connection between sameness and difference takes the fore. If the audience is to agree that all things are one, they must also recognize two kinds of listening, two orientations to discourse which engage distinct, yet not fully dissociable capacities. Listening, Heraclitus suggests, may be a merely passive perceptual activity. This kind of merely perceptual listening identifies the epistemic possibilities of the discourse with the perceptual-physical activity of listening – that is, it identifies hearing with comprehension. Such an orientation renders the faculty of hearing no more epistemically valuable to the agent than deafness.³⁰³

³⁰¹ See above, pp. 55-56. While the conditions of identity as such had not been formulated at this time – nor, indeed, any conceptual distinction between identity and similarity (as “different forms of sameness” or “different forms of likeness”) – we can probably assume that Heraclitus and his audience recognized the intuitive distinction between “this particular soldier in fighting in armour”, and “a soldier of a certain sort fighting in a certain manner while wearing a certain kind of armour.”

³⁰² The fact that they are not wholly interchangeable is suggested by the fact that he uses them together in D52/B59 and (more dubiously) in B59; his customary economy would seem to rule out mere tautology, though perhaps his aim is simply to add emphasis. D65b/B12 and D68/B88 use αὐτός in such a way that ἔν is implicit in their use. While its use in D87/B90 has somewhat different implications, its juxtaposition with “all” in “the same for all” (τὸν αὐτὸν ἀπάντων) suggests that αὐτός and πάντα may still be being used as polar expressions.

³⁰³ As in, e.g., D4/B34, D1/B1. See above, section II.

Hearing may, alternatively, be an active process that is not merely perceptual, since it requires a further level of reflective engagement on the part of the listener that leads to bringing-together or comprehension. In other words, it requires that the listener orient himself to the discourse as *logos* – that is, as the play of conceptual relations in discourse. This latter process remains tied to the perceptual act of listening, just as it remains partially tied to the various particular discourses in which the basic structure of human thought is expressed. First, it involves a use of conceptual relations – which, in their most basic form, are grounded in perception and the particular perceptual-physical contexts within which they are already implicit. Second, it involves a movement from a model of connection rooted in these perceptual-physical contexts towards an attention to conceptual relations. This shift depends upon discourse – particularly (though not exclusively) those discourses that involve sustained development of ideas or images or narratives – since it is through discourse that we come to recognize the patterned relations between concepts and ideas that belong at once to all our descriptions of different physical-perceptual contexts, and to the basic human thought structure that underpins those descriptions.³⁰⁴ Third, the process often requires the audience (as in the case of D46/B50) to listen with the close attention demanded by a discourse that conveys part of its meaning through explicit perceptual cues such as wordplay and phonic echoes (*λόγος/ὁμολογέω; λόγος /σοφός*). Listening to Heraclitus and listening to the *logos*, then, turn out to be, in one sense, two different things that are also, in another sense, the same: both involve, simultaneously, perceptual attention to a particular discourse and the use (whether reflective and engaged or habitual and passive) of the structures underpinning all discursive thought – specifically, the conceptual relations in discourse. This bringing together of sameness and difference is less marked, at least

³⁰⁴ See Chapter 1, section I, on the overlap between the conceptions of discourse and hearing within the oral culture of Heraclitus' time.

on a linguistic or logical level, than in the more obvious instances of the unity of opposites (such as the unity of day and night). Yet on the psychological level, the paradox of listening to a discourse yet not listening to the particular individual speaking that discourse seems to involve a similar evocation of both interdependence and conflict (again, within the oral culture of Heraclitus' time).³⁰⁵

These last two characteristics are crucial to the kind of orientation the logos seems to require. Heraclitus' logos does not ask his audience merely to subsume all things under one common principle, as Anaximenes may have done in resolving all the visible conflicts and changes of the world to the transformations of a single element, and as the Pythagoreans were reputed to have done with number.³⁰⁶ Rather, Heraclitus' logos, by articulating difference and opposition in their interplay with similarity and sameness, offers greater scope for dealing with multiple, conflicting logoi and the perceptions that they express. Moreover, it draws attention to the tools of thought that make this interplay possible – that is, relations among categories, such as conflict and interdependence, sameness and difference.

As suggested above, Heraclitus encourages his audience to give up a view of the nature of things that employs a rudimentary notion of categories as freestanding unities (plurality-in-unity). Instead, he invites them to see the nature and unity of things and of the cosmos as involving the interdependence of conflicting categories (unity-in-plurality, unity of opposites). This shift is bound up logos-rooted thought, as an orientation of mind that does not remain fixed in discrete instantiations of the categories found in any particular perceptual-physical context but allows for the reflection on patterns of those categories as they appear across various contexts. Such an orientation moves beyond the superficial grasp of a particular idiosyncratic discourse to

³⁰⁵ See, e.g., Havelock 1982; Tejera 1991; Robb 1983.

³⁰⁶ See, e.g., Guthrie 1987: 21-24; Klein 1968: 65-66, 68; Booth 1957: 98.

a comprehension of the discursive connections implicit in all discourse and all human thought. This comprehension both requires a model of connection rooted in conceptual relations rather than in perceptual-physical contact, and, at the same time, supports such a model, in that it leads the audience towards a view of unity rooted in relations among categories, in which sameness and difference receive equal weight (that is, unity-in-plurality) – and away from a view of unity oriented towards sameness, and rooted in the resemblance between “token individuals” categorized via a single “archetypal individual” (that is, the “character powers” version of plurality-in-unity). All this is, of course, more than an exercise in concept re-organization for Heraclitus’ audience, since the audience must presume that this conceptual order corresponds to the order of the things in the world if they are to even entertain it. This is because, as argued in Chapter 1, the conceptual framework of early Greek thought is grounded in the concrete world, and even Heraclitus’ comparatively abstract model of thought could neither gain nor maintain traction if it failed to provide a compelling way of seeing the world.

Conclusion

Heraclitus’ logos, then, acts as an epistemic tool and method. It highlights the ways in which human discourse and thought operate, and it invites a shift towards a (paradoxically) more consistent approach to the conceptual relations at the core of both. Moreover, it gives the audience a conception of reality organized in accordance with the nature of their own thought and concepts (rightly understood) – that is, a conception of reality as unity-in-plurality, ordered through the bringing together of opposites. This does not necessarily mean that Heraclitus eliminates all distinction between human thought – even the reflective human thought enabled by the logos – and reality. As we’ll see in Chapters 3 and 4, the relation between the logos and

knowledge is complex, and resists any ultimate mapping of the organized structure of human thought and language onto reality.

“Logos,” then, might be understood as an epistemic tool and orientation that uses discursive structures to comprehend language and experience¹ via consistent conceptual relations. In other words, the logos is the tool by which discrete elements of connected discourse or logoi drawn from observed facts,³⁰⁷ poetic, religious, folk and philosophical-scientific tradition,³⁰⁸ familiar words and concepts³⁰⁹ are brought together in a way that allows the audience to recognize both the unity and the conflict between them. Such an interpretation of the logos allows both for the central importance of language within Heraclitus’ epistemology, while also recognizing the importance of perception, since the logos involves the systematic use of conceptual relations that are implicit in linguistic categories – categories which are already present in perceptual experience.

There’s a paradox hiding here. While the logos leads us to truly cognize the world in accordance with the nature of human thought, there is a sense in which it seems to exist in an uneasy relation with human thought – and perhaps not merely that of the ignorant “many.” As we’ll see, the logos leads us towards truth, but truth is not found simply in a reorientation of human cognition; it involves a form of (loosely speaking) “cognition” that is not human at all, but belongs to the god. For this reason, the logos-as-epistemic-method turns out to be both at the centre of human thought, and, at the same time, antagonistic towards human thought – which it ultimately serves to undermine.

³⁰⁷ E.g., D78/B60, D79/B9, D80a/B13.

³⁰⁸ For instance, the kind offered by poets and other wise men (e.g., D22/B56, D20/B40, D10/B104), as well as by mysteries and oracles (e.g., D15/B5, D16/B15, D41/B93).

³⁰⁹ E.g., D53/B48, D55/B23.

Chapter Three: Ignorance and the Problem of Perspective: Heraclitus' Animal-Human Juxtapositions

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss an apparent limitation of the logos, and a potential puzzle. What the logos seems to offer is an understanding of the nature of reality via the right use of discourse, and of the human cognitive faculties in general. More specifically, it offers an understanding of reality as unity-in-plurality, or the unity of opposites.³¹⁰ Yet as Heraclitus shows in his juxtaposition of animal and human perspectives, there are limits to the human capacity to grasp the unity of opposites – limits arising both from the Archaic tie to concrete thinking and from the Archaic notion of cognition and the perceptual-conceptual differentiation of opposites. Heraclitus' animal-human juxtapositions bring these limitations to the fore through oppositions bound up with fundamental features of the human perspective – that is, needs and values rooted in the human constitution. These juxtapositions emphasize contexts where a creature's mode of differentiating one thing from another, and of privileging one opposite over another, are dictated by their constitution as a specific kind of creature (e.g., human, fish) and the perspective that arises from it. These juxtapositions create an equivalency between the human perspective and the perspectives of creatures as whose natures are traditionally seen as involving an inherent ignorance. The juxtaposition therefore appears to illustrate the fact that humans are excluded from an understanding of the nature of reality by the constraints of the human perspective – and

³¹⁰ As I will argue in Chapters 4 and 5, the logos also, ultimately, points the audience towards an understanding of reality as it truly is. Yet since the true nature of reality is unity-without-plurality, it is neither reflected in the structure of discourse, nor accessed directly in the exercise of logos-based thinking, and the comprehension of unity-in-plurality that such thinking yields.

that, in fact, the understanding of reality is impossible so long as one “views” it from any perspective at all.

In order to show how the juxtapositions foreground and “re-activate” the (never fully de-activated) pull towards concrete thought grounded in a specific perceptual-physical context, I begin, in section one, with a discussion of some of the features of Archaic Greek conceptualization that persist in Heraclitus’ comparatively abstract logos-oriented thought, and that directly contribute to the impact of the animal-human perspective juxtapositions. This section will lay the groundwork for the discussion of these juxtapositions both in this chapter and in Chapter 4 in two main ways. First, it will offer a general overview of the way in which Heraclitus’ method exploits *both* relatively abstract logos-grounded thought and the residues of concrete modes of thought that persist within it. Second, it will look at some important conceptual distinctions which we associate with abstract concepts, but which are not yet available even to Heraclitus’ relatively abstract approach to conceptual relations. In this way, section one will offer a more nuanced view of the scope and limitations of Heraclitus’ conceptual model and will provide a bridge between the argument of Chapter 2 and that of Chapters 3 and 4.

In section two, I apply the discussion of section one to an analysis of Heraclitus’ human-animal juxtapositions. I argue that these juxtapositions, while ostensibly offering instances of the unity of opposites, at the same time undermine the human capacity to grasp that unity. The ultimate import of these fragments, I argue, is to show that ignorance is inherent not only to the human perspective, but to perspective as such.

By perspective, I mean a kind of orientation towards epistemic objects which is limited by an individual's perceptual-physical ground of experience, and, specifically, the needs and values³¹¹ that those contexts dictate.³¹² Perspective, in Heraclitus' fragments, may be more or less restricted. Some fragments use a model of perspective in line with the highly limited, idiosyncratic viewpoint of those who remain ignorant of the logos. In these fragments, perspective implies something like one's immediate context of experience. In D51/B60,³¹³ the characterization of the direction of the path seems to depend at once upon one's physical location in the moment, one's visual impression of the path, and one's desire or need to travel in a particular direction. Yet in other fragments, such as the three-part animal(/child)-human(/adult)-god juxtapositions that I examine in this Chapter 4, the model of perspective used is compatible with the broader perceptual-physical context encompassed by the logos-based comprehension of human thought. In the latter case, perspective, while not limited to a wholly personal range of encounters with our environment, is still circumscribed by the needs and values dictated by one's constitution as a particular kind of creature. In this way, as I argue below, it remains "idiosyncratic."

I: Key Conceptual Distinctions (or Their Absence) in Archaic Thought

³¹¹ In this context, I understand needs and values as existing along a continuum, since both are rooted in the constitution of the creature in relation to its environment, and thus are, in some sense, ultimately reducible to needs. In a given environment – that is, in a particular social context under certain conditions – a human being may have an immediate need of gold (or some kind of currency) to fulfil basic physiological requirements like clean water, food, shelter, and protection from animals, the elements, and other humans. This need may also be bound up with a social structure and/or an individual psychology in which the view of gold's value is elaborated well beyond this sort of immediate need-fulfilling role. I have, in most cases, chosen the word "values" over "preferences" or "desires" because "values" draws attention to the fact that this model treats as rooted in human nature the various social structures that arise from human needs but also shape the way those needs are fulfilled.

³¹² See pp. 204-206 for a more extended definition which expresses this in terms of both Archaic and contemporary cognitive scientific models of mind.

³¹³ "The way up and the way down: one and the same" (ὁδός ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ὡυτή.)

In this section, I briefly discuss some further nuances of late Archaic Greek conceptual thought and Heraclitus' place within it. This discussion is intended to provide a brief supplement to Chapter 2 (and particularly Chapter 2, section I), further narrowing the claims found there. This section also forms a starting point for a chapter in which I focus on an apparent conflict within Heraclitus' methodology: the fact that it depends both upon the movement towards abstraction discussed in Chapter 2, and the fact that this relatively abstract thought remains unlike abstraction as we, or even late Classical thinkers, would understand it. My argument in chapter 2 incorporated two key claims:

(1) Heraclitus' audience is accustomed to a mode of conceptualization that involves an extremely low degree of abstraction, involving the sorts of inferential moves dictated by a specific, immediate perceptual-physical context. Such "concepts" can only be described as such on the basis of their categorizing and cognitive function; it is this that makes them analogous to the kinds of concepts with which we are familiar.

(2) Heraclitus' logos involves drawing his audience away from a mode of inference-making rooted in a specific, immediate perceptual-physical context (whether actually or imaginatively present) and towards a mode of inference-making that takes account of general patterns. This involves a greater degree of abstraction.

In this chapter, I will qualify (2) with a third claim:

(3) Heraclitus' mode of drawing his audience away from an immediate perceptual-physical context of interpretation and towards a relatively high degree of abstraction remains reliant on the experiential¹ dimensions of his discourse – that is, he still relies heavily upon the physical-perceptual imagination as an intermediary in order to provoke his audience to recognize patterns implicit in physical-perceptual experience and to focus on relations and inferential moves.

Heraclitus invites his audience to recognize the patterns that underpin their perception and conception of “all things” understood both collectively and distributively. This, as shown in Chapter 2, is associated with some freedom from the immediate physical-perceptual context and the (idiosyncratic) modes of connection it prescribes. This is because Heraclitus’ logos-rooted thought both requires and helps to support a degree of abstraction and movement away from the concrete thinking rooted in an immediate physical-perceptual context. Yet Heraclitus’ focus on patterns of inferential moves and consistent modes of connection-making does not reach the high level of abstraction that would allow the audience to actually replace the substantial “things” that make up their conceptual framework with abstract inferential patterns – as would be required if they were, for instance, to conceive of the process-based model of reality that Plato spells out for Heraclitus (and dismantles) in the *Theaetetus*. Heraclitus’ way of dealing with the unity of opposites continues to engage the physical-perceptual imagination (i.e., concrete modes of thought) in order to conceptualize the “nature” of particular kinds of things, as well as that of the cosmos. The limitations on the level of abstraction involved in Heraclitus’ logos are mirrored by limitations on the degree of freedom that the logos allows from the audience’s immediate perceptual-physical context. The pressure exerted by the latter on modes of thought and conception is diminished but not eliminated. Yet, as we’ll see in Chapter 4, Heraclitus not only adapts to this “limitation”, but even exploits it for his own epistemic/psychagogic ends.

The argument that spans both this chapter and Chapter 4 begins from and depends upon the argument of Chapter 2 in that it assumes that the audience has learned to employ the logos’ bringing-together-in-conflict to conceptualize the natures of things in terms of a unity of opposites that cannot be *directly* perceived – or at least, one that challenges a mode of

interpretation rooted in an immediate physical-perceptual context, with the idiosyncratic sets of physiological, affective, temporal and spatial cues that tend to dominate such an interpretative mode. The importance that these sorts of unities have for the audience's grasp of the nature of things is supported by the fact that such unities are recognized as occurring in a wide range of physical-perceptual contexts. Yet the value of the logos – and one of the sources of the audience's conviction that it can, in fact, show them the nature of things – is that the unities that it reveals involve regular patterns of conceptual relations. That is, it is not merely that the unity of opposites is widely present in a range of perceptual-physical contexts, but that we are, in fact, dependent upon each opposite in order to think about the other – so that in any context where one opposite appears, the other is, implicitly, present.³¹⁴ In what follows, then, I will assume that the audience has learned to accept Heraclitus' bringing-together-in-conflict as a method by which they can conceive of the natures of things – both the natures of all things, taken as a whole, and the nature of particular kinds of things.³¹⁵ This, as argued in Chapter 2, section I, involves a greater degree of abstraction than was present in the dominant mode of conceptualization in Archaic thought. However, my analysis of Heraclitus' perspective juxtapositions, as contrasted with my discussion of the logos in Chapter 2, will lay greater slightly greater stress upon the need for continued input from the experiential¹ (and ³)³¹⁶ domain in supporting this

³¹⁴ This is true even in cases of the unity of “opposites” like justice (δίκη) and strife (ἔρις), which are not strict conceptual opposites (D63/B80). Heraclitus structures these instances of bringing-together-in-conflict in such a way that the audience recognizes the need to think of these two terms in relation to one another. For instance, understood in its primary Archaic sense, δίκη refers to all that is involved in a lawsuit – that is, it refers to the procedures and outcomes involved in a system for settling strife. While it might be acknowledged that strife can be imagined outside of the existence of such procedures and outcomes (e.g., the strife of battle in epic), its meanings within the civic and interpersonal sphere tend to imply the kinds of quarrel whose nature is at least partially shaped by the sorts of civic (or even tribal) institutions for its resolution. LSJ, s.v. ἔρις. See also Gagarin 2016.

³¹⁵ The question of what Heraclitus' audience would have expected in seeking the “natures” of kinds of things from the unity of opposites, and what he offers them, will be addressed below (this section).

³¹⁶ For the definitions of experience¹, experience², and experience³, see pp. 66-67.

conceptualization,³¹⁷ and the continuing pull of thought processes and modes of inferences rooted in these faculties. This is important to the argument of this chapter for two reasons. First, the audience's recognition of the interconnectedness of "all things" is not such as to eliminate the pull to comprehend individual things through the bringing-together-in-conflict of the logos. This is made apparent by the central role played by exemplars in Heraclitus' account of unity-in-plurality in the form of the unity of opposites (and the importance of a focal physical-perceptual context or image even in those fragments that more directly address unity-in-plurality as it appears in the unity of all things.³¹⁸) In other words, the logos' revelation that all things are one (D46/B50) is continually mediated, for the audience, by its promise to "analyse each thing according to nature" (D1/B1);³¹⁹ the attempt to understand the nature of reality remains primarily focused on the need to grasp the natures of particular kinds of things via the unity of opposites. In this sense, their grasp of unity-in-plurality as the nature of *all* things, mediated through the unity of opposites as the nature of particular kinds of things, might be compared to their grasp of the logos, as embodied in particular logoi with which it cannot be identified, though it also can

³¹⁷ This can be seen in the fact that even as he encourages his audience to adopt a mode of thought less circumscribed by their immediate perceptual-physical context, he does so through methods that encourage close attention to the evidence of specific physical or imaginative contexts (see, for instance, the discussion in Chapter 2, section II of the role of phonic cues in Heraclitus' exhortation to "listen not to me, but to the logos" in D46/B50). A number of commentators have recognized these two apparently paradoxical features of Heraclitus' method, pointing, for instance, to his habit of drawing upon concrete exemplars from the realm of pre-reflective individual experience¹ even when he aims to challenge that experience in favour of a more general or abstract conception. See e.g., Hussey 1982: 58; Minar 1939: 332; Kirk 1962: 151-152.

³¹⁸ E.g., war in D64/B53; elemental cycles in D86/B31; fire in D85/B90. One might be inclined to cite D47/B10 as a possible exception, since there is no dominant image around which the multiple oppositions constellate (see, however, Shipton 1985, who sees in this fragment a continuous evocation of the tuning of a musical instrument), but this does not mean that there is no physical-perceptual context evoked here. The high degree of parallelism and near repetition (unusual for Heraclitus), combines with the extensive use of parataxis and a hypnotic rhythm of short, sonorous phrases to create a steady build up that suddenly "releases" on the long final pair (rendered emphatic not only by its length but by a less regular rhythm and the high proportion of plosive consonants). This gives the fragment the slightly hypnotic quality of a hymn invoking a god by its many names or aspects, thus suggesting the possibility that B10 might map onto the physical-perceptual contexts associated with religious invocation and ritual.

³¹⁹ κατὰ φύσιν διαίρων ἕκαστον. This is borne out by the fact that most of Heraclitus' illustrations of unity-in-plurality involve specific instances of the unity of opposites (for more on this issue, see below, this section).

only be conceived through the operations of language in particular instances.³²⁰ The pull back towards “concrete” thinking in Heraclitus’ audience – that is, the pull towards thinking rooted in the immediacy of concrete, physical-perceptual experience – is relevant to this chapter for a second reason. I will argue that Heraclitus, in the animal perspective/human perspective fragments, exploits the pull towards the concrete by eliciting responses that bring the physical-perceptual ground of conceptualization to the fore. More specifically, I argue that these juxtapositions draw out the perspectival character of opposition (and, by extension, of conceptualization) by emphasizing the way in which one’s needs and values underpin the discrimination of opposites. In doing so, they also show the audience that the grasp of the unity of opposites implies a grasp of conflicting perspectives, where those perspectives incorporate all the physical-perceptual contents involved in the discrimination of opposites. In other words, Heraclitus engineers these instances of the unity of opposites in such a way that his audience cannot contemplate the conflicting concepts as distinct from the conflicting perspectives, so that they must embrace the latter in order to grasp the former. This, as I will argue in Chapter 5, section III, also leads to the audience’s recognition of the imbalanced and incomplete nature of their other attempts to grasp the unity of opposites – in other words, they come to recognize the presence of physical-perceptually determined distortion even in instances where they had initially appeared to be able to grasp the opposites as relatively abstract concepts. In each case, the full grasp of the unity of opposites turns out to require the audience to embrace the conflicting perspectives to which the opposites are tied.

In order to motivate this interpretation, I will rehearse some of the arguments for taking a balanced view of conceptual thought in Heraclitus, recognizing *both* the achievement of a greater degree of abstraction through the logos’ bringing-together-in-conflict *and* the pull back towards

³²⁰ This fact is emphasized by D46/B50; see analysis of fragment in Chapter 2, section II.

“concrete” thinking – in other words, the fact that statements that a modern reader (or even a late Classical one) would reflexively unpack on a “purely” abstract level involve, for Heraclitus’ audience, a much greater draw towards interpretation on the basis of affective/visceral/perceptual experience^{1.321}. Specifically, I’ll look at some of the conceptual distinctions assumed by more “sophisticated” abstract conceptualization, and consider what their absence, in Heraclitus’ time, means for the relative degree of abstract or concrete thought involved in Heraclitus’ framing, and the audience’s interpretation, of certain kinds of ideas. First, I’ll consider the absence of an essence/attribute distinction, and its implications for the notion of the comprehension of “natures” which Heraclitus offers to his audience. Second, I’ll look at what the lack of a clear conceptual distinction between substance and attribute means for the Heraclitean opposites, considered in terms of their uneasy position between the pre-theoretic concrete thought of the character powers framework, and the (more) abstract concepts found in late Classical philosophy. Finally, I’ll consider a category of attributes that plays a central role in the argument of this chapter: observer-dependent and evaluative attributes, and argue that, again, such attributes were not part of Heraclitus’ conceptual toolkit.

Much of the argument of the middle section of this thesis (Chapters 3 and 4) turns on the audience’s attempt to comprehend the natures of various materials (seawater, sweepings, gold, clean water, mire) through the method of the logos. The logos, as noted above, not only seeks to

³²¹ See also Havelock 1982: 240-247 who emphasizes the necessity, for Heraclitus, of a recourse to the concrete and sense-oriented on the basis of his historical place within an evolving philosophical language in an oral culture. He notes the evocation of “situations which are pictorial and concrete” (241), and the consistent use of aural effects such as assonance (241). On the importance of reading Heraclitus with a respect for the liminal position he occupies with respect to abstract concepts, see, e.g., Wilcox 1994:12-13 who notes the ways in which Heraclitus compensates for and even moves towards those tools of abstraction not yet conceptually available to him (though Wilcox consistently underrates Heraclitus’ skill in turning to his own advantage what would, for another, less poetically gifted philosopher, be a barrier): “the fragments contain a number of other examples of concepts that seem to contain incompatible properties. This is no more than one would expect if Heraclitus were attempting to formulate a comparatively sophisticated philosophical view without being able to assume a number of useful distinctions.”

show that all things are one (D46/B50), but also promises to “analyse each thing according to nature”³²² (D1/B1). I will ultimately argue that these statements make use of key paradoxes (D46/B50) and ambiguities (D1/B1) that allow them to function within a logos that has two, apparently conflicting tasks: the logos must begin by partially satisfying the audience’s desire to grasp the natures of differentiated things, yet it also must point towards an understanding that undermines differentiation entirely.³²³ However, my more immediate task is to show, first, how Heraclitus’ perspective juxtapositions challenge the audience’s effort to comprehend the natures of things through the logos (this chapter), and, second, how this effort leads to an eventual understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality (Chapter 4). Heraclitean “natures” differ from Aristotelean natures in several respects, but one of the most problematic is this: Heraclitus’ framework did not yet involve a clear conceptual distinction between essential and accidental properties.³²⁴ Of course, an investigation into the nature of a certain kind of thing implies at least a pre-theoretic conception of “essence”: in order to investigate into the nature of seawater, one must allow that there is a general kind of thing that one calls “seawater”, whether it is found in the harbour of Ephesus or Miletus. Moreover, when our cognitive and perceptual faculties differentiate seawater, only certain features of it are salient either for the conceptual purposes of categorization or for the perceptual/physiological purposes of informing volition.³²⁵ On a (very) rudimentary level, then, the differentiation between accidental and essential properties is present

³²² κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον

³²³ I take up this issue in Chapter 5.

³²⁴ See, e.g., Heidel 1906: 342, 337.

³²⁵ Contemporary thought of course, recognize that these two things may come apart: that the properties that play an active role in categorization may not map directly onto those that most directly inform desire and volition (whether because of the imprecision and incompleteness of the former or the essential irrationality/idiosyncrasy of the latter). This recognition, however, presupposes two clear conceptual distinctions that were likely unavailable to Heraclitus. The first is between thought and perception as clearly differentiated faculties (see pp. 84-85; what makes sense perception idiosyncratic is not its inherent irrationality, but the failure to use the senses correctly; the exact same thing is true of thought); the second distinction is between properties and the object in which they inhere (see below, this section).

in Heraclitus – and even on the character powers framework³²⁶ – albeit in a more elastic sense than an Aristotelean might demand. Moreover, for Heraclitus, the investigation into the natures of things involves a greater concern with repeated structural patterns than can be found in the Archaic poets. For Heraclitus, the conception of a cosmos made up of things that have natures is bound up at once with the nature that the cosmos has as a whole and that each thing has separately. This nature is found in the logos’ bringing-together-in-conflict, i.e., the unity of opposites.³²⁷ This does not require that Heraclitus make a conceptual distinction between essential and accidental qualities as such.³²⁸ Yet he does create a parallel between the opposition that is the hidden, yet strongest, force for unifying both individual things and the cosmos, and which is also constitutive of the nature of both:³²⁹ in other words, in making the unity of opposites fundamental to the natures of each and every thing (taken singly as individuals), as well as to all things (taken together as one thing), he comes close to treating any opposites that might be found in a given object or material (or might be paired together as apparently independent objects or materials) as the essence of that object or material. Yet he does not imply that the nature of an object or material is constituted only by the bond between one specific,

³²⁶ See pp. 105ff on the attempt to apply the notion of “essence” to the character powers model.

³²⁷ On the interrelation, in the Presocratics, between the grasp of the nature of particular kinds of things and the grasp of the nature of the cosmos as a whole, see Naddaf 2005: 3.

³²⁸ The establishing of such a conceptual distinction, the consistent adherence to it, and the intuitive application of something akin to it are three different things. The first may be present without the second, the second and third without the first, and the third without the second and first. Moreover, in the case of the unity of opposites, the variety of ways in which the opposites might constitute the nature of things undermines a simple identification between, for instance, any single pair of opposites and a thing’s nature. A *óóó* might have its nature constituted by the opposites “up” and “down” or “straight” and “crooked”. It’s worth remembering that Heraclitus does not always use the unity of opposites in a manner that stresses the nature of some particular kind of thing in which two opposites are both present. At times, he also treats a pair of opposites as two comparatively distinct items, with each dependent on the other for its existence and nature. Such is the status of day and night in D25a/B57 and of hunger and satiety in D56/B111. Yet in D48/B67 both pairs have a more “qualitative” aspect when they are imputed to the God as constituting the apparent nature of the latter (even though, as I argue at pp. 193-196, this description ultimately serves to undermine the distinctions without which such oppositions are impossible).

³²⁹ Reading “Nature is disposed to hide” (*φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ*: D35/B123) with “A hidden bringing-together is stronger than an obvious one” (*ἀρμονίη ἀφανὴς φανερώης κρείττων*: D50/B54). For the centrality of the recognition of a *φύσις* in Heraclitus’ project, see D1/B1.

single pair of opposites (though he does seem to think that if we cannot see how the unity of any specific pair of opposites present in a given thing constitutes the nature of that thing, its nature will elude us entirely).³³⁰

As argued in Chapter 2, Heraclitus' audience learns to conceive of the nature and unity of things found in comparatively abstract patterns of conceptual relations. These are associated with inferential moves (i.e., connection-making among categories) only obtainable as the audience becomes less constrained by their immediate physical-perceptual context. It seems unlikely, however, that they would be able to conceive of an object or material on an exclusively abstract conceptual basis. Thus, the objects and materials whose natures are illuminated through the unity of opposites can never be conceived as exclusively conceptual objects: the continued pull towards concrete thought means that the conceptualization of a material such as water remains tied to the water that is the object of the audience's physical-perceptual experience¹.³³¹ The notion of a purely conceptual (or purely abstract conceptual) unity would likely have required cognitive and conceptual tools not yet accessible to Heraclitus, including a clear conceptual

³³⁰ That these natures ultimately turn out to be an error built into cognition does not undermine their importance in the logos, or the importance of the latter in achieving an understanding of the true nature of reality.

³³¹ I do not insist here that such a conception was entirely impossible for a late Archaic/early Classical thinker. I recognize that some commentators would see Parmenides' concept of being as a purely abstract, conceptual unity (this is especially true of those who see Parmenides' sphere as a "pure" metaphor [e.g. Fränkel 1973: 358n21], rather than as either as a literal image of being or as an instance of the "semantic stretch" that lies in between the purely literal and "purely" metaphorical [Lloyd 2017]). Yet there is at least some plausibility to the contention of Mourelatos 2008: 326-327, 330 in his view that Parmenides maintains the "naïve realism" of physical-perceptual thing-based unities, since his conception of *ἐστὶ* is at home in a worldview lacking an ontologically significant subject-predicate distinction – in other words, a clear conceptual distinction between attributes and the substances in which they inhere. In addition, most commentators also take Parmenides to have had his flourish a generation or so after Heraclitus – a not inconsiderable length of time in a period of such rapid conceptual change. Finally, Heraclitus' methodology and style are radically different from that of Parmenides: the impact of Heraclitus' discourse is mediated more directly and engagingly through its perceptual and affective qualities. Thus even if we accept that Parmenides went beyond the level of abstraction we might have expected in his time period – even if he did, in fact, conceive of the unity of Being on a purely abstract conceptual basis – we would still be constrained, on the evidence of the other contemporaneous approaches to conceptualization, combined with the evidence of Heraclitus' own words, to assume that Heraclitus did not reach (and may well not have aspired to reach) so lofty a level of abstraction.

distinction between substance and attribute.³³² One of the temptations for scholars of early Greek philosophy is to treat the transition from concrete to abstract thought as if it were a sudden leap accomplished by a single thinker.³³³ In fact, it's probably more realistic (albeit more complicated) to recognize that this movement was a gradual one. The use of mass terms (water, sea, earth), as noted in Chapter 2, section I,³³⁴ provided an important starting point for the conceptualization of substantialized "quality-things" (e.g., the hot and the cold) that could be conceived as physical things, considered as "ingredients" or the physical constituents of objects,³³⁵ but that could also be considered as objects of conceptual investigation, and that could also be understood as the conceptual constituents that make up a thing's "nature."³³⁶ Conceived as primarily physical things in a manner that stresses their function as "ingredients", such quality-things have the character of substances (while also providing the constituents for various other substances). It is this "ingredients" aspect of such quality-things that is emphasized on the "character powers" conceptual framework: in fact, "character powers" is simply a term for "quality-things" seen from the vantage of their most physical and least abstract function.³³⁷ Seen in their more conceptual function as objects of philosophical speculation concerning the

³³² See, e.g., Kirk 1962: 154; Moravcsik 1991: 558, 560; Heidel 1906: 337; Wilcox 1994: 12-13 (on Heraclitus specifically); McKirahan 2010: 45-46; Vlastos 1955: 353; Cherniss 1970: 7-8 (on early Greek philosophy in general).

³³³ This kind of oversimplification can even take the form of attempts to pin down the exact moment in which the discovery of abstractions and their distinction from concrete objects was made by a single thinker "once and for all." This is particularly the case in certain readings of Platonic metaphysics (see, e.g., Brentlinger 1972).

³³⁴ See pp. 105-107.

³³⁵ See pp. 103-104. Most commentators accept that Presocratic "abstractions" retain a greater pull towards concrete thinking than that of late Classical thinkers (and that their conception of qualities or properties involves, as a consequence, a greater degree of pre-theoretic substantializing). The landmark work on the "ingredients" model of qualities in Presocratic thought is Heidel 1906 – Mourelatos' "character powers" are an adaptation of this influential theory.

³³⁶ On the importance of "mass-terms" in providing a bridge towards abstract concepts, see Mourelatos 2008: 305n8; Mourelatos 2006: 62. For "quality-things" as serving, for early Greek philosophers, as a kind of quasi-abstraction, see McKirahan 2010: 45-46.

³³⁷ I have, in fact, emphasized this aspect of Mourelatos' formulation in order to allow for a vocabulary that recognizes different degrees of abstraction. For Mourelatos 2008, any less-than-fully-abstract property, trait, quality, etc. – any concept of this sort that remains partially dependent of the reasoning borne of concrete thinking (or, on his formulation "naïve [substantializing] realism") – is a "character power."

consistent natures of different kinds of things, quality-things begin to resemble the abstract qualities or properties whose conceptual structure can be distinguished from that of the individual “things” in which they inhere. The difference between the immediate, physical conception of these quality-things and the more abstract one seems to have been a matter of degree and emphasis throughout the Archaic and early Classical period, with the same thinkers often treating the same terms with differing levels of abstraction at different times. For instance, even in a context where the relation between properties/attributes (as “quality-things”) remains to some extent a relation between “things” (or “ingredients” which make up the stuff of perceptible materials/objects), a preoccupation with the nature of those “quality-things” in their own right lends itself to increasingly abstract modes of thought and inference. This is particularly true when, as in Heraclitus’ case, the investigation of the quality-things in question emphasizes their recurring structure across widely varying contexts rather than merely the “chemical formula” descriptive of the nature of some specific material.³³⁸ A helpful example of how the “ingredients” model can co-exist with greater and lesser degrees of abstraction is found in the Hippocratic treatise, *On Fleshes*. While the precise dating of this work remains uncertain, it was probably written sometime in the late 5th century BCE, placing its author among the last “Presocratics”.³³⁹ The author’s account of the nature of the cosmos involves the relationships among the basic elemental bodies – aether, earth, and air – that make up the cosmic ingredients. The nature of these ingredients is, in turn, understood in terms of their own constituent ingredients – the hot, cold, dry, and moist. That the latter are, in fact, understood as constitutive ingredients rather than abstract qualities/attributes is indicated, for instance, by the fact that heat *itself* is described as being immortal and omniscient (rather than as imparting these

³³⁸ Heidel 1906: 337n12.

³³⁹ Craik 2014: 48.

characteristics to the substance in which it inheres):³⁴⁰ in other words, it has character of a thing rather than that of a quality that inheres in things. Further, earth (understood as a uniform elemental body rather than as the heterogeneous ground at our feet) is envisioned as being made up of cold and dry, while having some heat in it as well.³⁴¹ This tells us that cold and hot are not simply qualities, which exist along a continuum and can become one another through Aristotelian qualitative change. Rather, cold and hot have the absolute character of actual things or materials, which do not (unlike qualities) admit of degrees except by mixing with their opposite in the same object. Here, then, we encounter investigations into the nature of “materials” at different levels of abstraction: the cosmos (or the organic body to which the composition of the cosmos is analogous in this treatise), the elemental bodies, and the constitutive quality-things that comprise the elemental bodies. Even at the highest level of “abstraction”, these materials are still substantialized and rooted in the perceptual-physical imagination. Yet as they become more abstract, they also gain an increasing degree of independence from the ordinary objects and materials encountered in immediate physical-perceptual experience¹, while, at the same time, becoming increasingly dependent upon the conceptual structure of opposition and interdependence (particularly in the case of heat and cold³⁴²). The example of *On Fleshes* is helpful to bear in mind when we consider Heraclitus’ position in the development of abstract conceptualization – and is particularly apt given the Hippocratic author’s borrowings from Heraclitus’ ideas and style. Although *On Fleshes* was composed nearly a century after Heraclitus’ own work, we can still see in its use of partially abstracted quality-things the same, paradoxical combination of a pull towards and an abstraction away from concrete experience¹ which we find in much of early Greek philosophy, and which

³⁴⁰ *Carn.* 2.

³⁴¹ *Carn.* 2.

³⁴² *Hippoc. Carn.* 3-4; 8-9.

can be a source of some awkwardness (as perhaps is the case in *On Fleshes*), but which is exploited so effectively by Heraclitus.

There is a final conceptual distinction which we cannot, without anachronism, attribute to Heraclitus. This is the distinction between inherent properties and what we might call “observer dependent properties”.³⁴³ As Taylor notes, the concept of observer-dependent properties seems to have received its first articulation in the work of Democritus,³⁴⁴ who recognizes that the same configuration of atoms may impact perceivers differently depending on the configuration of atoms that make up their own sensory faculties. Yet even here, such properties are not observer-dependent in quite the right sense, since Democritus ultimately sees observer-dependence as excluding the possibility that properties might be truly rooted in the nature of the object (which seems to mean that, strictly, when it comes to these properties, what we experience¹ does not exist).³⁴⁵ This also means that (contrary to modern intuitions) even properties such as value are

³⁴³ We could, of course, assert that such properties existed for Heraclitus without treating them as subjective. There is a further distinction that might allow Democritus to assert the reality of such “observer-dependent properties” while acknowledging that the properties are not independently present in the object – that is, that they depend upon the physical configuration of the perceiver. This is the distinction between potentiality and actuality. This distinction, however, seems not to have been conceptually available to Democritus, for whom it would have been particularly helpful. Given the influence of Heraclitus on Democritus (Granger 2002: 12), and given that the application of potentiality/actuality distinction in properties requires an already well-established conceptual distinction between substance and properties, it seems highly unlikely that Heraclitus would have had recourse to such a distinction (*pace* Hussey 1999: 97). As I argue above (this section), the conceptual distinction between substance and property had not yet been clearly formulated in Heraclitus’ time. There is, of course, nothing anachronistic in the claim that Heraclitus and his audience would have recognized that different materials have different effects on different creatures or under different circumstances (on this, see below, this section). That such a recognition involves the mind in implicit contradictions need not have occasioned serious concern or puzzlement in Heraclitus’ audience (Perry 2016: 480): this is one reason why Heraclitus complains that his logos is compelled to point out to his audience what simple reflective attention should already have shown them. His paradoxes involve the explicit statement of oppositions and conflicts present in his audience’s daily experience¹, which the audience is otherwise able to overlook. The anachronism consists in the suggestion that Heraclitus presented those paradoxes involving observer-dependent properties while pointing to the following solution: the traits in question can be co-present in a material (and can constitute, or at least accord with, its nature) because they are potentialities that are only actualized when the material stands in a specific relation to specific kinds of subject.

³⁴⁴ Taylor 1999: 190.

³⁴⁵ Taylor 1999: 192-193. This formulation, perhaps, oversimplifies the ontological status of such “secondary qualities” for the atomists – but in doing so, it emphasizes the serious difficulty that the atomists faced in giving these categories a clear conceptual structure. This difficulty strongly suggests that they are very much still in the process of formulating the conceptual distinction between “observer-dependent properties” and “inherent properties.” On the one hand, they offer a model of the physical structures that lie behind “observer-dependent

not dependent upon or qualified by an observer (and that observer's own constitution and nature) – that is, evaluative terms such as “best”³⁴⁶ or “polluted” or “drinkable”³⁴⁷ are in some sense unqualified, descriptive of an object's nature as such. (Ultimately, as I will argue, Heraclitus does away with the notion of such properties – of properties in general, with the objects in which they inhere – as real existents. My point here is not about his ontology, but about the conceptual framework available to him as he first clarifies that framework, then challenges it, along with the kinds of objects and properties described within and assumed by it.) While at least some of the sophists seem to have made a distinction in the evaluative dimension between the conventional and the natural, it would be a stretch to treat this as evidence that the first-generation sophists, at least, gave a special status to the evaluative properties as observer-dependent. For instance, Protagoras appears to have differentiated between the natural and the conventional in his treatment of the “correctness standard” in language. Here we have a clear instance of an “evaluative property” (i.e., correctness) as applied to one of the most likely candidates for an observer- or at least context-dependent standard of value. Yet as Woodruff points out,

properties” such as flavour and heat; having been thus reduced to arrangements of atoms, these properties should have as strong an ontological footing as any other structure composed of atoms. On the other hand, they recognize that these qualities exist only through the *interaction* between a particular arrangement of atoms external to living organism, and the particular arrangement of atoms internal to the human organism – with the inevitable result that the property-as-experienced¹ does not directly reflect the inherent nature of the object (the particular external arrangement of atoms) that is the source of the property-as-experienced¹. They seem to struggle with finding an ontological category for the observer-dependent property, variously labelling it as habit or custom (νόμος) as contrasted with truth (ἐτέος; see, e.g., D14/B9) and as nothing certain or accurate (οὐδὲν ἀτρεκέ; D15/B9). This strongly suggests that they are grappling with a new idea for which a conceptual formulation does not yet exist.

³⁴⁶ See, for instance, the unqualified statement that water is “best” (ἄριστος) in Pindar *Ol.* 1.1.

³⁴⁷ The context-focused definition of dirt as “matter out of place” will not do for the Ancient Greek, for whom miasma is both an impersonal force and one that is closely associated with the gods' anger. In its aspect as impersonal contagion miasma might, it's true, bear some resemblance to such impurities as disease-bearing germs, and, in this sense, look to us like “matter out of place” (at least in the sense that it is context-dependent, impure only given its effect on its “host” given the nature of the latter). Yet the close tie between miasma and divine anger undermines this attempt to create such a qualified or observer-dependent model of pollution, since the divine origin of miasma renders it context-external (though not objective). Moreover, this anger is a destructive force without qualification (e.g., destructive for humans, friends, cities, destructive for their dogs, destructive for their houses and other belongings). See Parker 1996: 9-11. (Heraclitus himself recognizes that pollution and purity are context-dependent, but not in the sense of treating them as observer-dependent properties. Rather, they are context-dependent in the sense that, like all opposites and all distinctions, they arise in relation to perspective.)

Protagoras' correctness standard seems (against our Plato-informed expectations of the sophists) to postulate correctness as a natural, context-independent property in language.³⁴⁸ In fact, it is not until the *Dissoi Logoi* in the early fourth century³⁴⁹ that we find clear evidence of a work that deals with the specific question of the ontological status of evaluative properties, as distinct from other properties. This exploration occurs, moreover, in the context of the then-standard conceptualization of these properties – one that will be attacked by Plato. The author of the *Dissoi Logoi* assumes that the inherence or reality of such evaluative properties as “good” or “bad” is without qualification. If X is good (for a horse) but bad (for a human), X turns out to be both good and bad.³⁵⁰

None of this is meant, of course, to suggest that Heraclitus and his contemporaries failed to recognize that some materials had a different impact on different observers with different constitutions – or that the way in which the observers experienced¹ those materials was dependent upon on their constitution. Nor does it in any way suggest that, even lacking the conceptual category of observer-dependent properties, Heraclitus was unable to conceive of the possibility that things might be “observer-dependent” – since for Heraclitus, as I argue in detail in this Chapter 4, all characteristics, along with the things that they characterize, turn out to be “observer-dependent”. Yet for him, this observer-dependence does not imply separation between the observed property and the object to which it is imputed by the observer. Rather, the observer-

³⁴⁸ Woodruff 1999: 295 argues that the correctness standard was “independent of public opinion, since it promoted natural over conventional gender for words”. I do not mean here to rule out the idea that some of these later fifth century thinkers may have distinguished between evaluative properties (as context- or observer-dependent) and other kinds of properties (as non-context-dependent). There are, however, complex interrelations to be found among the sophists' heterogeneous ideas concerning concepts such as justice/law, goodness or values, and the natural and the conventional (see, e.g., Barney 2006: 82-87). These, at minimum, show us that nearly a century after Heraclitus, and among most infamous (if problematic) sources of value relativism, the distinction between evaluative properties and inherent properties was new enough to demand more than persuasive argument – it required extensive clarification and definition on a basic conceptual level.

³⁴⁹ See Gill and Pellegrin 2006: xviii; Mourelatos 2006: 58. The dating of this work remains problematic, but the author is thought to be among the earlier sophists (Woodruff 1999: 292).

³⁵⁰ For the depth and seriousness of these and other problems caused by qualification-dropping (as we would think of it) in late fifth century and early fourth century thought, see Barney 2006: 90.

dependence of properties is also the observer-dependence of the objects to which they are imputed. In any case, observer dependence is, here, a misleading term, since, although the objects are apprehended in accordance with the nature or constitution of the observer who apprehends them, that observer is no more solid a foundation for their existence than is the observed world of differentiated things. Thus, as I discuss in Chapter 4, section II, it is not merely that the observer – along with his needs and values – is the determining factor in the discrimination of objects and their properties. Rather, this insight goes hand in hand with the insight that the observer is distinguished as a separate individual through his relation to the discrimination of objects and their properties. The epistemic agent experiences the disappearance of object-related distinctions at the same time as he loses the conception of himself as a distinct observer.

The absence of a clear conceptual distinction between observer-dependent properties and inherent properties is important for other reasons. Heraclitus and his audience recognized, of course, that the value of mud-baths for a pig is relative to the pig's constitution, just as their disvalue for us is relative to our constitution. What makes the juxtaposition of the value of the mud bath (for a pig) and its disvalue (for us) a genuine, non-trivial paradox is a conceptual framework that lacks a clear conceptual distinction between inherent properties and observer-dependent properties. The presence of such a distinction allows a modern audience to see that the simultaneous value and disvalue of the mud involves no actual conflict, since the value and disvalue are not *in* the mud (or not in the mud as such), but in the relation between the observer and the mud. By contrast, Heraclitus – as we would expect given his conceptual context – frames the simultaneous value and disvalue of the mud as the kind of conflict that bears upon the

genuine nature of the mud in which the two, mutually exclusive properties are found to inhere – that is to say, he treats it as an instance of the unity of opposites.

Logos-based comprehension, with its comparatively abstract approach to its subject matter, attenuates or decreases the pull to make sense of things through our own physical-perceptual context. In this, it contrasts with character powers “concepts,” which keep us wholly grounded in the perceptual-physical through a mode of “conceptualization” that, by using particular, paradigmatic individuals to categorize other individuals, departs only minimally from the level of immediate physical-perceptual experience¹.³⁵¹ Yet the logos inspires conviction in the audience by providing a plausible means by which they can make sense of their experience¹, and, in doing so, disposes them to work in accordance with its demands even where these present greater challenges to their customary manner of thought.

The cognitive challenges presented by the human-animal juxtapositions are, I argue, considerable. While section II below canvases several ways of understanding these fragments, I ultimately argue that they should be understood as marking the limit of the audience’s capacity to engage with the relatively abstract approach to the conceptual relations found in the unity of opposites. This is because these fragments create a very specific mesh of challenges, which Heraclitus skilfully deploys in order to tap simultaneously into, on one hand, the residual pull towards a “concrete” interpretation of concepts – that is, an interpretation based upon a particular physical-perceptual context – and, on the other hand, the method and demands associated with the logos’ relatively “abstract” use of concepts – that is, the method of comprehension through the grasp of opposed yet interconnected terms. The oppositions found in these fragments invoke needs and values associated with our human constitution (what I’ve called the “broader” or species-wide physical perceptual-context/conditions, as distinct from the “narrow”, individual

³⁵¹ See pp. 104-110.

one). Moreover, unlike most other instances of the unity of opposites, the human-animal juxtapositions treat the values themselves as the overt focus of the opposition. In order to understand the nature of mud in D80a/B13, I must grasp as equal and unified both the pig's valuation of the pure water, and the human's. As I argue in Chapter 4, section II, there is an intimate connection between the values involved in the opposition, on the one hand, and human survival and flourishing, on the other; this further encourages the audience to regard the oppositions in the juxtaposition with a more concrete focus, rather than treating them as more or less abstract concepts. That is, it encourages the audience to engage with the oppositions through the opposed perspectives with which they are associated (and with all the physical-perceptual baggage such perspectives entail). Finally, by juxtaposing opposed values, and, more specifically, values inscribed in the human constitution,³⁵² these fragments exploit and invoke the physical-perceptual ground of conceptualization. They emphasize distinctions that we make on the immediate physical-perceptual level – particularly since they show that such distinctions are made not only by us, but logos-less creatures like fish, donkeys and pigs. These distinctions, like the distinction between “this” and “not-this”, “same” and “different”, come already value-laden (“I want this; I don’t want that”), so that the motivational and discriminatory aspects of perspective are inseparable. This also implies that the immediate physical-perceptual responses have a proto-conceptual character, just as concepts are grounded in physical-perceptual experience¹: conceptual thought and physical-perceptual responses are, at root, inseparable, even though they may involve using the same capacities in a different way or with a different orientation.³⁵³ This ultimate convergence, for Heraclitus, between volitional-perceptual and conceptual discrimination is further supported by the absence in this period of a clear conceptual

³⁵² See pp.207-208.

³⁵³ This is in line with Laks 1999's view of the relation between perception and thought in Heraclitus.

distinction between substance and property (and further emphasizes that absence), since, on the volitional level, properties and things are not, finally, distinct. The “this” in “I want this” is defined both as a *thing* desired (since properties, understood as abstractions or as separate from the objects in which they inhere, cannot fulfil needs and desires), and as a quality desired (since the idea of desire for an unqualified thing makes little sense³⁵⁴ – that is, desire is always the desire for, e.g., a “hot thing” or a “bright thing”). The perspective juxtapositions exploit the pull towards the concrete through their emphasis upon the volitionally-loaded nature of properties, both by focusing on evaluative properties (as inherent and unqualified), and upon the suppressed-but-never-extinguished valencing of properties (including opposite properties) in accordance with one’s creaturely constitution.³⁵⁵

II: Ignorance as Inherent in Human and Animal Perspectives

In his contrasts between human and animal perspectives, Heraclitus focuses on conflicts around key values and needs involved in the survival or flourishing of various creatures, implying, in the process, that the human perspective does not have primacy over the animal. One interpretation of these fragments takes them as advocating some version of alethic relativism. However, alethic relativism appears incompatible with Heraclitus’ own dogmatic rhetoric concerning the nature of understanding and the path towards it. A form of perspectivism that holds that understanding requires us to encompass a range of perspectives might seem initially more promising. Yet such an interpretation fails to account either for Heraclitus’ insistent juxtaposition of psychologically

³⁵⁴ At least on the level of basic physical-perceptual responses.

³⁵⁵ For the valencing of opposites (that is, their built-in evaluative dimension) in all thought during this period, see Mourelatos 2008: 323–324. Mourelatos rightly points out that this valencing (or “leaning”, as he calls it) leads to a certain partiality in the equality required for the unity of opposites. However, he seems to underestimate the extent to which Heraclitus self-consciously exploits this “leaning”, treating it with different degrees of emphasis in different contexts. (For instance, as I show in Chapter 5, section II, the leaning towards unity is unusually emphatic in Heraclitus’ unity/plurality paradoxes, becoming part of the paradoxicality.)

incompatible perspectives, or for the evidence that such perspectives are to be regarded as equivalent in the sense that they possess equivalent ignorance rather than equivalent understanding. Read in this light, Heraclitus' fragments concerning human and animal perspectives suggest that the possession of a perspective implies a state of ignorance, that the absorption even in the collective perspective of a species is comparable to absorption in the insular privacy of sleep, and that such a state mirrors the failure to "listen to" or engage with the common (human) conceptual connections of the logos. Human ignorance, as we will see in Chapter 4, does not ultimately lie in our habit of seeing a particular material in terms of one opposite in a pair, rather than as a unity of opposites. The human-animal juxtapositions do, however, draw the audience's attention to their ignorance by highlighting their failure to successfully cognize seawater (for instance) even via the human, logos-based method of comprehension. The solution, detailed in Chapter 4, section II, will exploit the audience's expectation that: (1) we come to grasp the nature of reality through the bringing-together-in-conflict (i.e., unity of opposites) of the logos; (2) our grasp of the nature of reality is primarily experienced through the grasp of the nature of particular materials (both as instances of a more general pattern found in a wide array of different materials, and, at the same time, as emblems of the nature of reality as a whole). Neither (1) nor (2) turn out to map onto the nature of reality as it truly is. They do, however, mark important features both of human common (logos-based) cognition and of the method by which Heraclitus guides his audience towards an understanding of the true nature of reality.

Heraclitus juxtaposes the perspectives of various creatures – humans, donkeys, pigs, fish – in such a way as to suggest that these perspectives occupy the same epistemic plane. This is, in part,

the result of the equality between the perspectives implied by the direct opposition between the properties³⁵⁶ that they impute to particular objects. This balanced opposition is, of course, what we see in the unity of opposites, which involves assigning an equal weight to two things related to one another through their simultaneous conflict and compresence or interdependence. Thus D78/B61 seems to present the opposites “deadly” (ὀλέθριος) and “life-preserving” (σωτήριος) as simultaneously present in seawater (deadly for humans, but life-preserving for fish), while D79/B9 appears to show how the opposites “valuable” and “worthless”³⁵⁷ exist in both garbage (which is valuable for donkeys, but worthless for humans) and gold (which is valuable for humans, but worthless for donkeys). Moreover, the fact that these oppositions are to be understood as equally salient is signalled by the fact that their conflict cannot be resolved through thinking more clearly about the subject matter. Rather, the oppositions are rooted in needs and values deeply bound up with the flourishing of the creatures involved. The most obvious example is D78/B61, since the very salt that makes seawater “most pure” (καθαρώτατος) and “life-preserving” (σωτήριον) from the perspective of fish, also makes it “most polluted” (μιαρώτατος) and “deadly” (ὀλέθριον) for humans. The donkey’s preference for refuse rather than gold, and the human preference for gold rather than refuse are, similarly, rooted in the kinds of creatures each is. A donkey’s highly efficient digestive system enables it to

³⁵⁶ I recognize that the word “properties” involves anachronistic conceptual baggage (reinforced by the substance/attribute framework implied by such phrases such as “inhere in”). However, the alternatives either involved introducing confusion or imprecision (“characters”, “natures”), risked evoking their own sets of anachronistic assumptions (e.g., “powers”, “qualities”), and/or involved unnecessary convolution and periphrasis.

³⁵⁷ The words “valuable” and “worthless” do not appear in D79/B9, but are strongly implied by the contrast between garbage (σύρματα) and gold (χρυσός), and, more immediately, by the verb (ἐθέλω) which concerns what the donkey would choose, will, wish for, etc. Thus, a stricter transposition of the verb’s meaning into adjectival form would be “choiceworthy” and “not choiceworthy”. I use the words “valuable” and “worthless” because: (1) they remain relatively close to the basic meaning of ἐθέλω; (2) they seem to me to be better suited for bringing out the strength of the opposition between garbage and gold (where the one is an object of disgust, the other an object of desire); (3) they emphasize the convergence between the perceptual, volitional, and conceptual discrimination of garbage and gold.

meet its nutritional needs through discarded scraps that a human cannot digest;³⁵⁸ the social organization of human life allows a human being to use gold to meet his basic needs through trade (obtaining those χρήματα or “needed things” which are exchanged for gold in D87/B90),³⁵⁹ as a donkey clearly cannot. The pig’s preference for bathing in mud, and the human’s preference for bathing in pure water (D80a/B13), are both similarly rooted in the nature of each creature. A pig able to bathe in mud during the hot summer months is far more likely to flourish than one with access only to pure water.³⁶⁰ Human flourishing, however, is aided by the baths in clean water that enables us to remove mud, along with any insects and pathogens it might contain. Thus, mud turns out to be both “pleasant” and “unpleasant”.³⁶¹

The effect of these juxtapositions is particularly striking given that the observations involved would have been mere common sense among those with a basic knowledge of the relevant creatures and their care.³⁶² Heraclitus’ innovation lies in bringing these two observations into direct relation with one another, in ways that suggest simultaneous conflict (since the perspectives juxtaposed impute opposite properties to the materials involved – seawater, garbage, gold etc.) and unity (since these opposite properties seem to be simultaneously present in the same thing). Moreover, the juxtapositions have a cumulative effect, so that the relation among the various juxtapositions is as significant as the juxtapositions themselves. While a

³⁵⁸ The donkey is as capable of surviving on poor quality plant materials as the hardiest of equines, the desert goat (Izraely 1989: 5).

³⁵⁹ For the social organization of human life as part of human nature among some pre-Platonic thinkers, see Barney 2006: 84-87.

³⁶⁰ Access to mud is associated with better temperature control in pigs, who, given their near-inability to sweat, are heavily reliant upon the resources in their environment to keep cool. Since the moisture in mud takes longer to evaporate than pure water, mud baths are more likely to keep pigs cool than water baths (Brack 2011: 1).

³⁶¹ This opposition is observed, for instance, by Kirk 1962: 80. Kahn 1979: 188 speaks of “delight” and “disgust”. Again, the opposites are not directly stated, but the relevant adjective is already present in verb form, since the pig is said to ἡδονταί (delight in or take pleasure in) mire.

³⁶² It seems likely that Heraclitus’ audience would have had sufficient first-hand experience to support such knowledge. For instance, Griffith 2006: 192 notes that “in Archaic and Classical Greece, a high proportion of men and women of all social classes, both rural and urban” lived alongside livestock – particularly equines – and interacted with them daily. For the advanced understanding of the needs of animals evinced in ancient practices of animal husbandry, see Kron 2006: 116-117.

single juxtaposition of perspectives might simply offer a new instance of the unity of opposites, the multiplicity of juxtapositions³⁶³ signals that perspective is, in some way, part of the point of the juxtapositions. Moreover, the fact that every juxtaposition involves an explicit or implicit comparison between the human perspective against that of another creature – rather than, for instance, a comparison between the perspectives of donkeys and fish, or pigs and fish – draws attention to the specific implications of the juxtapositions for the human perspective, which appears in these fragments on an equal footing with that of fish, donkeys, and pigs. Yet these implications, insofar as they arise from everyday observations brought together using everyday conceptual tools, are in some sense already present in everyday human cognition – even if they require a logos-grounded orientation towards bringing-together-in-conflict in order to be recognized.

We might be tempted, at first, to take Heraclitus' concern with perspective-dependent qualities as support for a form of alethic relativism according to which the truth concerning the nature of a thing is relative to the vantage of the individual or culture – or, in this case, the species.³⁶⁴ However, Heraclitus' evident concern with the pursuit of understanding makes it highly implausible that he intends a complete identification between the truth and how things are for us as a species. First, the claim that these fragments support alethic relativism is difficult to

³⁶³ I count the three juxtapositions of human-animal perspectives that are accepted as genuine verbal quotation by Laks & Most. This count could be as high as five if we include the paraphrase or imitation in Columella (D80b/B37; the observations concerning D80a/B13 apply here; as Brack [2011] notes, dustbathing is a sign of well-being in fowl) and the observation in B4 concerning the pleasure taken by cattle in bitter vetch. The former seems likely to be a reminiscence or elaboration of B13; the latter seems to be an imitation of D79/B9 with a Peripatetic accent. However, the same interpretation can be applied to this latter fragment as to D79/B9, though in a weaker form. Albert the Great's "orobus" is at least plausible, since it transliterates the Greek ὄροβος. The plant may be ervil, which was grown largely for ruminant feed. If a human being chose to eat this difficult-to-digest and unpalatable grain legume, it would be a sign of extreme poverty and/or famine. In other words, the eating of bitter vetch might be both compatible with and conducive to the flourishing of cattle but not to the flourishing of humans. Aside from the human-animal perspective juxtapositions, there are also the human-god perspective juxtapositions (where animals, as well as children, also make an appearance). These, too, reinforce the importance of perspective, albeit in a slightly different manner. I discuss this set of juxtapositions in Chapter 4.

³⁶⁴ Kirk 1962: 80 accepts that these fragments indicate that alethic (species) relativism holds for at least some value assessments.

square with the fact that they also appear to offer instances of the unity of opposites.³⁶⁵ The claim that seawater is both pure (but only if you are a fish) and polluted (but only if you are human), in lodging the opposites in the relevant perspectives rather than in the thing to which those opposites are ascribed, eliminates both the compresence and the conflict of the opposites. In this case, the only sense in which the opposites are both true is in the qualified sense that Plato will put in the mouth of Protagoras in the Great Speech of the eponymous dialogue (each opposite is true *for* a given species) or the even more qualified sense that Plato will attribute to the “Protagorean-Heraclitean” account of perception-as-knowledge in the *Theaetetus* (each is true *for* a given individual in relation to a given perceptible at a given moment with respect to a given perceptual faculty). This, as Plato points out, involves a degree and kind of change that leaves us without any consistent object to which the opposites may be attributed, thus doing away with any question of attributing opposed properties to one and the same object, since such an object cannot be found.³⁶⁶ This is not, however, the precise problem in this case.³⁶⁷ If we accept the

³⁶⁵ This fact is observed by Marcovich 1967: 74 who denies that these fragments suggest “some kind of relativism” (178).

³⁶⁶ It seems quite likely that no one before Plato had conceptualized the problem with which this part of the dialogue grapples – that an object in which two opposites inhere is not quite an object (in the sense of a stable individual). I suspect (contra Bredlow 2011: 286) that Parmenides, for instance, did not engage in the analysis of linguistic structure required to identify the clear distinction and connection between the “is” of existence (as a stable, conceptualizable object) and the “is” predication (where what is predicated of an object is the essence or nature necessary for conceptualization). See above, section I, for arguments against the presence, in Heraclitus, of the necessary conceptual distinctions (including the essential/accidental distinctions) required for such an analysis. This issue is not, however, central to my reading of these fragments, since Heraclitus’ focus is on the expectation which he has kindled in the audience of obtaining the “objective” (or true and non-idiosyncratic) nature of things through a grasp of the unity of opposites – and this nature, as I argue at pp. 130-132 remains for them the nature of individuated materials. Unlike Plato, or even Parmenides, Heraclitus does not suggest that the nature of things cannot be conceptualized or spoken about because it involves the simultaneous presence of opposites – in fact, he suggests that it can be conceptualized *only* because of such simultaneous opposites. Despite the importance of language for Heraclitus, we do not find, in his methodology, the kinds of structural concerns with language and argument that are so crucial for Plato and even Parmenides – even his insights into language and conceptualization involve the immediate experience² or ³ of interconnected conceptual, affective, and perceptual cues (see, e.g., Chapter I, section I). Moreover, as argued below, the challenge that the human-animal juxtapositions, in particular, creates for the audience’s attempt to cognize opposites is on a broader experiential³ level.

³⁶⁷ Moreover, Plato’s obvious preoccupation with whether the postulation of opposites to the same object undermines language – what can be said to be true – significantly marks off his concerns from those of Heraclitus, for whom the possibility of the opposites inhering in one and the same object is not ruled out a priori by the

interpretation of the opposites as thus “qualified”, then, the juxtaposition can tell us nothing about the relation between the opposites, since it ceases to be true, from either perspective, that the opposites are both present in the same thing.³⁶⁸ Moreover, if the usual human view on the world in fact constitutes an understanding of what is true (since it is true for human beings), then the stress that Heraclitus places upon the ignorance of human beings (either the majority,³⁶⁹ or even the whole class³⁷⁰) makes little sense. While it seems plausible that Heraclitus might intend us to see that human beings are, in some sense, wrong about their own perspective – that is, they fail to employ the tools of human thought in a consistent or “common” way – such an interpretation in this case fails to account for the fact that Heraclitus’ characterization of the human perspective in the human-animal juxtaposition incorporates only the most widely-recognized facts concerning human survival and flourishing (that it is better to drink fresh water than to drink seawater, better to have gold with which to buy fresh food than to have old, indigestible sweepings, and better to wash in clean water than to wash in mud).

In fact, this last point presents an even deeper problem for the state of human understanding. These fragments specifically aim at facts relevant to the generic human perspective – judgements that we make about certain materials simply by judging in accordance with our human nature. The views on seawater, garbage, and clean water that Heraclitus

requirements of either conceptualization or speech – what finally makes them impossible for Heraclitus (unlike Plato) is the immediate challenge that they pose on a more fundamental perceptual and experiential¹ and ³ level. See further below.

³⁶⁸ Kirk 1954: 74; Barnes, 1979: 74-75. Hussey 1999: 95-95 makes a similar observation, noting that the fact that “Heraclitus explicitly infers that the sea is, simultaneously without qualification, both ‘purest’ and ‘most polluted’...supports a reading on which the observable relativities of ‘perception’ of ‘valuation’ are used by Heraclitus as evidence for a *nonrelative* compresence of opposites.” The fact that Heraclitus draws attention to the nature of the materials themselves, rather than (merely) our reactions (or rather, as I argue below, that he uses the question of the nature of the materials to illustrate the depth of the epistemic bind created by our reactions) seems to be further supported in B9 and B13 by the fact that the opposition between human and animal needs and values is implied rather than stated in the fragment. The explicitly stated opposition is, in each case, between two materials (mud and pure water; garbage and gold).

³⁶⁹ D3/B17; D10/B104; D19/B28; D25a/B57; D43/B108.

³⁷⁰ D1/B1; D22/B56; D74/B78.

attributes to human beings are not just widely shared among the majority of human beings (in the sense that the inability to comprehend the logos is widely shared among the majority of human beings). Rather, these views are inscribed in what it is to approach the world as a human being, via the needs and values that make up the human orientation to various things. The value judgements of these fragments cannot be separated from matters of empirical fact, at least insofar as the latter includes how we experience reality given our particular constitution or nature.³⁷¹ That is, our reflexive perceptual-physical sensations tell us, for instance, that seawater is polluted (especially if we try to drink it) and that garbage is not valuable (especially if we try to eat it).

This, however, seems to have troubling epistemic implications. The human-animal juxtapositions present the human perspective as recognizing only one opposite within a pair (e.g., ‘polluted’, but not ‘pure’, with respect to seawater; ‘valuable’, but not ‘worthless’, with respect to garbage). Yet Heraclitus seems to connect epistemic achievement with the recognition that disparate or opposed things are unified (e.g., “*all* things are *one* [thing]” in D46/D50) and

³⁷¹ There is a natural impulse here to wonder whether we should treat these sorts of opposites as having a different character than other oppositions for Heraclitus, given that they involve evaluative properties of various kinds. However, as argued in Section I above, the distinction between evaluative properties and other sorts of properties (e.g., evaluative vs. natural) had not yet been formulated. It’s true that the centrality of value assessments plays a role in these particular fragments – but, as I explain in Chapter 4, section II, this centrality helps to reinforce the psychological bind that their oppositions create for the audience. It’s perhaps worth reiterating that such an attempt to separate off value assessments from other kinds of oppositions (or to distinguish “thin” value concepts such as “pleasant” and “worthless” from “thick” ones such as “deadly” and “life-preserving”) does not seem to be supported by Heraclitus’ general method, and, again, runs the risk of anachronism. First, the Archaic principles of opposition were themselves heavily value-laden (Lloyd 1992: 41-47). As late as the mid-fifth century, Empedocles (D22/B123) would place side-by-side in a list of personified opposites comparatively value neutral (or at least “thick” value concepts) as Sleep and Wakefulness (Εὐναιή and Ἑγερσις) alongside such (relatively) thin value concepts as Greatness and Spoiling (Μεγίστω and φορῆ); Alcmaeon may have listed good and bad (ἀγαθόν and κακόν) alongside comparatively value neutral/thick concepts such as white and black (λευκόν and μέλαν) (D5/A3). The “Pythagorean” table of opposites reported at Arist. *Metaph.* 986a incorporates both apparently neutral/thick concepts such as motion and rest alongside thin value concepts such as good and bad. Further, as Hussey 1999: 95 notes, Heraclitus’ tendency to heap scorn on divergent value assessments among humans would seem, on the face of it, to undermine an openness to value relativism. We could, of course, protest that the relativism that we find here is grounded in the specific constitutions of the animals – but the fact of Heraclitus’ general orientation towards anything approaching value relativism shouldn’t be ignored, particularly given that he sometimes frames his attacks on the values of other humans by comparing them to animals (e.g., D13/B29; D9/B97). For Heraclitus, as I argue in Chapter 4, the opposites were fundamentally structured by human needs and values – in this sense, all judgement is value judgement.

ignorance with the absence of such recognition (e.g., Hesiod's failure to understand that day and night are one in D25a/B57). The perspective of human beings may, at first glance, appear capable of recognizing the unity of opposites even in the human-animal fragments – after all, the beliefs concerning the relation between, for instance, seawater and the survival and flourishing of fish are as widely shared by humans as the beliefs concerning seawater and the survival and flourishing of humans.³⁷² However, while humans as a whole class do recognize such things, the observation only bears upon the unity of opposites (and only becomes non-trivial) if it is understood to be a statement, not about the way in which the constitutions of different creatures respond to seawater, but about the constitution of seawater itself.³⁷³ There is, then, a difference between the species-focused recognition that the seawater may be of greater value to a fish than pure water, or that garbage may be of greater value to a donkey than gold, and the recognition of seawater or garbage as valuable in themselves. There is no sign that Heraclitus' contemporaries had a strong attachment to their trash – but they did seem to see gold and pure water as valuable in themselves as evinced by the practise of making gifts of gold objects to the gods (that is, their temples and shrines), by the plethora of golden garments, furnishings, and implements that surround the Homeric gods,³⁷⁴ by the frequent use of gold in value-based comparisons in Archaic poetry,³⁷⁵ and by the unequivocal value attached to water in Pindar Olympian 1.³⁷⁶ This seems to suggest that human beings don't really think that value and worthlessness are both equally

³⁷² For instance, Adoménas 1999: 100 claims that the human perspective encompasses the animal perspective, in that the human recognizes the suitability of the animal's preferences in light of the kind of creature that it is.

³⁷³ As Hussey 1982: 45 observes, the statement that seawater has these different effects on human beings and fish is wholly banal, yet "Heraclitus is likely to be anything but banal."

³⁷⁴ The description of the gods' chariot at *Il.* 5.724-731 is a nice illustration of this, both because of the frequency with which χρῦσεος is repeated (four times in seven lines), and because it requires the audience to suspend some of their pragmatic knowledge concerning the usefulness of wheels or bridles made of gold.

³⁷⁵ Gerber 1982: 17-19. For a particularly striking example see Thgn. *Eleg.* 1.418.

³⁷⁶ "Water is best" (Ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ; Pind. *Ol.* 1.1-2.) Gerber 1982: 15 points out a wide range of literary, religious and practical sources likely to make the claim that "water is best" a commonplace "in thought, if not in this particular form."

present in the nature of gold. Rather, they believe that value alone is truly present in the gold's nature – even if the donkey, by virtue of the limitations of its own nature, is incapable of recognizing or making use of this fact.

If, however, the perspective of human beings involves such complete absorption in a single opposite within a pair as to rule out the genuine recognition of the unity of opposites, then Heraclitus' observations concerning the ignorance of human beings has added force. After all, the logos' bringing-together-in-conflict has led the audience to believe that the unity of opposites is the key to an understanding of the nature of reality. As we will see in Chapter 4, what the unity of opposites and the logos in fact offers – a comprehension of the shared human view of reality – is very different from a true understanding of reality. Nonetheless, if we begin from the audience's present presupposition – that the unity of opposites really is descriptive of the nature of reality – then the human-animal juxtapositions provide a roundabout way of illustrating a truth about the epistemic constraints of the human perspective. Insofar as we approach reality from the human perspective, we fail to apprehend reality as it truly is.³⁷⁷ In the human-animal juxtapositions, this failure would seem to be present even in the (counterfactual) circumstances where the unity of opposites revealed the nature of reality as it truly is. The logos' bringing-together-in-conflict, as I argued in Chapter 2,³⁷⁸ organizes human thought and perception in such a way as to present to the audience a view of the world which is genuinely in accordance with their nature (and “common” in the sense that the view, in its basic structural principles, permeates all of human experience^{1 and 2}) – though brought to a level of clarity and consistency well beyond the habitual thought processes of “the many”. This, however, does not settle the

³⁷⁷ I've termed the apprehension of reality as it is in itself “understanding” or “wisdom” – as distinct from logos-based comprehension of the common human worldview. For an initial sketch of this distinction, see Chapter 2, section II

³⁷⁸ See, e.g., pp. 82-91.

question of the relation between this “common” human view of reality and the actual nature of reality. In fact, the human-animal juxtapositions paint a particularly stark picture of the ignorance inherent in the human view, by presenting the audience with a circumstance where human thought cannot even comprehend reality on human terms – that is, where they cannot grasp the natures of the relevant materials via the unity of opposites. In this sense, the human perspective, no less than the perspective of the individual dreamer, is revealed as a turning-aside from what is common, and an absorption in what is idiosyncratic and illusory.³⁷⁹

This seems to suggest that Heraclitus leads his audience, finally, to a place of epistemic pessimism. Yet he does seem to believe that understanding is possible for us – and that our failure to pursue and achieve it is something for which we are culpable. This is suggested, for instance, by his own apparent claim to an understanding of how things are (e.g., D1/B1),³⁸⁰ and by his impatience³⁸¹ with people’s tendency to look for revelation of the truth in the wrong places (e.g., D10/B104; D19/B28; D20/B40; D25a/B57), and with their epistemic failings more generally.³⁸²

³⁷⁹ The term “illusion” never, of course, appears in Heraclitus. However, my use of this word maps onto ideas implicit in, for instance, his characterization of those who turn away from the common thought and live “as if they have their own thought” (ὡς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν). (For this analysis of illusion in Heraclitus, see also Freeman 1966: 199; Wilcox 1994: 99.) In general outline, this means adopting the viewpoint of “reality-as-it-is-for-me”. It implies a view of reality that is in accordance with our own nature – that is, structured and constrained by the kind of creatures that we are – rather than a view of reality that is simply in accordance with reality. In other words, it is illusory in the sense that it does not disclose reality as it is in itself. This doesn’t preclude the possibility that human illusion may still constitute a kind of contact with reality – if only in the sense that bumping up against a table with one’s eyes closed constitutes a form of contact with an object of vision.

³⁸⁰ Barnes 1979: 59 may offer a somewhat one-dimensional reading of D1/B1 when he says (on the assumption that it stood at the beginning of Heraclitus’ “book”): “Heraclitus’ first claim is that he can offer a general account of the world.” Yet this characterization does, I think, capture the basic idea of something that Heraclitus wants to impress upon his audience from the outset.

³⁸¹ On the incompatibility of Heraclitus’ tone with true epistemic pessimism, see, e.g., Curd 2013: 221, 234.

³⁸² See Moore 2018: 7, who also notes that Heraclitus’ fragments abound with uses of the word ἄνθρωπος, the majority of which call attention to an epistemic failing with marked disapprobation that suggests that the failure is avoidable. This is perhaps made somewhat paradoxical by the fact that the usage is often emphatic – i.e., it is rarely necessary to the sense of the fragments, so that these examples seem to violate Heraclitus’ normal habit of extreme concision. If the problem is one that is specific to human beings, what is the source of Heraclitus’ impatience? Moore suggests that it concerns the human failure to “narrow the span between men and gods.”

Perhaps, as Kahn suggests, the animal-human comparisons are intended only to show us the “partiality” of the human perspective, and to give us the opportunity to obtain a “larger vision”, by recognizing the unity of opposites in the fact that the same thing may be valuable for one species, and worthless, or even dangerous, for another. What this means, on Kahn’s account, is that we must recognize that these things to which we ascribe a negatively-valenced term (polluted, unpleasant, worthless) can also have a positively-valenced term (pure, pleasant, valuable) ascribed to them by another creature – and both ascription is equally appropriate to the material under consideration. If we truly take this fact in, we begin to see the way in which the negatively and positively valenced opposites knit together to form the (ultimately good) structure of the whole.³⁸³ This interpretation seems, in fact, to work well with the characteristics of the logos. Heraclitus juxtaposes two commonly-recognized accounts of seawater – that it is life-preserving for fish and deadly for human beings – in such a way as to highlight the conflict between them, while suggesting that both must be given equal priority when determining the nature of seawater.³⁸⁴

If the audience tries to follow through on the logos-based method of comprehension, they will attempt to apprehend seawater (for instance) in accordance with the opposite ascribed to it by the fish and the opposite ascribed to it by the human. This is a mental feat that requires far more than does the acceptance of the truth of either ascription alone. Similarly, it goes beyond

³⁸³ Kahn 1979: 188-9.

³⁸⁴ For the view that the opposites must be weighted equally for the unity of opposites to function, see, e.g., McCabe 2015: 61. These fragments are sometimes read as an attack on human values. (See, e.g., Fränkel 1938: 322; Robb 1983: 192, 196; West 1971: 194.) As I will argue, that is, in a broader sense, their ultimate aim. However, given the absence of a clear distinction between evaluative and non-evaluative properties (see section I above), the evaluative and epistemic aspects of such assessments are inextricably bound up together, so that both are substantive component(s) of the object conceptualized (so long, that is, as we are remain on the human level of cognition, and therefore cognize the world in terms of individuated objects with natures, and cognize those natures as, in part, a function of value-for-us, etc.) While the logos provides the audience with a chance to think with a greater degree of abstraction, and thus to attenuate the power that their needs and desires have on their model of conceptual connections, these value assessments are nonetheless integral to the way in which human concepts function – we cannot think without them, so that to think about the nature of seawater, garbage, etc. is to think with and through constitutionally imposed experiences¹ of value and disvalue. For further discussion, see Chapter 4, section II.

the observation that two creatures may interact with the same material in a different way, since the latter observation involves, not two conflicting yet mutually informing observations about the nature of one material, but two compatible and unrelated observations concerning the natures of two different kinds of creature. Logos-based comprehension demands that the audience bring the two observations together in and through their opposition – they must, that is, accept that seawater is both deadly and life-preserving, and that both of these ascriptions make up what seawater is. In this way, by comprehending the equal truth in the way in which fish experience seawater and in the way in which humans experience it, they would (it seems) comprehend a unity that remains invisible to them so long as they remain exclusively within the human perspective on seawater.

There are serious difficulties for the “larger vision” argument, however. In order to fulfil the demand of the logos, it isn’t sufficient that the audience recognize that seawater has a negative effect on them, and a positive effect on fish. In order to recognize how the opposites “deadly” and “life-preserving” both reveal something true about the nature of seawater (rather than merely about the nature of fish and human beings), they must recognize both opposites as equally present in seawater – that is, they must be able to grasp both perspectives as equally true. Yet it isn’t clear how they are to grasp the equal truth of two perspectives which conflict on such fundamental needs and values. There are important reasons, after all, for the fact that the human perspective is (largely) uniform on the question of the drinkability of seawater or the value of baths in clean water as opposed to mud. These judgements are bound up with a set of action tendencies associated with the needs and preferences fundamental to our survival and flourishing as human beings – they are inscribed in our perspective as a species, and are fundamental to our

perspective's action- and attention-guiding structure.³⁸⁵ A human being who truly recognized the unity of opposites in the fact that seawater is both drinkable and life-preserving and undrinkable and deadly would need to be able to hold the associated action tendencies *equally*. In other words, the embrace of these opposed properties would seem to lead to the volition both to drink seawater and not to drink seawater. This is a different problem than the one that the unity of opposites, understood as a relatively abstract conceptual pattern, presents in fragments where the perspectival element is less central – though the difference is one of degree rather than of kind. In cases where the opposites are, for instance, day and night, the audience's recognition of their unity depends upon their ability to move beyond their “narrow”, individual perspective grounded in an idiosyncratic perceptual-physical context, and the concrete reasoning that arises from that context. When they do this, much of what is diminished is the kind of powerful perceptual and volitional content (e.g., the patient's sensory experience¹ of being cut and burned, and his wish to escape such an experience¹) that limits cognitive scope (e.g., the patient conceptualizes the cutting and burning as “harm” in a way that excludes the opposed conceptualization of such treatment as “healing”). However, as the human/animal juxtapositions highlight, such powerful volitional and perceptual elements are also found in the broader, human-wide perspective, and here we can see clearly that such elements are inextricable not only from the inferential moves dictated by one's immediate, idiosyncratic physical-perceptual context, but even from the

³⁸⁵ For the model of perspective as an action- and attention-guiding construct which both maintains and is maintained by our beliefs and preferences, see Limanowski & Friston 2020: 1-16. For a different but parallel view see Ataria 2015: 143-148. These models, emerging as they do from modern cognitive science, do not, of course, map perfectly onto from the Archaic Greek model of the “primal unity of mind” found in the undifferentiated (or not-fully-differentiated) faculties of cognition, volition, and perception. Yet like the model of the “primal unity of mind”, these modern psychological models understand volition, cognition and perception as inextricably bound up with one another. Moreover, both modern and Archaic models treat these faculties as underpinned (in the modern model) or pervaded/constituted (in the Archaic model) by a unifying perspective or “minimal self-consciousness” or source of self-identity (though on the Archaic model, this is simply, as Onians has argued, the breath that is pervades all of the psychological faculties). See immediately below for discussion of this Archaic model of mind.

patterned conceptual relations of the common logos-based thought.³⁸⁶ At this point, the degree of abstraction achieved through the logos' approach to patterned conceptual relations cannot be sustained. This is, in part, because the animal-human juxtapositions deal with opposites directly relevant to human flourishing and imbued with a high degree of symbolic and associative power (see Chapter 4). As a result, the pull towards the concrete, the immediate – which the reorientation towards the logos has decreased, but not eliminated – becomes that much stronger. More importantly, however, these particular juxtapositions involve explicitly evaluative properties. This brings the audience up against a feature of Heraclitus' psychology that he shares with Archaic Greek society at large: the absence of a clear differentiation between different faculties, and as a result, the absence of a clear distinction between their different modes of discrimination.

To some extent, this is a feature of the conceptual framework in which Heraclitus participates. In the absence of any clear conceptual distinction between evaluative properties and natural properties, between observer-dependent and inherent properties, between thought and perception (and therefore, between rational/conceptual discrimination and perceptual discrimination) and between substance and properties, Heraclitus' audience would have begun with fewer of the cognitive tools that gave later audiences more breathing space between the discrimination of materials (seawater, gold, etc.) and the perceptual or volitional features attached to those materials for a given individual or given species. In other words, later audiences were better equipped to take from the juxtaposition a lesson about the need to

³⁸⁶ What is at issue here is the *power* of the associated perceptual and volitional content, or the fact that it is wholly absorbing of the audience's attention. If, as I suggest, Heraclitus' psychology did not offer a clear differentiation between the faculties of thought, perception, and volition – and if, therefore, he took cognitive/intellectual discrimination, perceptual discrimination and volitional discrimination to be bound up with one another in conceptualization, then the issue here is the need to diminish the force of the most obviously distracting aspects of conceptualization, whether those are the affective, somatosensory, volitional or even intellectual aspects (as might be the case of an is/is-not paradox, where the most immediate tensions might in fact be experienced on the intellectual level).

distinguish between the aspects of their own assessments deriving from different mental faculties (for instance, the faculties of judgement, perception, and volition). For these later audience, the purpose of embracing the unity of the opposites “pure” and “polluted” with respect to seawater might be, for instance, to cancel out their evaluative judgements or volitional instincts (or their perceptual experiences¹ and volitional instincts) and encounter the material in question purely in terms of its (value-free) perceptual properties (or purely in terms of its conceptual/rational nature). However, for Heraclitus’ audience, for whom Onians’ “primal unity of mind”³⁸⁷ was still the overarching model informing how they saw themselves and the world around them, the grounding psychological framework tended to run together the perceptual, volitional, and conceptual aspects of discrimination. This is a psychology vividly illustrated by Heraclitus in D78/B61, where he treats cognitively and semantically rich properties such as “pure”³⁸⁸ as distinguished through and conceptually enmeshed with perceptual-physical properties in which the action-guiding and evaluative elements are central (“drinkable”, “undrinkable”, “life-preserving” and “deadly”), and where this discrimination and conceptualization appears to occur both on the part of humans and of fish.

³⁸⁷ Onians 1988: 15-17 describes this “primal unity of mind” as involving the experience¹ and conceptualization of psychic activity in which the intellectual, affective, perceptual and conative processes are “undifferentiated” (14). Within such a framework, the “passive” psychic processes (and/or those that can be “completed” internally) such as perceptual and cognitive awareness are already bound up with action tendencies, while action tendencies can be described by perceptual and cognitive experiences¹ that a more detached and better-differentiated model of psychic processes (as employed by “Greeks such as Aristotle, and [us] to-day” [18]) would classify as passive and/or as properly internal. See also Snell 1953, on which Onians’ account of this model is grounded. For the continuation of this model of mind throughout the Archaic period, see Onians 1988: 70.

³⁸⁸ The notion of what is *καθαρός* was evidently an important one to Heraclitus, appearing in no less than three verbatim fragments, including two animal-human juxtapositions (D80a/B13; D78/B61); both of these feature the notion of *καθαρός ὕδωρ*. Even if we leave aside the religious connotations that dominate D15/B5 (which also concerns the implicit presence of water, in that it deals with fluids in which one washes oneself), there are conceptual complexities built into Heraclitus’ use of these terms, such that the needs and values associated with a given contextual use of *καθαρός ὕδωρ* are inseparable from its nature *as καθαρός*. *καθαρός* in this context means, of course, without pollutants (LSJ, s.v. I.2) and therefore sound and usable for its proper purpose (LSJ, s.v. I.6). Clean water is, in this sense, water that acts effectively *as water*, meaning that it can both wash and nourish. Yet this meaning is bound up with the notion of being unmixed with anything else – such as the salt with which it is mixed in seawater. (Water is in fact, the proverbial instance of that which is *καθαρός* in the sense of being unmixed with anything else [LSJ, s.v. I.2].) For fish, however, seawater is not water to which salt has been added, but “pure water.” Our “pure water” would be, for them, water from which salt had been subtracted.

Heraclitus' logos functions, in part, to shift the audience away from this "primal unity", not by the clear, direct differentiation of faculties but through processes of abstraction and reflection that will facilitate this differentiation³⁸⁹ even as the differentiation will itself open possibilities of dealing ever more abstractly with the kinds of paradoxes that Heraclitus' logos presents. For Heraclitus' audience, however, the primal unity of the mind remains (partially) in place, as does the pull towards concrete modes of reasoning based in an immediate perceptual-physical context. The animal-human perspective juxtapositions are structured in such a way as to make both these facts central to way in which the audience experiences³ the juxtapositions. D78/B61, for instance, foregrounds the fact that both humans and fish pick out and "conceptualize" seawater through a nexus of features grounded in their perspective – that is, an action- and belief-guiding framework of needs and values. This, ultimately, means that the genuine recognition of the equal truth of the judgements arising from these opposed perspectives has the effect of nullifying the action-guiding needs and desires involved with those judgements

³⁸⁹ For Heraclitus' position on the cusp of the "discovery" of the distinction between thought and perception, see Wilcox 1993. We would go too far were we to say, with Snell 1953: 17-18, that Heraclitus in fact originates the distinction between body and soul, the perceptual and the intellectual/spiritual, using the term *ψυχή* to mark the latter. Snell's evidence, in the form of paradoxes that Snell believes were meant to be through a recognition of the body/soul distinction, implies that the purpose of Heraclitus' paradoxes lay in achieving their intellectual resolution. This, as I have repeatedly suggested, is a misunderstanding of the way in which Heraclitus' paradoxes, as forms of bringing-together-in-conflict, function. In any case, *ψυχή* in Heraclitus has much of the apparent inconsistency and ambiguity that we find among words for psychic organs in Homer (this ambiguity is perhaps more consciously and reflectively exploited in Heraclitus' case, of course – but reflective use of a conceptual ambiguity is different from the creation of a fully formulated distinction). It may perhaps play a role in our faculties of rational evaluation, as argued by Nussbaum 1972a, but the relevant fragments (D33/B107; D98/B45; D104/B117; D116/B85; D121/B98) do not give us a sufficient basis for distinguishing rational evaluation from perceptual discrimination or even from the "vital force" or action tendencies associated with judgements (see Snell 1953: 196-197). The opposition of *ψυχή* to body is made even more dubious by the fact that it plays the role of one of the cosmic masses, alongside water and earth, in D100/B36. What this implies, I think, is that we should be cautious about assigning too neat a correspondence between the concepts of logos and *ψυχή*. The former is involved in distinction- and connection-making (D1/B1) and is shared in common among all humans. The latter seems to be involved in our individuation: it is an individual possession, like our eyes and ears, which can be used badly or well (B33/B107; D98/B45); as a cosmic body, it is also descriptive of something that is without individuation (D100/B36), which, unlike the other cosmic bodies (D86/B31) seems to elude the common human capacities marked by the term logos (D98/B45). On the inconsistency of the functions of psychic organs in early Greek thought, see especially Onians 1951, who in his attempt to lend the terminology for mental faculties the greatest possible systematicity, succeeds also in drawing attention to the persistent presence of ambiguity and inconsistency. See especially Onians 1951: 49, 59, 98, 100.

– and, with them, the perspective that they help to structure.³⁹⁰ The result, as it turns out, is that the two perspectives (along with the opposed judgements or concepts with which they are associated) cancel out. I will expand upon this point in Chapter 4, where it plays a central part in the solution to the epistemic problem that it highlights. For the purposes of the present argument, the chief issue is this: the human-animal juxtapositions reveal an obstacle to the audience’s capacity to recognize the equality of the opposites in the relevant cases. This is because the conceptual, perceptual, and volitional faculties are not differentiated in the early Greek mind – and in the case of the animal-human juxtapositions, the volitional facets of differentiation are given a central role. It isn’t clear how the audience can override the idiosyncratic human volitions with respect to the relevant materials (water, garbage, gold, mud) without at the same time overriding the conceptual and perceptual facets with which they are bound up. In other words, since the volitions play a necessary role in the concepts of, for instance, “pure” and “polluted”, the nature of human psychology seems to prevent the audience from cognizing the opposites as equally present in the nature of seawater.

Kahn’s “larger vision” reading of the human-animal juxtapositions runs up against a further difficulty. While there are serious reasons to question whether the audience is capable of grasping of the unity of opposites in cases where it demands the simultaneous grasp of the human and animal perspectives, we know that the unity of opposites plays a crucial role in

³⁹⁰ See Limanowski & Friston 2020: 1-16 (see especially 8-12) who emphasize the importance of both the attenuation of conflicting sensory information (including, e.g., interoceptive information), along with interplay between sensory information and the beliefs and preferences (3, 5) in the maintenance of a perspective (or, as they call it, as self-model). On their view, an agent who was flooded by conflicting sensory information that they failed to attenuate would (temporarily) lose their sense of perspective or self (see, e.g., 11). This is, in fact, the state of the individual who induces conflicting responses in him or herself by not only conceptualizing, but actually experiencing³ seawater (literally or imaginatively) as both pure/drinkable and polluted/undrinkable. See Chapter 4, section II for a discussion of the crucial role of the experiential³, as opposed to the merely conceptual, in these fragments.

comprehension of the shared human view of reality.³⁹¹ Equally clear is the fact that the animal-human juxtapositions do present what are in some sense traditional Heraclitean instances of the unity of opposites.³⁹² Yet what these juxtapositions primarily emphasize is not epistemic achievement, but epistemic failure –not merely because of the audience’s inability to grasp both opposites, but also because the juxtapositions create an equivalence between the human worldview and the worldview of creatures whose ignorance is proverbial. The particular animal perspectives that Heraclitus offers in juxtaposition with the human draw upon strong pejorative connotations.³⁹³ While it seems doubtful that Heraclitus’ audience would be flattered to find their point of view placed on an equal footing with, for instance, that of the horse or ox, such a comparison would be less insulting than the comparisons with which they are in fact presented. Horses, for instance, are presented as having a degree of nobility in Greek literature,³⁹⁴ while a muted respect for the (value of the) ox was signalled by laws against “ox-murder.”³⁹⁵ By contrast, the animals Heraclitus in fact selects – that is, donkeys, pigs, and fish – not only carry clear pejorative associations, but are, more specifically, associated with ignorance.³⁹⁶ The

³⁹¹ As argued in Chapter 2.

³⁹² As argued above, pp. 148-152.

³⁹³ See Fränkel 1938: 322; Granger 2002: 7; Robb 1983: 192, 196; West 1971: 194. (Fränkel recognizes both the pejorative connotations of the animals selected, and the way in which the fragments serve to make the human and the animal equivalent to one another. However, he sees this equivalency as established through the use of proportional analogy rather than through the unity of opposites). For the epistemically damning consequences of these fragments, see also Rankin 1995: 250-251. Cf., however, Kahn 1979: 186, who argues that the animals Heraclitus presents in these fragments do not draw upon these kinds of connotations, since they involve concrete descriptions about the real behaviour of animals. This argument seems to go against Kahn’s own important methodological insights concerning the interpretation of Heraclitus’ multiple levels of meanings, since it implies that Heraclitus cannot exploit both literal facts and symbolic associations at once.

³⁹⁴ The nobility of horses, as Gregory 2007: 195-198 notes, is repeatedly signalled in the Homeric poems by their use in conveying men of high-status (as contrasted with the use of donkeys in conveying women and slaves), the affection shown to them and attributed to them, and the kinds of epithets attached to them (e.g., *κάλλιθριξ*, “beautiful-maned”).

³⁹⁵ This “crime” was punished by putting on trial the axe which was used to kill the ox (Lonsdale 1979: 153). The practice had only ceremonial significance, yet its long survival suggests recognition of the society’s dependence on the ox – a recognition lacking in the attitudes towards the similarly useful and important donkey.

³⁹⁶ The pejorative implications of an equivalency between animal and human perspectives need not, however, depend upon such highly negative associations as we find associated with the animals that Heraclitus selects. Xenophanes, for instance, undermines human perspectives on the divine by treating them as equivalent to the

connection between fish and ignorance seems a natural one given the creatures' silence, and the tendency for early Greek poetry to treat thought and speech as one.³⁹⁷ Thus, fish lead Hesiod's list of creatures which lack both logos and justice, and which are therefore unable either to know or to speak of what is right (*Op.* 274-80). Diogenes of Apollonia also appears to have singled out fish (along with birds) for their stupidity – a result not only of the fact that they cannot be reached by the air, but due also to shortcomings of their mouths and tongues, as a result of which “they cannot understand each other.”³⁹⁸ Plato's *Timaeus* apportions the life of fish to the “most ignorant and mindless”³⁹⁹ souls, since the murky (θολερός) waters in which they live correspond well to their ignorance (ἄμαθία) (92b).

Later writers continue to use the silent fish as an image of ignorance, speaking of stupid men as ἀφωνότερος τῶν ἰχθύων.⁴⁰⁰ Fish associations seem to be connected not only with epistemic but also moral and aesthetic inferiority. Sluiter notes that, in the *Odyssey*, comparisons between fish and men served to convey a degree of moral repugnance – since in such similes, fish connote helplessness and lack of heroism.⁴⁰¹ Fish also appear to evoke a level of visceral distaste. In Homer's world, they are eaten only by those who are starving (e.g., Odysseus' companions on the Island of the Sun).⁴⁰² Moreover, although the *Iliad* makes repeated references to the devouring of corpses by birds and dogs (as well as fish), the only creatures that we in fact witness consuming a human body are the fish who eat the dead Asteropaeus (21.200-204).

imagined beliefs of the valued and relatively “noble” horse and ox (D14/B15). For Heraclitus' own use of animals to directly invoke ignorance and ignobility, see also D9/B97, D13/B29.

³⁹⁷ Onians 1973:13-14.

³⁹⁸ δύνασθαι συνεῖναι ἀλλήλων (D44/A19). Laks 1999: 265 takes fish, rather than birds, to be the primary example of the deficiencies discussed in this passage.

³⁹⁹ μάλιστα ἀνοητοτάτων καὶ ἀμαθεστάτων

⁴⁰⁰ E.g., Luc. *Gall.* 1.

⁴⁰¹ *Od.* 12.251-255; *Od.* 22.383-388 (citations in Sluiter 2014: 822-824).

⁴⁰² Scott 1917: 172.

Donkeys, like fish, are associated with ignorance. They are characterized in both “high” and “low” literature as stupid (as well as preoccupied with base appetites for food and sex).⁴⁰³ The opening scene of the *Frogs* presents a series of jokes that exploit the association between donkeys and slaves as beasts of burden with low, physiological preoccupations. The donkey’s purported insensibility to all but the most direct, visceral stimuli is illustrated by the fact that they were thought to be most appropriately handled by regular, vigorous beatings,⁴⁰⁴ since their proverbial stupidity meant that they were incapable of benefitting from instruction of any other kind,⁴⁰⁵ or appreciating the pleasures of the educated (that is, the *συνετοί*)⁴⁰⁶ such as music⁴⁰⁷ and literature.⁴⁰⁸

The human-pig comparison also involves particularly strong pejorative implications. Even among domesticated animals, pigs were considered of low value. Their small size and relatively undemanding eating habits – they could be fed scraps, and even human waste – differentiated them from such “elite” animals as horses, oxen, and bulls.⁴⁰⁹ Pigs were domesticated exclusively for the purposes of food (they were also, of course, used for sacrifice). Where human beings are compared to pigs, this, like human-donkey comparisons, serves to mark their absorption in base appetitive preoccupations,⁴¹⁰ their lack of culture, and their stupidity.

⁴⁰³ Gregory 2007: 193. In fact, however, donkeys appear only rarely in “high literature.” Hesiod does not mention donkeys (though he speaks of the higher-status mule). Of the four (fragmentary) references to donkeys in surviving works of the tragic playwrights, two are from satyr plays (Griffith 2006: 226n127). The *Iliad* offers only a single reference to donkeys; at a key moment in his retreat in Book 11, Ajax is compared to a donkey beaten by children (11.556-562). The simile serves to highlight his humiliation at the hands of the Trojans – which is made all the more emphatic by the fact that it marks an abrupt transformation from an earlier simile likening him to a fierce (if outnumbered) lion under attack (11.547-554).

⁴⁰⁴ Gregory 2007: 203-204.

⁴⁰⁵ ὄνος πληγῶν ἄξιος (Griffith 2006: 227).

⁴⁰⁶ See pp. 89-101 on the importance of this word for Heraclitus.

⁴⁰⁷ E.g., Aesop 542 (Perry 1965). See also citations in Griffith 2006: 227n134.

⁴⁰⁸ ὄνῳ τις ἔλεγε μῦθον (Griffith 2006: 227). (Compare the modern English expression, “casting pearls before swine”).

⁴⁰⁹ Howe 2014: 140-141.

⁴¹⁰ For instance, Semon. 7.2-5 presents the sow-like wife as lazy and greedy.

The epithet “Boeotian sow” (Βοιωτία ὕς),⁴¹¹ appears in Archaic lyric poetry and in Old Comedy as a pejorative indicating stupidity and lack of education.⁴¹² The humiliating nature of the transformation of Odysseus’ men into pigs, is signalled by the description of their behaviour (“always grovelling and eating in the mud”⁴¹³) and their foodstuff (the acorns and cornelian cherries⁴¹⁴ that belonged to the diet of “primitive” or non-agrarian societies – like that of the Cyclopes in Book IX, whose ignorance is evidenced by their failure to cultivate their own, and the neighbouring, island).⁴¹⁵

These pejorative implications are difficult to ignore; they seem to form an important part of Heraclitus’ meaning. Yet – once again – it seems evident that the juxtapositions offer instances of the familiar unity of opposites. As in other unity of opposites fragments, the unity depends on the conflict between the two terms (here, the ones variously ascribed to a given material by the human and animal perspectives) and this conflict, in turn, depends on the balance between the two terms. That is, just as the conflict and interdependence of the “way up” and the “way down” tells us that neither “up” nor “down” is primary with respect to the “way,” so the presence of the unity of opposites in the animal-human juxtapositions signals the equivalency of the perspectives juxtaposed.

The suggestion, then, is that the level of understanding in the two perspectives is indeed balanced – yet given the evocations of ignorance that Heraclitus draws upon in his selection of animal perspectives, they indicate not so much an equivalent degree of understanding as an equivalent absence of understanding. In other words, the effect of the juxtaposition is not to raise

⁴¹¹ Found, e.g., at Pind. *Ol.* 6.90; Theoc. *Id.* 5.23, Cratinus 310. The “proverb” “any pig might know” (ἂν πᾶσα ὕς γνῶιη), cited at Pl. *Lach.* 196d, seems to be a variation on this.

⁴¹² Stehle 2014: 167n131.

⁴¹³ χαμαιευνάδες αἰὲν ἔδουσιν (*Od.* 10.243).

⁴¹⁴ ἄκυλος and κράνεια (*Od.* 10.242).

⁴¹⁵ *Od.* 10.238-40.

the audience's esteem for the animal perspective with respect to its access to truth, but rather, to lower their esteem for the human perspective. This serves to reinforce the implications of the other difficulties that these instances of the unity of opposites present for the audience. As argued above, the grasp of the unity of the two conflicting terms proves elusive in these cases. This is, in part, because of the emphasis that these juxtapositions place on just those elements of concepts that logos-based comprehension partially attenuates in other cases – that is, the attention-absorbing elements of audience's physical-perceptual context (with “context” here used in its broad meaning – i.e., the constitution-based perspective shared by the whole species, with its associated needs, values, and preferences).⁴¹⁶ Again, the features of the human perspective that Heraclitus highlights in these fragments are an essential part of viewing the world as a human being, since our survival and flourishing is closely tied to, for instance, our conception of seawater as “undrinkable” rather than “drinkable.” Here, then, the human perspective involves such absorption with a single aspect of a thing as to preclude any genuine recognition of the unity of the two terms. This, as noted above, would seem sufficient evidence that ignorance was inherent in the common human perspective – at least from the point of view of an audience that believes that understanding of the nature of the cosmos and the things within it depends on the grasp of the unity of opposites (a belief that will turn out to be rooted in an illusory conception of reality, but one that is also a necessary intermediate step in the achievement of an understanding of reality's true nature). These doubts about the human perspective are reinforced by the poetic and cultural associations evoked by the animals whose perspectives on the natures of various materials Heraclitus equates with the human perspective on those materials. The audience comes,

⁴¹⁶ This direct re-engagement of the (never entirely absent) experiential³ dimension alongside the conceptual is, I argue in section Chapter 4, section II, an intentional move on Heraclitus' part, and is a crucial part of the audience's transition from the human, logos-based comprehension to the divine, perspectiveless understanding. See Chapter 4 for a further discussion of some of the limitations and puzzles associated with the logos' attenuation of the physiological and affective associations evoked by concepts.

in this way, to register the same sorts of doubts about the epistemic validity of their “broad”, shared human perspective as of the epistemic validity of their “narrow”, individual perspective.

These doubts are further supported not only by Heraclitus’ claims concerning the ignorance of human beings as a whole class,⁴¹⁷ but even by the troubling D74/B78, which claims that human beings do not have “understanding” (γνώμη).⁴¹⁸ The human perspective on the world – along with the myopic needs and values that constitute it – involves the same state of ignorance occupied by sleepwalkers. Nor is it clear that we could escape this ignorance by taking on the perspective of some other creature – since the animal perspectives in these fragments are, equally, tied to myopic absorption in a single aspect of a thing, and thus seem, no less than the human, to embody a state of ignorance. Heraclitus has, then, widened his claim concerning epistemic vacuity of the merely individual perspective so that it encompasses not only the idiosyncratic perspective of individuals within a species, but also the idiosyncratic perspective of the individual species. Each species is wrapped up within its own perspective on the world – and

⁴¹⁷ D1/B1; D22/B56; D74/B78. The omission of the article in D1/B1 and in D74/B78 makes it especially likely that Heraclitus intends to refer to humans as a whole class (rather than simply the majority of humans). See Smythe 1956: 81126; 81129.

⁴¹⁸ Mouraviev notes that the early general meanings of γνώμη can include an individual’s ability to know, power arising from knowledge, and the means by which a thing is known. Mouraviev understands γνώμη in this fragment as belonging to the second general category, and translates it as “piece or item of knowledge” (1973: 72). I follow him in interpreting γνώμη here as belonging to this second category, but favour the more general “understanding” (the interpretation of the plural as indicating an actual plurality of pieces of knowledge sits uneasily with the fact that wisdom, for Heraclitus, is one). For the translation of γνώμη in this fragment as “understanding”, see also McCabe 2015: 56; Robinson 1987: 49 (“right understanding”). Bywater 1889: 107. For the translation as “insight” see Dilcher 1995: 149. For the general translation of this word in Heraclitus as “insight” see Minar 1939: 332. Kurke 1999: 63 supports this reading even as she adds an important new layer. γνώμη, especially when used (as here), in the plural, refers to the teachings distilled from poetry into a body of epigrams – that is, those deep truths which constitute and express both the communal (aristocratic) body of knowledge and its moral orientation (see, e.g. Thgn. 60, 717; Soph. *Ajax* 1091). See also Bloomer 2013: 457. By asserting the vacuity of this body of knowledge, he is both affirming the audience’s ignorance, and depriving them of the epistemic and moral markers by which they distinguish themselves from the many (compare the way in which he plays with the aristocratic class’s description of itself as σὺνερὸς, as discussed in Chapter 2 [see pp. 89-91]) In challenging the notion that understanding can be found in γνώμη understood as this body of pieces of “knowledge” – whose epigrammatic form is illustrated by such proverbial sources of wisdom as the oracle at Delphi, the Seven Sages, and by Heraclitus himself – Heraclitus reinforces the challenge to linguistically expressible truth found in, e.g., D47/B50 and D41/B93 (for comparisons between Heraclitus and the oracle at Delphi in its “literary aspect”, see Parke and Wormell 1956; for comparisons with the Seven Sages, see Granger 2002).

such a perspective is incompatible with the incorporation of divergent perspectives in the bringing-together-in-conflict of the logos. This means that the logos is “common” only to human beings, who do not automatically gain understanding of reality merely through their use of logos-based comprehension; in fact, even their ability to use the logos consistently is problematized. Again, there’s no reason to think that we could remedy our ignorance by taking on additional perspectives, learning to see garbage, for instance, both as donkeys see it and as humans see it. Such a move appears, first, to be psychological impossible, since the opposed needs and values that constitute Heraclitus’ juxtaposed human/animal perspectives cannot be held at the same time. Moreover, the fragments seem geared less to suggest that understanding is found in looking at the world from the human perspective as well as the perspectives of pigs, donkeys, and fish. Rather, they create the impression that understanding cannot be found in any of these perspectives.⁴¹⁹ Yet the audience’s dependence upon the logos’ method of bringing-together-in-conflict – their investment in it and in the belief that it can, in fact reveal the natures of things (an investment carefully reinforced by Heraclitus) – means that the logos is not readily abandoned as a method for achieving knowledge. This continued dependence will play an important part in overcoming the ignorance that is, in fact, inherent in the human (as well as the fish, pig, donkey, etc.) perspective.

Conclusion

The evidence of the human-animal juxtapositions, especially when added to other statements about the ignorance of human beings, does seem to imply extreme epistemic pessimism. The

⁴¹⁹ See also Pradeau 2002: 48-50 for the reading of the human/animal juxtapositions as emphasizing the pervasive influence that our constitution, or the kind of creature that we are, has upon our judgements concerning the nature or character of things. For Pradeau, however, this does not imply pessimism about the attainability of knowledge within the confines of this constitution-imposed perspective, but rather, that Heraclitus’ ultimate concern is with “la vie humaine, la représentation et la connaissance humaines de la réalité, l’adoption de modes de vie ou des opinions qui la définissent.” See Robb 1983: 193 who, in his analysis of D110/B11, the epistemic/moral equivalence of humans and animals (and their shared opposition to the gods).

explicitly perspectival content, as well as the direct appeal to needs and values bound up with human flourishing, undermines the audience's capacity to attenuate the sensory and volitional content of the opposites. As a result, they are unable to grasp the juxtaposed opposites as a unity of equal, interdependent terms. Humans, like fish, donkeys and pigs, seem to be struck in the worldview dictated by their own constitution-driven needs and values. The suggestion is that the maintenance of any perspective whatsoever involves an absorption in the idiosyncratic, akin to that of the many in D2/B2 who cling to their own, private conception of the world. Yet regardless of the bleak epistemic prospects for those who perceive reality from the perspective of humans and animals, the divine "perspective" does, at least, appear to constitute understanding – even if, as I will argue in the next chapter, its capacity for understanding arises from the fact that it is no perspective at all. In fact, the way out of epistemic pessimism for Heraclitus' audience turns out to be found in the very perspectivelessness of divine understanding – via the "cancelling out" or collapse of perspective attendant on the effort to grasp the unity of opposites in the animal-human juxtapositions.

Chapter Four: From Many Perspectives to the Perspectiveless One

Introduction

In this chapter, I continue to examine the role that Heraclitus' perspective juxtapositions play in his epistemology – not only the perspectives of humans and animals, but also (what is presented as) the perspectives of the gods. I argue that these fragments not only emphasize the ignorance inherent in the human perspectives, but also show that understanding is the exclusive province of the divine. This understanding, however, is both non-dual and perspectiveless. As such, it cannot be reached from within the framework of human thought, since the latter depends upon duality and opposition. In fact, it requires a rethinking not only of the very idea of divinity, but of the relationship between the divine, its understanding, and that which it understands. I suggest that Heraclitus does offer the possibility that humans can achieve a temporary state of understanding which assimilates them to the divine. They can only achieve this, however, through a loss of all those specifically human elements of their cognition – in other words, through a temporary abandonment of the human perspective.

In section one, I consider Heraclitus' "proportional analogies" – that is, those fragments where he juxtaposes the human perspective with those of animals and gods. I argue that these fragments: (1) further underscore the ignorance inherent in the human perspective; (2) indicate that the nature of reality understood by the divine is non-dual and, more specifically, undifferentiated. That is, reality, as apprehended in genuine (divine) understanding, is unity-without-plurality.

In section two, I argue that Heraclitus' model of divine understanding is, specifically, a perspectiveless understanding. From this vantage, a further function of the human-animal

juxtapositions becomes visible. As discussed in section II, these juxtapositions raise serious doubts about the possibility of attaining knowledge from within the human or animal perspectives. Yet, as I argue in section IV, they also provide a means by which perspective itself may be undermined – thus providing the audience with an opportunity to attain a perspectiveless understanding.

I: Divine Understanding and Non-Duality

“Human character does not possess understanding (γνώμῃ), but the divine (θεῖον) does,” states D74/B78.⁴²⁰ While the statement that the human character lacks understanding is unsurprising, given what we learned from the animal-human perspective juxtapositions about the link between ignorance and the maintenance of a perspective, the claim that the divine *does* possess understanding is more problematic. So long as a divinity views the world from any perspective at all, however lofty, it seems likely its perspective will present the same epistemic limitations as the perspectives of animals and human beings. Yet, as I argue in this section, Heraclitus not only provides repeated assurances that the divine *does* possess understanding, but he does so, in part, through a set of human-god comparisons which further underscore the ignorance inherent in the human perspective. At the same time, these comparisons help lead towards a view of divine understanding as non-dual.

Heraclitus’ “divine” does not receive a uniform or straightforward treatment in the fragments. At times – as in his statements concerning the one wise – the model of divinity he offers is at odds with the anthropomorphism (and plurality) of the Hesiodic and Homeric gods. At other times – as in the human-god “perspective” juxtapositions – he presents a view of the

⁴²⁰ ἡθὺς γὰρ ἀνθρώπειον μὲν οὐκ ἔχει γνώμῃς, θεῖον δὲ ἔχει.

gods that is far more consonant with the traditional one. The reason for this lies in the different function of the gods in the different fragments. As I will show in this chapter section, the human-god juxtapositions have a specific set of aims. Namely, they seek to: (1) further emphasize the impossibility of achieving understanding from within the human perspective; (2) suggest the existence of some “perspective” from which understanding might be achieved; (3) highlight some of the conditions of understanding. Their function is directly concerned with the puzzles concerning perspective and the perspectiveless “view” required in order to achieve an understanding of the nature of reality. For this purpose, it makes sense that the gods should appear in a more traditional guise, such that, like the Homeric and Hesiodic gods, they seem, at first, to possess their own distinct set of needs and values. This is because the juxtapositions can only achieve their function if the gods in question are, initially, viewed as having a perspective; without this initial assumption, the fragments could not offer such pointed puzzles and insights concerning perspective. By contrast, the fragments concerning the (one) wise (discussed in section II below, as well as in Chapter 5, section II), and those concerning *the* god (i.e., those in which θεός receives the article⁴²¹) are less concerned with the puzzles of perspective as such, and more concerned with the unity of reality and its identity with the unity of the one who understands that reality, and with the unity of the act of apprehending that reality. One of the functions of these fragments, as I argue in Chapter 5, section II, is to provide a description of reality as unity-in-plurality while at the same time pointing beyond unity-in-plurality, towards an intimation of reality as a unity without differentiations – a unity-without-plurality. Yet another function of the fragments concerning the divine, as I argue in section II below, and in Chapter 5,

⁴²¹ This, perhaps, something to which we should pay more attention in Heraclitus than we would in another thinker, given his tendency to elide articles, particles, and connectives. While it would be a mistake to assume that the presence of the article implies that the god is singular (as it would in English), its presence does make θεός emphatic in a way that, when taken along with the singularity of the divine “one wise”, invites the audience to at least entertain the possibility that there is only one θεός.

section I, is to emphasize the undifferentiated nature of reality, and the idiosyncratic nature of the differentiations that we make.

Despite their differences, both the “non-anthropomorphic divine” fragments and the human-god juxtapositions share in common a preoccupation with the possession of understanding by the divine. Heraclitus attributes understanding to the divine not only in D74/B78, but also in his references to “[the one] wise” ([ἐν τὸ] σοφόν: D43/B108; D44/B41; D45/B32). The divinity of the one wise in these fragments is signalled by its possession of epistemic powers beyond those of members of a multiplicity such as humans or animals – for instance, its acquaintance with the understanding (γνώμη, again) that steers “all things through all things” (D44/B41).⁴²²

Moreover, while Heraclitus’ human-god juxtapositions in some respects parallel his human-animal juxtapositions, the former, strikingly, lack the implications of equivalence one finds in the latter. Even where the juxtapositions are structured around an apparent equivalence of relations, this equivalence itself depends on the non-equivalence of the human and the divine. For instance, the monkey:human::human:god comparison in D77/B83⁴²³ depends upon the acceptance of a stable hierarchy that dictates relative value. The structure of the fragment seems to be that of a proportional analogy,⁴²⁴ indicating that the wisdom and nobility of the god exceeds that of the human in the same way that the wisdom and nobility of the human exceeds

⁴²² I follow most contemporary commentators in seeing here a reference to the logos, since the order of the logos, insofar as it is (as I argue in section II below), directed towards understanding, and even (as I argue in Chapter 5, section II) provides a kind of image of understanding, depends upon understanding as a structuring principle. As I argue below (this section), the logos’ ordering of things leads towards the cancelling out of the things that it orders – “all things” are not merely ranged against each other in bringing-together-in-conflict, but actually pass straight “through” each other, as through a mutual dissolution into empty space. The notion that the order belonging to all things might involve the cancelling out of those things appears elsewhere in Heraclitus – as, for instance, in D87/B90 (especially as read with D85/B30). The suggestion that a single divine principle separate from multiplicity might be approximated by ordered multiplicity of which it forms the source may be present in D105/B114.

⁴²³ “The wisest human, compared to a god, will show itself to be a monkey in wisdom, nobility, and everything else.” (ἀνθρώπων ὁ σοφώτατος πρὸς θεὸν πίθηκος φανεῖται καὶ σοφία καὶ κάλλει καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσιν.)

⁴²⁴ As Fränkel 1938: 309-337 observes.

that of the monkey.⁴²⁵ In other words, the analogy depends on the inequality of the terms involved, and the equality of the relations among the terms.

Heraclitus, as I argued in Chapter 3, undermines the hierarchal ordering of the human and the animal, and thus ultimately undermines the equality of the relation between terms. Moreover, the model of the divine that we find in these fragments is one that Heraclitus ultimately calls into question, since it involves a quasi-anthropomorphic model of divinity, with a particular perspective that can be defined in some way through its relation to the human perspective. Yet both the initial plausibility of the structure as a whole, and the sustained emphasis on the epistemic superiority of the divine, serve to further emphasize human epistemic deficiencies, undermining the human perspective “from above” as well as “from below”. The epistemic differences between gods and humans are not given only in general terms, as in D74/B78. Heraclitus also capitalizes on familiar associations in order to impress on his audience the scope of their ignorance, making use of the audience’s presupposition of their epistemic superiority to animals⁴²⁶ and children, in order to show the audience to themselves *as* animals and children (as seen from an imagined god’s eye view).

One of the alluring aspects of the human/god comparisons is their implicit promise to reveal something about how the gods see things. Yet beyond the epistemic superiority of the gods, Heraclitus in fact tells the audience little about how reality appears from such a vantage. Unlike the human/animal comparisons, which talk about the qualities or values with which a given creature invests a given material, these fragments are almost exclusively negative in

⁴²⁵ McDermott 1935 notes that the ape, being “useless”, was valued by the Greeks only for its comic qualities or its interest as a grotesque (166), was seen as “satiric because he is man’s *reductio ad bestiam*” (166) and often served as an emblem of folly (169) – as, for instance, in its role in fable as the dupe of the fox (175), as in fr. 89 of Archilochus (175). The word *πίθηκος* means both “ape” and “monkey”.

⁴²⁶ See, e.g., Alcmaeon, D11/A5, for the view that the animal perspective is differentiated from the human by the fact that understanding is absent from the former.

orientation, emphasizing the fact that the gods do not see things as humans do. This purely negative character of the proportional analogies is not as apparent as it is in D74/B78 (which shows gods as having the understanding that humans lack) and D73/B102 (which emphasizes the non-dual nature of the gods' understanding, as compared to the dualistic nature of human thought). The proportional analogies of D75/B79⁴²⁷ and D77/B83 appear, on the surface, to also tell the audience something about how the gods view human beings (as children in B75/B79 – that is, silly, weak, and lacking foresight – and as monkeys in D77/B83 – that is, ugly, foolish, and generally deficient⁴²⁸). In fact, however, these fragments present just a single perspective – that is, the human perspective on monkeys in D77/B83, and the adult perspective on children in D75/B79 – and invite the audience to try to use it to extrapolate the perspective of the gods. That is, they seem to ask the audience to move from a presumed “known” relation (the relationship between the wisdom of monkeys and the wisdom of humans, or between the viewpoint of a child and the viewpoint of an adult) to an unknown relation (that is, the relationship between the wisdom or viewpoint of humans and the wisdom or viewpoint of the gods).⁴²⁹ The natural inference would seem to be that, while the wisdom and viewpoint of the gods may represent a mere placeholder here, giving no direct information concerning its nature, the structure of the analogy offers a means by which the audience may acquire that information. They need only, so to speak, solve for X in the equation “Human wisdom: Monkey wisdom:: X: Human wisdom”, thus extrapolating from the known to the unknown.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁷ “A man is called a child by a divinity just as a child is by a man.” (ἀνὴρ νήπιος ἤκουσε πρὸς δαίμονος ὅκωσπερ παῖς πρὸς ἀνδρός.) As Granger 2002: 4 notes, the reduction of grown men to the level of children (or even below the level of the children upon who guide home drunk men) also serves as an expression of degradation in D104/B117. For the low value assigned to children and their faculties in ancient Greek society see Beaumont 2013: 195-206.

⁴²⁸ See, e.g., Dilcher 1995: 152.

⁴²⁹ Fränkel 1938: 314. The claim that these fragments are intended to give us a glimpse into the gods' viewpoint seems especially improbable given that the proportional analogies make use of qualities such as “nobility” (κάλλος) which, for the gods, seem not to admit of relativity (D73/B102).

⁴³⁰ Fränkel 1938: 318-319.

Ultimately, however, the distinction between the perspective of the adult human and that of the child or monkey cannot be sustained, and the structure collapses. There are two, related reasons for this. First, the equivalence of the human and animal perspectives in the juxtapositions discussed in Chapter 3, along the implications of human ignorance present in those juxtapositions, make it seem unlikely that the adult human should be understood as possessing some genuine understanding which the monkey and the child lack. Second, even when considered apart from other perspective-contrasting fragments, the overall effect of these apparent proportional analogies is to eliminate the distinction between the two “lower” terms in the analogy (i.e., human and monkey, adult and child). It is not, then, that the human being represents a genuine “geometrical mean”, such that he may be considered wise in relation to a monkey and ignorant in relation to a god, but rather that, considered from the imagined viewpoint of the gods, the difference between the monkey and the human disappears.⁴³¹ Thus, in D75/B79 the god does not call the grown man by some name that is “proportionally analogous” to the name by which the man calls the child. Rather, *both* man and child are called “child” here.⁴³² D77/B83,⁴³³ meanwhile, signals lack of differentiation between monkey and human through an ambiguity in the word φαίνομαι. Read as “seem to be”, it might emphasize likeness rather than identity – a likeness that might point towards a particular vantage from which resemblance is recognized. Yet the notion of the subjectivity of this likeness – that is, its dependence upon the vantage from which it is seen – gains much of its force from the fourth century and later technical usage, where φαίνομαι often marks what appears to the senses or to

⁴³¹ Fränkel 1938: 314-316.

⁴³² Heraclitus uses the word νήπιος, which can mean either “child” or “childish, lacking in understanding.”

⁴³³ “Compared to a god, a human being will be shown to be a monkey in wisdom and beauty and all other things.” (ἄνθρωπων ὁ σοφώτατος πρὸς θεὸν πίθηκος φανέϊται καὶ σοφία καὶ κάλλει καὶ ἄλλοις πᾶσιν.)

the imagination.⁴³⁴ The more common early usage emphasizes the objective force of “show oneself as” or “be made evident as”.⁴³⁵ For that reason, the statement can be meaningful without any focus upon the vantage from which something is viewed. The focus is, rather, on a stripping bare, a manifestation of what had so far been disguised or murky. That is, when the wisdom of the human being is considered with reference to the gods, a fact otherwise unnoticed by the audience becomes apparent – their wisdom, like that of the monkey, is no wisdom at all.⁴³⁶

Thus, while they do not permit us to extrapolate from the animal through the human to the divine, D77/B83 and D75/B79 do serve to put additional pressure on human ignorance, emphasizing it not only “from below” – by showing the equivalence of the human and the animal perspective – but also “from above” – by highlighting the vacuity of human “understanding” through its difference from that of the gods.

Heraclitus’ animal-human juxtapositions have, as an implicit backdrop, some of the fundamental tenets of Archaic “folk epistemology”, as found in Archaic poetry (and in some Archaic and early Classical philosophy). The knowledge-to-experience¹ ratio of Archaic Greek epistemology, according to which knowledge increases proportionally as experience¹ increases,⁴³⁷ is incompatible with Heraclitus’ rejection of an epistemic model rooted in passive, unreflective experience¹ alone.⁴³⁸ Yet just as Heraclitus appropriates epic diction and rhetorical techniques to his own purpose, just as he exploits the traditional anthropomorphic model of the gods, Heraclitus seems, in his proportional analogies, to appropriate the knowledge-experience¹ ratio

⁴³⁴ LSJ, s.v., II.2.

⁴³⁵ Depending on whether we treat *φανείναι* as future middle or passive. While it is grammatically middle, Ionic did not differentiate between the future passive and middle in meaning (Smyth 1894: 8633).

⁴³⁶ As Curd 2019: 33 and Kahn 1979: 174 note, the implications for human wisdom are made particularly damning by Heraclitus’ use of the word *ἤκουσε* (in light of the importance of hearing within Heraclitus’ thought).

⁴³⁷ Snell 1953: 137.

⁴³⁸ See Chapter 2, Section I.

in order to highlight human ignorance. In Archaic “folk epistemology”, it is the gods’ perspectives – the “far-seeing” vantage from which they observe events, along with the implications of their far superior perceptual faculties – that is responsible for their superior understanding.⁴³⁹ The “knowledge-experience¹ ratio” places the scope of experience¹ possessed by Muses who are present “everywhere”⁴⁴⁰ and the sun that acts as witness to all the events among the living,⁴⁴¹ in relief against that of human beings who see only what their particular day brings before them.⁴⁴² Like traditional uses of the knowledge-experience¹ ratio, Heraclitus’ proportional analogies underscore human ignorance by creating an apparent relation between human and divine understanding. Yet the proportional analogies eventually undermine even this relation between human and divine, suggesting that human ignorance is not relative, but absolute. This is because Heraclitus’ challenge to the animal-human epistemic hierarchy, and his implicit rejection of the knowledge-experience¹ ratio, with its dependence on a notion of knowledge that cannot be separated from the simple accruing of further idiosyncratic perceptual-physical contexts, undercut the attempt to derive positive insights from these fragments. Attempting to analyse the proportional analogies through the knowledge-to-experience¹ ratio (as the familiar justification for the gods’ superior knowledge), the audience is quickly brought up short in their attempts to gain insight into the gods’ perspective. That is, they cannot make use of the proportional analogy because it requires them to do the impossible: to recreate the perceptual-physical context from which the gods observe us,⁴⁴³ and, more specifically, to reconstruct it in relation to the physical-perceptual contexts upon which the distinction between

⁴³⁹ Leshner 2009: 2; Wians 2009: 184-185.

⁴⁴⁰ Homer *Il.* 2.485.

⁴⁴¹ Aesch. *Ag.* (632-633; 674-676; 1323-26); Aesch. *Cho.* 985; Hom. *Il.* 3.277; Hom. *Od.* 9.109; Hes. *Op.* 267; Soph. fr. 752. I owe a number of these citations to Betegh & Piano 2019: 194 and Wians 2009:184.

⁴⁴² Archil.70; *Od.* 18.130-137; Semon. 1. For the claim that the “chief effect of the ratio [of knowledge to experience] is to emphasize how little humans know,” see Wians 2009: 182-183.

⁴⁴³ The proportional analogies trade on the assumption that such a context exists. As I argue below, this is not Heraclitus’ own view – for Heraclitus, divine understanding is perspectiveless.

adult and child cognition and human and ape cognition rests. That is, the difference between adult knowledge and child knowledge is connected to adult's accumulation of a greater number of physical-perceptual experiences¹ (as well as the immaturity of the child's [physical-perceptual] faculties), while the difference between human wisdom and monkey wisdom is tied to the more limited (physical-perceptual) faculties associated with the monkey's constitution. This difference has already been shown to make no difference, at least within the context of the perspective juxtapositions – the ignorance involved in each case is equivalent. As a result, the middle term of the equation, upon which the proportional analogy depends, is absent. Further, the ratio of experience¹ model of knowledge is, again, implied by these particular proportional analogies – and this, as noted above, is a model Heraclitus challenges and rejects. Thus, whatever value the analogies possess, it is not found in any direct information they can offer about the epistemic situation of the gods.⁴⁴⁴

Yet in some sense, the proportional analogies do tell the audience something about the wisdom of the gods. First, they confirm the absolute division between divine understanding and human ignorance presented by D74/B78. Second, they support the single positive insight into the

⁴⁴⁴ Heraclitus' rejection of the idea that the gods have a physical-perceptual context may also inform the contrast between the traditional model of the sun as overseer of all things and his conception of "what never sets" (τὸ μὴ δῶνόν) in D83/B16. See also Most 2013: 7-8 who locates a similar rejection of physical-perceptual context (as least as it concerns spatial location) in Heraclitus' scorn for those who pray to statues. The comparison to Xenophanes' use of perspectivism is useful here. Heraclitus seems to have taken seriously Xenophanes' point that the human perspective is so limited that we cannot be said to know anything at all about the gods. We are incapable of "seeing" the gods because what our view of them is simply another version of ourselves, modelled after our own appearance, behaviours and desires (D12/B14; D13/B16; D8/A19). On one reading, this suggests that our ability to know the gods is occluded entirely by our perspective as creatures of a particular kind. In this sense, we are the epistemic equals of animals – since, if they had hands, they too would make images of gods resembling themselves (D14/B15). Xenophanes seems to be moving towards a rejection of the "knowledge-experience ratio" model. Thus while he makes implicit use of accumulated experience to challenge apparent instances of knowledge (as in D13/B16, where he turns his knowledge of the kinds of gods worshipped in other cultures into challenge to the plausibility of the kinds of gods worshipped in his own), he also recognizes an equivalent ignorance between human beings and two animals whose specific characteristics (short lifespan, limited scope of experience as domestic animals) would seem to suggest their inferiority to human beings on an epistemic hierarchy based in the ratio of experience. Heraclitus may also have taken from Xenophanes a broader critique of the possibility of human knowledge, as suggested by D49/B34 (but see, e.g., McKirahan 2010: 68 on the view that the apparent skepticism in this fragment is restricted to theological and cosmological questions).

nature of divine understanding found in the extant fragments – the claim in D73/B102 that such understanding is non-dual: “For god, all things are beautiful, good, and just, but humans have assumed that some things are unjust, others just.”⁴⁴⁵

The way in which divine understanding is non-dual is a matter of some debate. Burnet takes the fragment to mean that for the one wise “the relativity and opposition universal in the world disappear.”⁴⁴⁶ This reading accepts the full force of the fragment, in all its strangeness, though in doing so, it may force us to reconsider the familiar depiction of Heraclitus as a philosopher whose overarching doctrine was the unity of the opposites through strife.

A reader firmly committed to the ultimate truth of the unity of opposites in Heraclitus might, perhaps, read the fragment as suggesting that the god sees the world from some higher vantage, from which this (real) duality is either invisible, or is understood in a different way. Fränkel, for instance, argues that the view of the god simply takes in a “wider horizon” which includes all good and all bad together, rather than only particular instances of each, and therefore recognizes the order that depends upon both together. Thus: “that there exist both good and bad, is good.”⁴⁴⁷ Kahn, who sees the fragment as indicating that the god views the world in terms of the “invisible fitting together” that humans miss, also recognizes that on such an interpretation,

⁴⁴⁵ τῷ μὲν θεῷ καλὰ πάντα καὶ ἀγαθὰ καὶ δίκαια, ἄνθρωποι δὲ ἃ μὲν ἄδικα ὑπειλήφασιν ἃδὲδίκαια. (Trans. Laks & Most.) With Laks & Most, I accept this as a genuine verbatim fragment. See also, e.g., Marcovich 1967: 481- 482; Kirk 1962: 181. I think that the suspicion that sometimes attaches to this fragment (see, e.g., Kahn 1979: 183) arises from two main factors. First, it is, for most commentators, a deeply uncomfortable fragment on doctrinal grounds. Second, the marked use of connecting particles (μὲν/δέ) is unusual in Heraclitus (though not unheard of – compare, for instance, D64/B53). In this case, however, the particles are not simply a grammatical convention; they are a highly appropriate technique for drawing attention to the fragment’s focus on duality and differentiation. Given that Heraclitus’ audience would have grown accustomed to the absence of connectives in his prose, their sudden proliferation would be jarring to the ear, underscoring the implication that dualities involved are similarly out of place, in the sense that they do not in fact belong to the nature of reality as it is in itself.

⁴⁴⁶ Burnet 1930: 166-167.

⁴⁴⁷ Fränkel 1973: 375. See also Kirk 1962: 181.

injustice would need to continue to exist in some sense for the gods, even if it could not be applied to the cosmos *as a whole*.⁴⁴⁸

Yet the fragment does not give us reason to think that justice and injustice are united for god in an “invisible fitting-together”, since Heraclitus does not say, for instance, that, for god, all things are both just and unjust, or that justice and injustice are one and the same.⁴⁴⁹ He eliminates duality entirely, by leaving out one term in each pair of opposites. At this point, the reader committed to the idea that the unity of opposites does, in fact, describe the true nature of Heraclitean reality at some level might still rescue their interpretation by making a bold claim: they might argue the gods themselves have perspectival shortcomings. That is, if duality truly exists, on any level, then this duality is one (genuine) facet of the nature of things that the divine cognition does not encompass. It is not part of their constitution, as the kinds of beings that they are, to recognize conflicting values, much as it is not part of the nature of a donkey to recognize the value of gold. Robinson appears to interpret this fragment along such perspectival lines, as indicating that each view of justice (and injustice) has a degree of truth insofar as it accords with the context of the relevant creature – though the human context is far more circumscribed than the divine, and the degree of truth that it offers is correspondingly limited.⁴⁵⁰ Kirk offers a more

⁴⁴⁸ Kahn 1979: 184. Kahn also reads this fragment as showing that the god’s view is not only wider than the human, but qualitatively different.

⁴⁴⁹ Marcovich 1967: 482. This observation would also appear to undermine Marcovich’s own tentative interpretation of the fragment as indicating that god grasps the “essential and universal” goodness of the “world-order as a whole” and recognizes that individual instances of injustice are “only details which do not matter” (484). Insofar as such instances of injustice – even unimportant ones – exist for the god – it is no longer the case that “for the god, all things are good, beautiful and just.”

⁴⁵⁰ Robinson 1987: 148-9. While I diverge with Robinson in my analysis of this fragment, there is a sense in which his proposal does speak to what I take to be its core. Epic poetry generally speaks of δίκη as something that is relative to some particular group – that is, rather than speaking of what is just *simpliciter*, the poets speak of what is just for slaves, or citizens, etc. (Tor 2017: 259). B102 not only tells us that divine understanding is non-dual, but it ties this non-duality to a rejection of the relativity and context-dependence of human life and cognition. In other words, the very fact that justice, on the gods’ understanding, has no opposite, tells us that it is absolute, overriding any kind of relativity which might assume that a certain action was, for instance, just for a citizen but unjust for a slave. Robinson makes a parallel point in his analysis of B67, describing the god as “context-free” in a way that frustrates the attribution of one opposite over another (128). However, his view that the human notion of (dualistic)

tentatively perspectival interpretation, suggesting that for the god, the oneness, rather than the duality of opposites is, if not the only view, the only significant one. This is a result of the god's superior vantage, "removed from (or possibly subsuming) the realm of opposites."⁴⁵¹

These perspectival readings seem, however, to be undermined by indications that Heraclitus recognizes an absolute, rather than relative, gap between human and divine understanding (D74/B78; D77/B83; D75/B79). In addition, such readings seem at odds with the actual language of D73/B102. The word ὑπολαμβάνω ("assume") in this fragment suggests an error⁴⁵² – the human view that some things are just, some unjust, involves some failure of understanding. It seems striking, in this connection, that Heraclitus' fragments repeatedly underscore the relativity and context-dependence of the opposites that structure human thought, pointing out that the human conception of what is good (D55/B23) or just (D56/B111) or beautiful (D81/B82) depends upon a contrasting experience. This is also true in the human-animal juxtapositions, where our perspective is defined through the contrast between our judgements and those of fish, donkeys and pigs. Since the god does not recognize things as good or bad, just or unjust, beautiful or ugly, its thought seems not to require these sorts of constitution- and context-dependent contrasts⁴⁵³ – that is, it do not depend upon perspective in

justice is justice in a "weak" sense, while the god's justice is justice in a "strong" sense seems to allow us to speak of the divine, "synoptic" (149) perspective vs. the human, myopic perspective.

⁴⁵¹ Kirk 1962: 183.

⁴⁵² Marcovich 1967: 484 (a "partial, incomplete, and in the end false view"); Robinson 1987: 148 ("supposition" as against the "accurate" god's-eye-view).

⁴⁵³ We might have reason to wonder whether terms such as "good" and "beautiful" and "just" can have any meaning at all if all things are beautiful, good, and just. In this context, Heraclitus' emphasis on "just things" over the other two terms (since it is the only one of the three terms to reappear in the second half of the fragment) seems significant. As observed by Kirk 1962: 127, in the late sixth century BCE, the word δίκη (justice) did not yet have the status of an abstract principle, but was, rather, bound up with various aspects of the legal process – it was, in other words, rooted in and dependent on injustice. This makes the possibility of a non-dual view of the world as "just" particularly puzzling. See also Bernabé 2020: 265 who makes a complementary point about Xenophanes' denial that the gods steal, commit adultery, and deceive one another. As he notes: "Nous pourrions par ailleurs aller encore plus loin dans l'interprétation du texte et nous demander si Xénophane ne considèrerait pas également incorrect le fait d'attribuer aux dieux des qualités comme l'honnêteté, la fidélité matrimoniale et la véracité qui, bien qu'elles soient positives, appartiennent au milieu humain."

either the less restricted, species-wide sense, or the more restricted, individual and communal sense.⁴⁵⁴ If, like Robinson, we recognize that Heraclitus' juxtapositions of various creatures signals a "fascination....with the perspectival" and context-dependent,⁴⁵⁵ then this fragment, by actually pointing towards an absence of relativity and context-dependence in the divine thought, represents an important departure from the accounts of animal and human perspectives. This makes it seem highly unlikely that the view of reality as non-dual is a function of the constitution and context of the god. However, given the duality-dependent nature of human thought,⁴⁵⁶ it does account for Heraclitus' claim in D74/B78 that humans, unlike the divine, do not have understanding.⁴⁵⁷ Heraclitus appears to want us to make this connection to D74/B78, judging by the fact that, read together with D73/B102, the two fragments show a direct dialogue with the 7th century poet, Theognis, whose fragment 58-63 speaks of bad men as defective in their understanding or powers of judgement (γνώμῃ), "not knowing how to distinguish [= not having understanding or powers of judgment] bad from good."⁴⁵⁸ Heraclitus has not only taken Theognis' lyric one step further but has turned it on its head. For him, *all* men lack understanding and fail to recognize the nature of bad and good, but he connects this lack of understanding with the very fact that we distinguish between bad and good at all.

⁴⁵⁴ For these two senses of perspective, see the introduction to Chapter 3 (pp.127-128). For further discussion of the perspectiveless character of divine understanding, see below, section II.

⁴⁵⁵ Robinson 1987: 183-184. Robinson in fact recognizes elements of the perspectival not only in the animal-human juxtapositions (D78/B61, D79/B9, D80a/B13), but in oppositions involving cyclical alternation (D48/B67, D68/B88, D70/B62) as well as in fragments concerning context-specific social practices (D57/B58). See also Osborne 1997: 80: "Heraclitus' most important observation was that the significance of things changes with the time and place and context of the observer, and of the speaker."

⁴⁵⁶ This includes, of course, logos-rooted comprehension, which highlights opposition and bringing-together-in-conflict.

⁴⁵⁷ Dilcher 1995: 152 also observes this implication of B102. He too, recognizes that, for Heraclitus, the human mode of thought is not only duality-based, but is also, through that duality, unavoidably one-sided, with the result that even the full grasp of the unity of opposites is impossible for us. We must judge things as good *or* bad, just *or* unjust. See also Mourelatos 2008: 323-324 on the "leaning" present in Heraclitus' use of opposites.

⁴⁵⁸ Thgn. 60: οὔτε κακῶν γνώμῃς εἰδότες οὔτ' ἀγαθῶν. For this translation, see Levine 1985: 184.

The collapse of the proportional analogies in D77/B83 and D75/B79, then, illustrates for us the failure of attempts to use duality to make sense of the gods' wisdom or the gods' perspective. In this, they build upon the work of those "unity of opposites" fragments that juxtapose human and animal perspectives. The latter set of fragments, while ostensibly supporting a duality-based model through their presentation of opposed yet equivalent perspectives, actually undermine duality by demanding that the audience grasp two mutually exclusive (or mutually cancelling) perspectives. The "proportional analogy" fragments, which depend on the equivalence of two different relations, also lead towards non-duality, since they ultimately present the understanding of the gods as not merely exceeding but as actually negating the (apparent) understanding of human beings and animals. In other words, the collapse of the proportional analogies corrects those dualities (animal vs. human; human vs. god) that form an integral part of the analogies' structures. Human and animal understanding are revealed as the same, in the sense that both represent an absence of understanding; as a result, divine understanding turns out to be the only "real" term in the analogy, since there is no other genuine understanding against which it can be contrasted.

Divine understanding, then, unlike human thought, is non-dual. Moreover, since perhaps the key duality presented in the fragments is that of unity and plurality⁴⁵⁹ – that is, "one thing"

⁴⁵⁹ I take plurality and unity to act as opposites in Heraclitus. This observation is compatible with the recognition that Heraclitus also uses the word *ἐν* to express the relation among opposites (e.g., at D25a/B57; D51/B60), especially if one thinks that Heraclitus' range of uses of *ἐν* are connected to his presentation of more than one model of unity in the fragments. In any case, unity and plurality exist as higher order oppositions even within other unity of opposites fragments. For instance, in D25a/B57, day and night are not merely one, but are, rather, both multiple and one. These are the two key opposed relations that the logos brings together, and it is their simultaneous presence that creates the unity of opposites. Moreover, as Stokes 1971: 101-102 argues, D47/B10 seems to present the unity of opposites as having the same structure as the unity of all things. In other words, this fragment presents unity and diversity (or "all things" and "one thing") as opposed and united in the same manner as first-order opposites such as day and night. For further discussion of the way in which the unity of opposites is related to the unity of all things, see Chapter 5, section II.

and “many things”⁴⁶⁰ or “one thing” and “all things”⁴⁶¹ – this understanding would seem to take in reality *either* as a unity-without-plurality, or as a plurality-without-unity. However, the contrasts Heraclitus offers between unity and plurality make it seem highly improbable that he would align divine understanding with plurality rather than with unity. Even where the contrast between unity and plurality is restricted to the aspirations of humans, “one [thing/man]” is connected with the best, against which “all things” or “the many” are contrasted (D12/B49; D13/B29). In the fragments concerning the divine or quasi-divine “one wise”, the relationship is even more apparent. “What is wise is separated from all [things/men]” (σοφὸν ἐστὶ πάντων κεχωρισμένον; D43/B108) and “the wise is one” (ἐν τὸ σοφόν; D44/B41; D45/B32). Divine understanding, then, would seem to take in reality as a unity-without-plurality – that is, reality, for the gods, is understood as an undifferentiated oneness, or unity-without-plurality.⁴⁶²

This unity-without-plurality is, clearly, unlike the unity-in-plurality with which the logos is most immediately concerned, since the latter form of unity involves both conflict and interdependence among parts – that is, it can only exist in the context of plurality.⁴⁶³ Nonetheless, as I argue in section II below, the logos makes use of unity-in-plurality in order to guide us towards an understanding of reality as it truly is: an undifferentiated oneness, or a unity-without-plurality.

⁴⁶⁰ D12/B49; D13/B29; [implicit] D2/B2.

⁴⁶¹ D44/B41; D46/B50; D47/B10; D87/B90; D94/B99; D105/B114.

⁴⁶² The implicit assumption that I make here is that the divine understanding converges fully with the actual nature of reality. See below, section II for further discussion of the relationship between epistemology and ontology, or between the divine understanding of reality and the ultimate nature of reality. See Nehamas 2002: 51-53; Cornford 1957: 183-187 for the view that what is real is, for Heraclitus, an undifferentiated unity. See Burnet 1930: 166-167 for the view that for the “one wise”, the differentiations located within the “partial things we see” (and which are without wisdom) disappear. A very similar view is held by Freeman 1966: 124-127. Vlastos 1955: 367 also recognizes that Heraclitus ultimately eliminates distinctions, though he regards this as a sign of Heraclitus’ abandonment of any kind of philosophical consistency.

⁴⁶³ See pp. 56-57.

Heraclitus' human/god comparisons, then, like his human/animal comparisons, are largely negative in their effect – they serve, not to illustrate the nature of the gods themselves, nor to inform us of that which the gods understand, but to emphasize human ignorance. However, they do suggest that divine understanding has one key feature – it is non-dual, and, as such, it is the understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality.⁴⁶⁴ They also indicate that this understanding is not simply one perspective on reality among many – nor even a superior perspective which possesses a greater degree of fidelity to the true nature of reality. Rather, the absolute break between human ignorance and divine understanding suggests that on the human side of the break we find no direct grasp of the nature of reality, while on the divine side, we find a direct and complete apprehension of the true nature of reality. Or rather, as I will show in the next section, divine understanding *is* reality, since in a non-dual reality, the distinction between knower and known vanishes.

II: The Perspectivelessness of Divine Understanding; the Logos as Guiding Humans towards Perspectivelessness

The fact of the non-duality of divine understanding helps to reinforce Heraclitus' points concerning the ignorance inherent in the human perspective, with its duality-based approach to reality. If, however, divine understanding is non-dual, this creates problems for the notion of a divine perspective. In his presentation of perspectival elements of human and animal experience, Heraclitus emphasizes the interdependence of perspective and duality. Divine understanding, then, appears to be perspectiveless. This is in keeping with the link, established in section

⁴⁶⁴ See also Rankin 1995: 251 for the view that: (1) our sense experience¹ grounds our language; (2) our constitution grounds our sense experience; (3) our constitution, sense experience¹ and language are inadequate for framing the true oneness of reality, since we can only formulate the notion that “all is one” using language that is itself plural.

Chapter 3, section II, between the maintenance of a private perspective – that is, a perspective restricted to an individual, or even to a species – and the idiosyncratic pseudo-perceptions of the sleepwalker. In recognizing the perspectivelessness of divine understanding, we are also able to make sense of an unresolved difficulty arising from Heraclitus’ emphasis upon the ignorance of all humans. A complete denial of the possibility of human understanding would seem incompatible either with Heraclitus’ insistence upon the importance of seeking understanding, or with an attitude which strongly suggests that he himself has achieved understanding. What Heraclitus is denying is, rather, the possibility that humans qua humans can achieve understanding. In other words, we cannot attain understanding from within the human perspective – that framework of action and inference-guiding needs and values that underpins the nexus of interdependent (and not yet conceptually differentiated) psychic processes that includes volitions, conceptualization, judgements, and perception in the “primal unity of mind”.⁴⁶⁵ Human ignorance is the ignorance imposed by the human ἦθος – its (constitutional) disposition and character, or nature.⁴⁶⁶ Yet if a human being can escape the perspective – the modes of conceptualizing, willing, valuing and perceiving – imposed by the human ἦθος, he may be able to achieve the perspectivelessness of the divine ἦθος (or the divine lack of ἦθος⁴⁶⁷). Moreover, while the logos-based orientation of bringing-together-in-conflict serves only to clarify and reveal human nature and the human worldview, it nonetheless provides an epistemic guide that leads beyond the human perspective and beyond the logos itself, to a perspectiveless

⁴⁶⁵ See pp. 161-163. This understanding of perspective, as I suggest there, can be derived both from the Archaic Greek model of the mind, and from modern cognitive scientific models.

⁴⁶⁶ LSJ, s.v. ἦθος, A.II.2; A.II.3. The latter meaning, “nature”, is probably somewhat early. The earliest clear instance of ἦθος meaning “the basic constitution of a species or kind” is, perhaps, Empedocles B17.28. Yet the notion of ἦθος as the inborn (rather than habit-based) character of a specific kind of thing is present in the literature as early as Hes. *Op.* 67 (where the “kind of thing” in question is women).

⁴⁶⁷ The text is ἦθος γὰρ ἀνθρώπειον μὲν οὐκ ἔχει γνώμας, θεῖον δὲ ἔχει (“Human character has no understanding, but the divine does”). Clearly, we are to take θεῖον as qualifying an implicit ἦθος, and that is what the first, and dominant interpretation involves. However, the fact that we can take θεῖον as a substantive, as the “divine (thing)” may have relevance as the audience gains a deeper awareness of the path to knowledge that Heraclitus offers.

apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. Specifically, the incompatible perspectives brought together in conflict by the logos provide, not a genuine apprehension of reality, but a *means* by which the audience might reach the perspectiveless state from which reality might be apprehended – that is, a means by which they can cause their own perspectives to cancel out.

Heraclitus' animal-human juxtapositions present duality and perspective as interdependent. In these fragments, to see something from a particular perspective is to see that thing in terms of opposed categories. To see seawater as a fish is to see it as life-preserving, as opposed to deadly (D78/B61); to see garbage as a donkey is to see it as choiceworthy, as opposed to worthless (D79/B9). This makes sense, since such oppositions guide the choices that we make as the kinds of creatures that we are – that is, the choices that we make from the human perspective as opposed to the donkey perspective.⁴⁶⁸ Such choices arise from our constitution as particular kinds of creatures, the reflexive perceptions and sensations that this constitution prompts, and the volitions, judgements and conceptualizations with which, for Heraclitus, these are inextricably bound up. In this way, the most basic kind of duality – “this” vs. “not-this” – is tied to automatic categorization of things as “desirable” rather than “undesirable.” If we judge that “all things are good” (D73/B102) – seawater and fresh water, garbage and gold, mud and clean water – we are no longer judging on the basis of any particular set of needs and values. Since our constitution-dictated needs and values are fundamental to the action and inference-guiding structure that is perspective, a judgement that privileges no particular set of needs and values is a judgement

⁴⁶⁸ Pradeau 2002: 49-50 also notes the close connection between the value-laden oppositions with which these fragments are concerned, and the constitution-driven choices with which the oppositions are bound up.

made from no particular perspective.⁴⁶⁹ In other words, if we are to make no duality-based distinctions such as “good” and “bad” (or “good” and “not good”), we must cease to see things from any particular perspective.⁴⁷⁰

Moreover, the animal-human juxtapositions are not the only fragments in which the perspectival elements of opposition are foregrounded. Heraclitus also illustrates the dependence of opposition upon the perspective in the “narrow” sense – that is, perspective as restricted to a particular individual, rather than perspective as restricted to a particular kind of creature⁴⁷¹ – reminding us that the two kinds of perspective belong to a single continuum, with both involving an idiosyncratic restriction to a perceptual-physical context. For instance, in D51/B60 it is the perspective of the traveller – both her physical position in viewing the path, and her need or intent to travel from one place to another – that makes of a particular stretch of ground a “way up” or “way down” (ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω).⁴⁷² Similarly, in D56/B111, our view of health, satiety and rest as “pleasant and good” (ἡδὺ καὶ ἀγαθόν) depends upon a perspective that includes the contrasting experiences¹ of illness, hunger and labour. If we happen not to have undergone these

⁴⁶⁹ This is, ultimately, incoherent, since the idea that one could judge all things to be good actually depends on holding all the necessary needs and desires. The problematic nature of this “larger vision” model of divine understanding was examined at length in Chapter 3, section II, and will be further discussed in this section, below.

⁴⁷⁰ Cf. Wilcox 1994: 99. “the existence of a personal self is a dream-like illusion, the illusion of those who live ‘as though with private understanding’...the self is nonexistent, just as idiosyncratic thinking is delusional. In reality, ‘all things are one’, so the apparent existence of a multiplicity of personal ψυχαί must be an illusion.” (The concept of “perspective”, of course, is not identical to the concept of “self” – understood here in the minimal sense of an individuated observer. However, given that the genuine nature of reality is, finally, that of an undifferentiated unity, there can be no separate “things” that we might identify as selves. The loss of perspective, and the understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality, would imply the loss of any individuating features that could mark of an independent soul, self, or observer. See also the discussion of D43/B108 below, this section.)

⁴⁷¹ See the definition of the “broad” vs. “narrow” sense of perspective given pp. 127-128.

⁴⁷² See Robinson 1987: 183-184. Osborne 1997: 80-116 also argues that Heraclitus’ primary insight is that “the significance of things changes with the time and place and context of the observer, and the speaker.” She finds implicit instances of the unity of opposites arising from “observer-related or context-dependent significance” in a range of fragments dealing with human practice and customs (e.g., D15/B5, D16/B15, D119/B96).

contrasting physical-perceptual experiences¹, then health, satiety and rest are neither pleasant nor good – and, in fact, cannot be picked out or differentiated at all.⁴⁷³

It is striking that the two words that Heraclitus uses in D56/B111 to describe the “positive term” among the contrasting experiences¹ also appear in fragments more explicitly concerned with issues of perspective. “Good” (ἀγαθός) is one of the three terms that Heraclitus uses in D73/B102 to contrast the human dualistic perspective with the divine, non-dual perspective. In D80a/B13, the pig “takes pleasure” (ἡδομαι; verbal cognate of ἡδύς) in mire. The use of these terms in D56/B111 reinforces the deep connections we find in the human-animal juxtapositions between perspective and our constitution-driven categories and volitions. In addition, a cognate of ἡδύς appears in fragment D48/B67, in a context that seems to underscore the inextricable link between perspective, perception, opposition, and naming. This fragment also draws out a further implication of the perspectivelessness of the divine understanding, in that it illustrates the ultimate convergence between epistemology and ontology. As we have saw in section II above, the epistemic authority of the divine “perspective” is absolute – the divine understanding of reality is an apprehension of what really is, where the human and animal perspective on reality are illusory mirrors of the needs and values of the observer. The absence of duality (or of any kind of multiplicity) in reality implies that the apprehension of reality cannot be something distinct from reality itself – the knowing, the knower, and the act of knowing must be radically unified.

D48/B67 runs: “The god is day night summer winter war peace surfeit famine. It changes just as, when mixed with spices, it is named according to the ἡδονή of each one.”⁴⁷⁴ The majority

⁴⁷³ Heraclitus’ juxtaposition of conflicting human perspectives, and the relation between the human-human juxtapositions and the human-animal juxtapositions is the focus of Chapter 5, section III.

⁴⁷⁴ ὁ θεὸς ἡμέρη εὐθρόνη χειμὼν θέρος πόλεμος εἰρήνη κόρος λιμός· ἀλλοιοῦται δὲ ὅκωσπερ ὁκόταν συμμιγῇ θυώμασιν ὀνομάζεται καθ’ ἡδονὴν ἐκάστου. Most commentators agree that there is a missing word between

of editions translate ἡδονή as “scent.”⁴⁷⁵ There are strong reasons in support of this translation.

In later Ionian philosophy,⁴⁷⁶ ἡδονή is used to denote a sensory quality – that is, flavour.

Moreover, the presence of the perceptible spices, and their characteristics when mixed with fire, makes it seem plausible that it is the scent by which “each one” is named. However, ἡδονή as “flavour” belongs to a new technical, philosophical vocabulary, and, as Kahn notes, seems unlikely to be the *primary* significance of the term for Heraclitus’ audience.

Depending on how we translate ἡδονή, the significance of “each one” (ἐκάστου) changes. ἐκάστου may be read as either neuter or masculine. If it is understood as neuter, it refers back to the neuter θύωμα (spice), and the fragment suggests a parallel between the use of language and perception to differentiate scents and the use of language and perception to differentiate opposites. If, however, ἐκάστου is understood as masculine, then “each one” becomes “each man.”⁴⁷⁷ In this case, “pleasure” would be the more natural translation for ἡδονή, with ἐκάστος

ὄκωσπερ and ὀκόταν. The majority follow Diels in adding πῦρ, though Fränkel 1938b: 230-244 makes an intriguing, if not wholly convincing, argument for ἔλαιον. I follow Kahn 1979: 280 in his view that, while the fragment requires the reader to supply πῦρ, the absence of any vehicle for the simile draws attention to the god’s namelessness (as well as bringing into focus central disanalogies between the god [or reality, beyond the human perspective], and our names/differentiations).

⁴⁷⁵ Marcovich 1967; Laks & Most 2016; Kirk 1962; Pradeau 2002; Graham 2010 (“scent”). However, Kahn 1979 and Rowett 2013 favour “pleasure”. Kirk 1962: 195 recognizes “pleasure” as “giving a plausible sense” but finds its implications in a simile about spices “far-fetched”. On his view, the idea that different people might discern a different predominant note in mixtures of spices is unreasonable, but his objection seems at least in part to be motivated by the assumption that Heraclitus held an optimistic view of the possibility of achieving accurate and “common” discernment through the sense of smell (on which, see the discussion of D34/B7 below). I think that Kirk overestimates the degree of agreement to be found among individuals about what a given mixture of things “smells like”. In fact, taste and smell offer one of the most familiar instances of disagreement and difficulty among individuals in arriving at a shared conception and label. Yet they can also create deep, if idiosyncratic, associative links that reach to our core – as in the well-worn example of Proust’s madeleine. (I suspect that the lack of commonality among the shades in the Homeric Hades – that is, the fact that they share a physical space, but appear unaware of one another, and even of themselves – is one of the reasons that Heraclitus allocates this one sense to souls in Hades [D121/B98].) Underlying this fact are, of course, implications concerning a common human tendency to give certain names to things. While humans are often in agreement about these names, those names, considered in relation to the nature of reality as it truly is, are no less idiosyncratic than the names for scents over which individuals argue among themselves.

⁴⁷⁶ See Anaxagoras D13/B4. The word also appears in Diogenes of Apollonia D42/A19; here, though, it may be Theophrastus’ vocabulary rather than Diogenes’.

⁴⁷⁷ Kahn 1979: 280.

suggesting personal or idiosyncratic preference.⁴⁷⁸ “Scent” is still, of course, implied by the simile itself.⁴⁷⁹ The mingling of the fire (or the god) with the spices, leading to the attribution of different names, involves the sense of smell as an integral part of the interpretation. The simile of the spices which are mingled with the fire also indicates that something is *added* which leads the god to be perceived differently,⁴⁸⁰ and, at the same time, allows the differentiation of both spices and opposites to occur.⁴⁸¹ In other words, the simile creates a connection between, on the one hand, the addition of something that does not precisely belong to the god, and, on the other hand, the act of differentiation. In this act, the god becomes perceptible and nameable, and, at the same time, is disguised.⁴⁸² The simile also emphasizes this notion of the “something added” as leading to an illusory⁴⁸³ conception of the god. When the spices are thrown on the fire, it gives off smoke – it is this, not the fire itself that is perceived.⁴⁸⁴ The fragment, then, points towards the interdependence of perspective (that is, idiosyncratic preferences of “each man”) and opposition,

⁴⁷⁸ The perspectival implications of the fragment are also underscored by the fact that Heraclitus has, here, chosen opposites closely associated with human needs and values (Kahn 1979: 280). In his analysis of other fragments (B111 and B23), Kirk 1962: 132 claims that the use of ἡδύς (B111) and (B23) signal that the fragment is concerned with the human standard rather than an absolute one.

⁴⁷⁹ Compare Bywater 1889: 117n14, who reads ἡδονή as scent, but also understands the naming of the scent to be idiosyncratic, so that “God is named according to the attribute that most impresses the individual.” (I diverge from Bywater, of course, in that I do not accept that Heraclitus’ god in B67 ultimately possesses attributes – even leaving aside the anachronistic character of the attributes-substratum model [see pp. 54, 137-140].)

⁴⁸⁰ Osborne 2003: 95, 109n46; Fränkel 1938a: 235-236. ἀλλοιοῦται means, literally, “become different in kind.” The adjectival cognate, ἀλλοῖος, is used to mark things belonging to contrasting classes, and, in particular, duality-based contrasts. There may be some implication that the god, in “becoming different”, is also “becoming different than itself.” At minimum, it seems to suggest the introduction of difference where only sameness was present before – in other words, it expresses a move towards the primary duality (sameness/difference) upon which all differentiation and duality rests.

⁴⁸¹ Heraclitus explicitly ties differentiation to scent at D34/B7.

⁴⁸² In much the same way that the “one wise thing” is both “unwilling and willing to be called by the name of Zeus,” the god of this fragment both is and is not the opposites. Insofar as their differentiation involves being mixed with something additional, it seems that he is not the opposites. Nonetheless, part of the point of the variety of oppositions listed seems to be that the god is all-encompassing – if it is true that he is not the opposites, then it is nonetheless also true that the opposites are nothing apart from him. This suggests that if something is added, it must be added at an epistemic, rather than an ontological level – a reading perhaps supported by the fragment’s concern with perspective and naming.

⁴⁸³ By “illusory” I mean “descriptive of reality as-it-is-for-me” rather than as it is in itself. See p. 157 on this usage in relation to Heraclitus.

⁴⁸⁴ On the association in ancient Greek (as in English and French) between smoke and the nonexistent or illusory, see pp. 227-228.

while highlighting the further connection to language or naming. In addition, through the ambiguity between the preference-focused and perception-focused meanings of ἡδονή, the fragment reinforces the convergence, at a foundational level, between perceptual discrimination (that is, mixture of spices which scents the fire), conceptual/linguistic distinctions, volitional distinctions and the idiosyncratic perspective that obscures the real nature of what is perceived. This not only reiterates the link between basic physiological responses and perspective, but also hints at another level of meaning in Heraclitus' paradoxes around perceiving and failing to perceive found in other fragments.⁴⁸⁵ Human beings do perceive the fire or god – at least in the sense that without the fire, their perception of the spices could not occur. Yet they perceive it in a manner so mixed with, dependent upon and overridden by their own preference-driven differentiations that they also fail to perceive it (just as the mingling of the spices leads to the perceiver encountering, not the comparatively scentless fire, but the spices only).⁴⁸⁶

As has been widely observed by commentators,⁴⁸⁷ B67 identifies the god with the whole of reality,⁴⁸⁸ even as it offers an account of the way in which reality⁴⁸⁹ is differentiated into a multiplicity through the idiosyncratic preferences of the observer. This is what we would expect

⁴⁸⁵ See, e.g., D4/B34, D22/B56, D1/B1.

⁴⁸⁶ See Rowett 2013: 186 for the assignment of names in B67 as an expression of our individual “preferences” or “our own human interests.” See also Robinson 1987: 128, who contrasts the god in this fragment with the opposites, saying “God/the universe is, as such, context-free, *unchanging* and *unchangeable*. People, by contrast, will invariably describe it from within the confines of a particular, limited context within which they operate, a context in which there will be change, movement, variety and polarity.” See Pritzl 1985: 313 for the view that our sense experiences, as they map onto names, lead us to make distinctions that are in some sense arbitrary: “from a unified experience of what is ‘out there’ various threads are pulled out and maintained by names.”

⁴⁸⁷ See, among others, Kahn 1979: 278; Robinson 1987: 128; Kirk 1962: 197; Fränkel 1973: 388; Marcovich 1967: 417.

⁴⁸⁸ The parallel to Xenophanes' (likely) identification of the god with the cosmos in D17/B24, D18/B25, D19/B26, and the connection between this move and the de-anthropomorphizing project in both philosophers, is also widely noted. There is another, possible parallel – albeit one dependent upon the interpretation of the contentious D49/B34. If, with some commentators, we understand Xenophanes' view as a slightly weakened epistemic pessimism – that is, the position that human beings cannot be knowers in any unqualified sense – then Xenophanes may, like Heraclitus, identify the god who is reality itself with the “one true knower”.

⁴⁸⁹ See below, this section, on the view that the pairs of oppositions included in this fragment are shorthand for “all the opposites” and, by extension, “everything that is” (on the human worldview).

in the context of reality as unity-without-plurality, since the undifferentiated character of such a reality rules out differentiation between the god-as-knower and reality-as-known. It is also consistent with Heraclitus' statements concerning the (one) wise (D43/B108; D44/B41; D45/B32; D46/B50). Of these four fragments, the first three are framed in such a way that (ἐν) τὸ σοφόν appears as a version of the divine – though it is a notion of the divine shorn of anthropomorphism (a characteristic that it shares in common with ὁ θεός of D48/B67). These first three fragments all emphasize the unity of the divine, or the wise, and its separation from multiplicity. In other words, the knower, at least, is unified. Moreover, the unity of the knower (i.e., the [one] wise) is associated with a single insight (D43/B108; D44/B41; D46/B50). In D46/B50, that insight concerns the unity of reality, while in D43/B108 it might even be thought to concern the non-multiplicity of reality. Of the four (ἐν) τὸ σοφόν fragments, D45/B32 is perhaps the fragment most nearly resembling an answer to the question: “What is the ‘one wise’?” It also manages to pack into its first four words (ἐν τὸ σοφόν μόνον) a systematic ambiguity that implies, among other things, the radical unity or singleness of what is wise (with μόνον qualifying ἐν τὸ σοφόν), the radical unity or singleness of the insight that constitutes wisdom (with μόνον qualifying σοφόν), and even, perhaps the notion that this single, unified thing is all that exists (with μόνον qualifying ἐν).⁴⁹⁰

The “(one) wise” fragments, then, reinforce a complete convergence of ontology and epistemology that is perhaps given its most direct expression in D48/B67.⁴⁹¹ Like “the god” of B67, “the one wise” is at once the single, radically unified knower, and the single, radically

⁴⁹⁰ Sullivan 1984: 287. See Chapter 5, section II, for further discussion of “the one wise” fragments and their implications for Heraclitus' use of the unity/plurality opposition in pointing towards unity-without-plurality.

⁴⁹¹ The fact that the divine knower is identified with the whole of reality in the form of the one wise, as well in the god of B67, is recognized by, e.g., Kirk 1962: 197-198 and Kahn 1979. See also Bossi 2011, for whom, however, the god of B67 is limited to the “lower”, anthropomorphic manifestation of the one wise, which involves “diversification” (10) and “cosmic multiplicity (21), as distinct from the “pure singularity” of its “higher” manifestation (21).

unified known. Alternatively, given that the knower and known are not even conceptually distinct,⁴⁹² the whole of reality, as undifferentiated knower and known (whether labelled as “the god” or “one wise”) might be conceived of as the knowing itself, or the insight involved in such knowing.⁴⁹³

The identification of the god with the whole of reality underscores the perspectivelessness of divine knowledge from a lower conceptual level as well. Perspective implies that one is constrained by, and identifies with, one part of (a differentiated) reality rather than another. In other words, my perspective involves a particular location in time and space, but also the particular body that occupies that location in time and space, and the constitution of that body as

⁴⁹² Of course, none of these formulations (either Heraclitus’ or my own) are free of such a conceptual distinction, since they remain dependent on the kind of dualism and the differentiations that are incompatible with unity-without-plurality. The problem of how exactly Heraclitus deals with the need to gesture a reality whose character is fundamentally at odds with the character of language and concepts is the subject of Chapter 5, sections I and II.

⁴⁹³ One might argue, on this basis, that the identification of the one wise with “knowing knowledge” (ἐπίσταθαι γνῶμην) in D44/B41 can bear a reading that does not depend upon one of the accounts offered by commentators of different species of knowing designated by σοφόν, ἐπίσταθαι and γνῶμην. One might, that is, argue that “the wise is one: knowing the knowledge [understanding]” (ἐν τῷ σοφόν ἐπίσταθαι γνῶμην) is deliberately tautological, and that this is in keeping with the fact that the one wise is once the knower and the known. This interpretation need not be at odds with the *apparent* presence in this fragment of multiplicity in the object of knowledge (i.e., the fact that the one wise “knows the insight that steers all things through all” [ἐπίσταθαι γνῶμην, ὅτῃ ἐκυβέρνησε πάντα διὰ πάντων]), nor, in fact, does it require that we accept (with, e.g. Kirk 1962; Marcovich 1967) this fragment as evidence that Heraclitus’ “one wise” fragments have two distinct referents – divine wisdom, with its purer unity (as, e.g., in B108) and human wisdom, with its closer connection to multiplicity (as in this fragment). As Sullivan 1984: 284 points out, what the one wise knows is not the plurality that is steered – the one wise simply knows the single insight (γνῶμην) responsible for the steering of that plurality. If the one wise, which is at once the insight or understanding of reality and reality itself, is the guiding force in the organization of reality within the human and animal worldview, this need not imply that the understanding experiences reality in the manner of humans and animals: it might even “guide” in the sense that a striving point guides our actions (see LSJ, s.v. κυβερνάω, I.3). One might, in this sense, compare the relationship between the one wise, in its insight, and the plurality it guides to the relationship between the divine laws and the human laws it “nourishes” (τρέφω) in D105/B114. One might also note possible parallels with the other Heraclitus fragment that refers to the “steering” of all things (though the word in this case is οἰακίζει not κυβερνάω): “The lightning-bolt steers all these things” (τάδε πάντα οἰακίζει κεραυνός). The lightning bolt does not necessarily steer all things through a direct engagement with all things *qua* all things. It may steer all things by causing them to lose their apparent differentiations (perhaps, as Finkelberg 2017: 44 suggests, because it “pilots” all things to their destruction *qua* all things, in the sense that lightning striking a ship “pilots” the ship by setting it on fire). Thus, D44/B41 can be understood as referring to the way in which the ultimate nature of reality serves as the guide for the logos’ bringing-together-in-conflict that yields the systematic juxtaposition of conflicting, illusory perspectives, and facilitates the cancelling out of those perspectives. Nonetheless, among the “one wise” fragments, this fragment does perhaps offer us our closest glimpse of the effect of the (temporary) attainment of divine understanding upon the human being who returns to the human perspective. Such a person, who knows both the structure of the logos and where it leads, is able to see how the differentiation, ordering, and bringing together of “all things” in accordance with human cognition leads to all things passing through all – that is, to their cancelling out.

human or fish, healthy or sick, etc. If I am identified with the whole of reality, I cannot have particular needs or preferences arising from my desire for or aversion towards another part of that reality (though the ability to hold such needs or preferences will, of course, disappear, along with the subject of those needs and preferences, in a reality that lacks all differentiations.) The perspectiveless nature of divine understanding makes sense for one additional reason. Heraclitus' contrasts between animal and human perspectives focus upon needs, desires and values. As we've seen, these needs, desires and values are the basis of perceptual and conceptual discrimination. Heraclitus has already challenged the view that the god makes value judgements, denying that he designates particular things as either possessing or not possessing those evaluative properties that are among the highest terms of praise for an aristocratic audience: good (ἀγαθός), noble (καλός) and just (δίκαιος) (D73/B102). The claim that the god is without needs or preferences follows logically from the absence of evaluative dualities, but it also underscores the connection, implied in the animal-human perspective juxtapositions and reinforced by B67, between: (1) perspective (defined as a constitution-dictated framework of needs and values which form the basis of perceptions, cognitions and volitions, thus guiding actions and inferences); (2) dualism (good/bad, just/unjust, beautiful/ugly); (3) discrimination between opposites on the basis of perspective-grounded ascription of negative and positive valences.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹⁴ The notion of a god without needs and preferences is one that recurs in pre-Platonic philosophy. For Philolaus, enlightened or quasi-daimonic human beings, too, may have been free of the needs and preferences imposed by their constitution, as evinced by the fact that human beings who live on the moon do not defecate (D23/A20). The implication seems to have been that they do not experience ordinary human bodily requirements – since, if they do not defecate, they presumably do not eat or drink either. Heraclitus seems to have been particularly influenced by Xenophanes' anti-anthropomorphic approach to the divine, as evinced, for example, by his decision, at times, to even deprive his divinity of a gender, calling it, “the wise thing” (τὸ σοφόν). The lack of preferences may be implicit in the claim, in D45/B32, that the wise thing is both “unwilling” and “willing” to be called Zeus. (ἐθέλω may mean “I am willing” or “I wish.” When negated, the meaning “I do not wish” is somewhat more common. Thus, one possible translation would be “does not wish and is willing to be called by the name of Zeus.” For this trend among the Presocratics in general, see also Bernabé 2020.

There are, then, two interdependent senses in which the human perspective seems to rule out the possibility of understanding. First, the maintenance of a perspective, in itself, makes the achievement of divine understanding impossible. Second, the human mode of thought, which at its most common and least idiosyncratic involves logos-rooted comprehension, depends upon the very dualities that are incompatible with understanding.

Yet this raises a number of puzzles. As noted in Chapter 3, section II, Heraclitus' scathing comments concerning the ignorance of the many⁴⁹⁵ and the "wise,"⁴⁹⁶ make it seem unlikely that he intends for his audience to be content with epistemological pessimism.⁴⁹⁷ Moreover, given the impossibility of attaining understanding from within the human perspective, and given the non-dual nature of true understanding, the role of the logos within Heraclitus' epistemology seems to demand explanation. First, since the human perspective is mired in ignorance, it seems puzzling that Heraclitus places so much importance in a method for attaining comprehension according to what is common to human thought. Second, since true understanding is non-dual, the logos-centred nature of human cognition, pervaded as it is by opposition and duality, seems to doom us to ignorance from the outset.

Yet it does seem as though Heraclitus treats the logos as a path to true understanding. More specifically, as multiple commentators have noted, Heraclitus seems to suggest that in obtaining wisdom, human beings either become divine, or in some other sense go beyond the human.⁴⁹⁸ As Herbert Granger notes, the lack of any middle ground between ignorance and understanding in Heraclitus' account suggests that there is "no place for humans between the

⁴⁹⁵ D1/B1, D2/B2, D3/B17, D4/B34, D10/B104, D19/B28, D22/B56, D25a/B57.

⁴⁹⁶ D10/B104, D19/B28, D20/B40, D22/B56, D25a/B57, D26/B129.

⁴⁹⁷ On the evidence against a view of Heraclitus as an epistemic pessimist (or a relativist), see pp. 151-152.

⁴⁹⁸ Sullivan 1984: 291; Granger 2000: 261; Nehamas 2002: 46.

subhuman and the superhuman.”⁴⁹⁹ The consequence seems to be that in order to become wise, human beings must also, in a sense, become divine.⁵⁰⁰ Of course, given his non-anthropomorphic attitude towards divinity – manifested, for instance, in his explicit⁵⁰¹ and implicit⁵⁰² associations between the god as the τὸ σοφόν (“the wise [thing]”; neuter rather than the expected masculine or feminine form when describing a god⁵⁰³) – it seems unlikely that humans will become divine in the sense of becoming traditional Homeric gods. This does not, however, prevent Heraclitus from using the familiar language and imagery of immortalization to suggest the human potential to move beyond the human perspective. For instance, D123/B63 states: “For the one who is there, they rise up and become wakeful guardians of the living and the dead.”⁵⁰⁴ As has been widely noted,⁵⁰⁵ the fragment seems to echo Hesiod’s myth of the “golden race” of humans who, after death, become “divinities” (δαίμονες) and “guardians of mortal humans” (φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων).⁵⁰⁶

There are a few striking aspects to Heraclitus’ choice of allusion. First, since the guardians are described by him as watching over “the living and the dead,” they are placed outside the life/death opposition that partly defines what it is to be a human being, an animal, or even, in any recognizable sense, a god (since gods are, in an important sense, defined by their nature as ἀθάνατος). The allusion suggests, in other words, that humans may not always be

⁴⁹⁹ Granger 2000: 279.

⁵⁰⁰ See, e.g., Curd 2013: 235; Granger 2000: 279. See Tor 2017 on the interrelations between gods and mortals in early Greek thought and the range of access to the divine achievable for humans, ranging from actively sought and corrigible “disclosures” (e.g., Xenophanes) to temporary or partial achievement of a state of divinization (e.g., Parmenides, Empedocles).

⁵⁰¹ D45/B32.

⁵⁰² D44/B41; D43/B108.

⁵⁰³ The absence of gender is, of course, precisely what we’d expect, given that the god is free of both constitution and of valencing (that is the positive value masculine/negative value feminine).

⁵⁰⁴ ἔνθα δ’ ἐόντι ἐπ’ ἀνίστασθαι καὶ φύλακας γίνεσθαι ἐγερτὶ ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν. Trans. Laks & Most.

⁵⁰⁵ E.g., Marcovich 1967: 396; Kahn 1979: 254; Graham 2010: 193; West 1971: 153; Robinson 1987: 125.

⁵⁰⁶ Hes. *Op.* 122-3.

circumscribed by human limitations.⁵⁰⁷ Second, that most human beings do not become such “wakeful guardians” is echoed in the literary allusion by the fact that Hesiod’s guardians come only from the first and best race of mortals.⁵⁰⁸ Given this background, the wakefulness of Heraclitus’ guardians seems significant, since it reinforces their contrast with the sleep in which ignorant humans are immersed.⁵⁰⁹ Finally, before Hesiod’s guardians rise up, they first die and are “hidden by earth” (ἐκάλυψε κατὰ γαῖ’).⁵¹⁰ Taken against this background, it seems as though Heraclitus is suggesting that his guardians must,⁵¹¹ in some sense, die to their previous lives – perhaps to their lives as humans – before they can “rise up.”

The implication, then, seems to be that humans need not remain within the ignorant human perspective; they can wake from the obliviousness and lack of perception that it entails. However, even though the state of divine understanding is a real possibility for humans, it is not one that most will actualize. Moreover, such a state seems to involve a kind of “death”. This is precisely what we’d expect, given that in order to go beyond human epistemic limitations, it is necessary to abandon the idiosyncratic human perspective.⁵¹² Specifically, we abandon the

⁵⁰⁷ Read with D72/B21, it may also suggest that from the divine non-perspective, human life and death are both indifferently states of sleep/death.

⁵⁰⁸ Kahn 1979: 256; Robinson 1987: 125-126.

⁵⁰⁹ Granger 2000: 279.

⁵¹⁰ Hes. *Op.* 121-122.

⁵¹¹ I have assumed here that this fragment is *not* a literal statement about life after death (though it does involve something that comes very near to actual death as humans understand it). I recognize, however, that there is some controversy on this point. For the view that the fragment does speak literally about life after death, see Marcovich 1967: 396-397, West 1971: 153-154 and Robinson 1987: 125-126. (Robinson does, however, recognize the “difficulties...in reconciling this with the rest of Heraclitus’ views”). Cf., however, Nussbaum 1972b:167-168 and Granger 2000: 279. As Granger observes, the notion of any kind of personal immortality seems particularly unlikely given Heraclitus’ inclusion of soul within the cycle of elemental oppositions (D100/B36; D102/B12; the latter fragment seems to support the notion that souls become moist, not merely through moral failing, but in the course of the regular cycle of opposition – a point further underscored by D67/B126). The idea of personal immortality is further challenged by the fact that the elemental cycle in which the soul is incorporated in D100/B36 involves the loss of individuality – that is, while it is the individuated (plural) ψυχᾶι that die into water, it is the ψυχῇ (singular) as an undifferentiated elemental body that comes to be from water.

⁵¹² It might be objected that for Heraclitus, death seems to be an extension of or extreme version of the ignorance of sleep – as, for instance, in D71/B26, where it lies at the far extreme of the life-sleep-death continuum. Sleep, as seen most directly in D1/B1, is the state of those who, in their ignorance, live in a wholly private world, incapable not only of an understanding of the nature of reality as unity-without-plurality, but even of the human, logos-rooted

human perspective by abandoning the action- and inference-guiding needs, values and preferences that ground our dualities and distinctions. In the absence of such a framework, we are no longer recognizably “ourselves” – on a cognitive level, we (temporarily) cease to be “this particular human being”, or even to be human at all. In fact, in the absence of such a framework, we do not even have a basis for distinguishing ourselves from anything else.⁵¹³ There are a few problems that the achievement of a divine, perspectiveless state raises: some practical and psychological; some epistemic. First, how can we come to know reality as unity-without-plurality (and how does the logos, upon which Heraclitus lays such emphasis, help us to attain that knowledge)? How can we achieve a state where we encounter reality as undifferentiated? Would not such a state prove fatal to us as creatures whose perception-conception of differentiations is necessary to their survival? I believe that Heraclitus recognized these epistemic and practical problems; the final part of this chapter will be devoted to his solution to them.

I will begin by addressing the epistemic problem: how can humans achieve understanding, given the fundamentally dualistic nature of human cognition? The answer to this question lies, paradoxically, in the duality-centred logos, which turns out to play a key part in the abandonment of the human perspective, and thus in the movement from mere comprehension to genuine

comprehension of reality as unity-in-plurality. As Granger 2000 argues, Heraclitus’ expression of the ignorance of the many in terms of the absence of sense perception gives the ignorant the status of the insensible shades in the Homeric Hades. Yet the fragments, at times, invest death with a somewhat equivocal epistemic significance. For instance, those who die pass beyond the epistemic bind of finding a way to “expect the unexpected” (ἐλπεται ἀνέλπιστον: D37/B18), since what they encounter is what the living “do not expect or believe” (οὐκ ἔλπονται οὐδὲ δοκέουσιν: D120/B27). Death is also associated with wakefulness in D72/B21, where it is part of the sharp contrast between the state of the sleeper and the state of the wakeful. While sleepers see only the mirror of their own state (that is, they see sleep), the waking see something distinct from and ostensibly opposed to wakefulness (that is, they see death).

⁵¹³ This is a problem that Parmenides, too, encounters – at least if we read Parmenides’ “what-is” as both lacking in differentiations, accessible to knowers, and encompassing everything that is. See, e.g., Nussbaum 1979; Tor 2017; Mackenzie 1982 (though the latter takes this objection as fatal to the thesis that “what-is” involves a unity-without-plurality of all that is).

understanding. This is, in part, because it gives us an uncompromisingly clear picture of human thought and perception, inviting the audience to follow these, with their full implications, all the way through to where they undermine themselves. In this way, the logos encourages the loss of the human perspective through an experience³ of the “cancelling out”⁵¹⁴ of perspective. As argued in Chapter 2, logos-based comprehension emphasizes a consistent mode of relation-making, and this, in turn, implies a shift towards a model of reality as unity-in-plurality. Such a unity is comprehended through “bringing-together-in-conflict” – most often expressed in the unity of opposites. To some degree, such a unity can be recognized and grasped by the audience. In order to grasp the unity of day and night, they must move away from the perceptual-physical model of connection and towards the conceptual relation model. The latter model helps to attenuate the pull towards a concrete mode of thought that interprets things through some immediate perceptual-physical frame of reference (since day and night, although mutually entailing in both a conceptual and a physical sense, are also mutually exclusive, in that they cannot be present in the same immediate physical-perceptual context at the same time). This movement towards conceptual relations is a significant part of the epistemic process: it facilitates the comprehension of the unity of opposites and sets up a propensity to search for the natures of things through the unity of opposites. Yet this comprehension is not sufficient for an understanding of the genuine nature of reality. Rather, once the audience has grasped the use of consistent conceptual relations and accepted the central importance of interdependent opposites to human thought, they are faced with a challenge to their ability to grasp some evident instances of the unity of opposites. This challenge, in the animal-human juxtapositions, is explicitly experiential³ in its focus. In other words, the animal-human juxtapositions put added pressure on the pull towards the concrete that is, in any case, never wholly absent even from Heraclitus’

⁵¹⁴ See pp. 206-210 on the “cancelling out” of perspectives.

relatively abstract use of conceptual relations. This pressure arises, specifically, from the animal-human juxtapositions' explicit focus on needs and preferences of the most immediate, biologically-grounded sort. It is these needs and preferences – directly expressed through oppositions like pleasant and unpleasant, choiceworthy and worthless, drinkable and undrinkable – which must be comprehended together in the unity of opposites. In the animal-human juxtapositions, the evaluative and action-guiding features of concepts – never far from an Archaic Greek's mode of cognition – are brought again to the fore. The unity of these opposites must be grasped through the conflicting perspectives with which the opposites are associated. The notion of perspective can be understood (in terms borrowed from cognitive science) as a framework of basic and interrelated perceptions, conceptions, and volitions which are bound up with the physiological needs and values of a particular kind of creature in a particular environment, which ground that creature's basic self-awareness (that is, its pre-reflective awareness of itself as a differentiated thing within its environment),⁵¹⁵ and which serve to guide that creature's higher-level volitions, perceptions and cognitions.⁵¹⁶ This notion of perspective as a kind of minimalist self-awareness grounded in foundational, interrelated and constitution-driven perceptions, cognitions and volitions has certain points of overlap with the Archaic model of the "primal unity of mind" (as articulated by Onians and Snell) – at least in the inextricable, or even ultimately undifferentiated, nature of the basic volitions, perceptions, and conceptions.⁵¹⁷

Limanowski & Blakenburg, following Metzinger's conditions for a "consciously experienced

⁵¹⁵ I am adapting here the more technical (and potentially misleading) cognitive scientific term "minimal phenomenal selfhood", described by Limanowski and Blakenburg 2013: 1 as involving "the experience of a unified, situated body as a 'sensorimotor unity anchored to its world'" and by Limanowski 2014: 1 as "the most basic possible kind of self-consciousness or self-awareness."

⁵¹⁶ For the model of perspective as an action- and attention-guiding construct which both maintains and is maintained by our beliefs and preferences, see Limanowski & Friston 2020: 1-16. See also Ataria 2015.

⁵¹⁷ See pp. 161-163.

first-person perspective”,⁵¹⁸ explain that this basic self-awareness is bound up with “pre-reflective self-modelling...through an organism’s model of the world that is phenomenologically centred onto the self.”⁵¹⁹ This underscores the problem brought out in my discussion of the human-animal juxtapositions in Chapter 3, section II. If, as I argued there, these juxtapositions require that the audience engage with the opposites not merely as abstract concepts, but with all their context-specific perspectival baggage, the unity of opposites cannot be grasped either from a single perspective in the juxtaposition or from both together. An audience that tries to take on the volitional, perceptual and cognitive orientations of two conflicting perspectives will, if they achieve even the most basic success, end in cancelling out both perspectives. The conflict between the animal and human perspectives undermines the maintenance of a worldview “phenomenologically centred” on any “self”, whether animal or human: that is to say, the two conflicting volitional-perceptual-conceptual modes belonging to the two different creatures, in undermining one another, undermine the very bases of the “pre-reflective self-model” essential to what Metzinger calls the “consciously experienced first-person perspective” and Limanowski & Blakenburg term “minimal phenomenal selfhood.”⁵²⁰ This self-model is inextricably bound up with our differentiations – both those that go into our conception of the world around us, and those that allow us to distinguish ourselves from (and situate ourselves within) that world.⁵²¹

The animal-human juxtapositions, then, are rendered problematic by the fact that they make two ultimately conflicting demands of the audience. They demand: (1) a conceptually-grounded recognition of the equality and unity of the juxtaposed perspectives; and (2) a powerful re-

⁵¹⁸ Metzinger 2004: 1.

⁵¹⁹ Limanowski & Blakenburg 2013: 1.

⁵²⁰ This kind of fundamental, irresolvable conflict is what Limanowski & Friston 2020: 8 describe as the sort of “unexplained prediction error” in the self-model that threatens the continuance of minimal phenomenal selfhood.

⁵²¹ Limanowski & Friston 2020.

engagement with the perceptual-physical content of the juxtaposed perspectives. On the one hand, (1) seems to indicate to the audience that they must hold the opposed perspectives together in order to comprehend, in accordance with the logos, even the most basic stuff – seawater, garbage, mire. On the other hand, (2) seems to reveal the impossibility of recognizing these juxtapositions in any meaningful way, since the two perspectives cannot in fact held by one individual at the same time.⁵²²

The audience, then, finds themselves faced with an apparently unfulfillable demand. In order to engage in the logos-rooted comprehension, they must bring together the two opposed perspectives, where these two perspectives are bound up with mutual entailing concepts, yet are also, on a psychological level, wholly incompatible. We cannot, as argued above, adopt both the fish's and the human's perspective on seawater, experiencing¹ or ³ it as both drinkable and undrinkable. Yet the logos seems to demand that we do exactly this. It isn't clear, therefore, how the audience is to grasp the equal truth of two perspectives that conflict on such fundamental needs and values. The ascription of the property "drinkable" to seawater cannot be disentangled for the late Archaic Greek from the perceptual physical experience¹ of that property or the action tendencies with which it is bound up.⁵²³ This is, in part, because the judgement "drinkable" (or even "pleasant" or "choiceworthy"),⁵²⁴ and the associated action tendencies and perceptual physical experiences¹ possess an immediate link to the needs and preferences to do with our survival and flourishing as human beings⁵²⁵ – they are inscribed in our perspective as a species,

⁵²² See pp. 159-164.

⁵²³ This is especially true given that Heraclitus' audience lacks a model of observer-dependent properties. See Chapter 3, section I.

⁵²⁴ On the fact that, for Heraclitus' audience, such evaluative and "observer-dependent" properties are inherent to the object to which they are ascribed (and on the depth that paradoxes created by simple "qualification-dropping" had even for later Classical audiences), see Chapter 3, section I.

⁵²⁵ The success of the juxtaposition also, of course, depends upon Heraclitus' careful selection of the materials to which these judgements are attached. The negatively valenced materials represent a threat to human life and flourishing. By contrast, the positively valenced materials play a central role in communal human life. Potable water

and are bound up with those most basic perceptions, conceptions and volitions that serve to ground our “self-model”. A human being who truly recognized the unity of opposites in the fact that seawater is both drinkable and life-preserving and undrinkable and deadly would need to be able to hold the associated action tendencies *equally*. In other words, the embrace of these opposed properties would lead to the desire and intent both to drink seawater and not to drink seawater. If we consider the problem merely as an abstract conceptual conflict, we might be capable of grasping the compresence of opposites such as “drinkable” and “undrinkable” (perhaps through implicit qualifications of the opposites; in other words, through an underlying recognition of the opposites as true of the same material in different ways). Yet as argued in Chapter 3, the nature of the audience’s conceptual framework is such that these opposites simply cannot be grasped as abstractions – their perceptual and volitional content is inextricably bound up with their cognitive content. Thus, again, the audience cannot simply deal with the opposites compresent in seawater as concepts distinct from the full experiential^{1 or 3} context from which the ascription of those opposites is derived. They must, in other words, fully adopt two conflicting perspectives on the material in question (here, seawater). Yet these two conflicting perspectives

is not merely among the few external materials without which no human being can survive for even a few days. It would also represent a particularly obvious source of value for someone living in Aegean Ionia, where the pattern of the Mediterranean climate meant that each summer brought some degree of drought. (See Crouch 1996: 236. See also Gerber 1986 on the notion that water is both “everlasting” [ἀέναντος] and “sacred”).

Gold also has important connections to human flourishing. On the one hand, as the most expensive of all materials, it was associated with the gods; as a material used to adorn images of the gods (Gerber 1982: 10-11), it was also linked religious practices intended to gain the gods’ favour and to turn away bad fortune. Yet gold was also, as D87/B90 suggests, associated with the common standard of value that mediates exchange on the human level, making it possible for individuals to obtain the “things needed” (χρήματα) for daily life. The fact that Ephesus was a major trading centre meant that Heraclitus may have had the opportunity to observe the intricacies of cross-cultural trade at close quarters, and to note that here, gold appeared to be “common” among human beings in a way that even language (that is, the Greek language) was not. This commonality would have been particularly noticeable if, as the mid-sixth century BCE treasury record excavated from the site of the Archaic Temple of Artemis suggests, gold served in Ephesus as the “money of account” to which all other forms of currency were converted (Kroll 2008: 20-21. Seaford 2004: 94). It is, moreover, striking that the two positively valenced materials that Heraclitus uses in the animal-human juxtapositions are the same two materials that Pindar calls ἄριστος in the opening lines of *Ol.* 1: “Water is best, but gold blazing like fire/in the night surpasses all lordly wealth.”

(ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ, ὁ δὲ χρυσὸς αἰθόμενον πῦρ/ ἅτε διαπρέπει νυκτὶ μέγανος ἐξοχα πλούτου. Trans. Fowler 1992.)

challenge the structure of perspective itself, considered as a perception-, conception-, and volition-guiding framework of needs and values (and the foundation-level perceptions, conceptions and volitions with which those needs and values are bound up). Perspective, as Limanowski & Friston note,⁵²⁶ involves the interdependence of sensory information,⁵²⁷ beliefs and action tendencies.⁵²⁸ We can only maintain the coherence of a perspective structured in this way if we engage in the attenuation of conflicting sensory information.⁵²⁹ Such sensory information is, after all, not only the basis for our beliefs and their associated volitions but is also structured by our volitions and beliefs, since our expectations and desires determine what kind of sensory stimuli we seek out and attend to. When an agent is confronted with conflicting sensory information that they fail to attenuate, their perspective is overloaded and (temporarily) collapses; that is, they lose the framework or structure that permits them to distinguish phenomena – to perceive and conceive it, as well as to form volitions concerning it).⁵³⁰ Such a collapse of perspective would, then, be achieved by an individual who induces conflicting responses in himself by not only conceptualizing, but actually experiencing³ seawater (if only imaginatively) from the fish’s perspective as pure, drinkable, and life-preserving, and from the human perspective as polluted, undrinkable, and deadly. In this case, the sensory information is most likely to be of the interoceptive kind: the audience, in taking on both the human and the fish perspective, experiences a pull towards and a revulsion away from the act of self-immersion in

⁵²⁶ Their term here is, in fact, “self-model”, but as noted above, this model does not involve a self-reflective awareness. Rather, it consists in a rudimentary structure that allows for a creature to have an implicit sense of its own existence and edges: “me” vs. “not-me”; “I want” vs. “I don’t want”; “I believe/expect x” vs. “I believe/expect x’s contrary.”

⁵²⁷ Limanowski & Friston 2020: 9 note that the relevant “sensory” information would include both “exteroceptive” sensory information (that is, information directly concerned with external stimuli, such as visible or audible phenomena) and “interoceptive” sensory information (that is, information concerned with internal bodily states and processes, including information about painful and pleasant states, hunger, thirst, etc.) Tendencies to perceive outer states of affairs are “sensory” in this sense, but so are volitions/desires/preferences.

⁵²⁸ Limanowski & Friston 2020: 3; 5.

⁵²⁹ Limanowski & Friston 2020: 8-12.

⁵³⁰ Limanowski & Friston 2020: 11.

seawater. The conflict of sensory information cannot be sustained; the result is a collapse of perspective. The audience no longer experiences³ seawater as either pure or polluted (or both), drinkable or undrinkable (or both). The collapse involves the loss of the needs and values which allow these categories to be conceptualized, sensed, and discriminated, and with which they are bound up. Moreover, since the audience's ability to discriminate between different materials is rooted in the perspectival framework that informs their cognition, perception and volition, the collapse of that framework would involve the loss of the ability to make distinctions not only between properties of materials, but also between the materials with which those properties are bound up.⁵³¹

All this is likely to seem somewhat theoretical to a 21st century reader. Yet this is, in part, because our ways of engaging both with perspective and with verbal compositions differ considerably from the approach taken by the late Archaic Greek. On the one hand, as emphasized above and in Chapter 3, section I, our conceptual framework allows us to engage with the relevant opposites at a level of abstraction unavailable to Heraclitus' audience. Unlike them, we can, to a great extent, treat the relevant concepts in abstraction from their volitional and perceptual/physiological implications; we are not drawn back to concrete modes of interpretation (or not to the same degree).⁵³² Yet if our facility for abstraction is greater, our capacity for intense imaginative absorption of the kind required to generate the necessary perspective collapse is diminished. It is important here to remember that Heraclitus' audience was accustomed to a mode of oral reception that demanded and elicited their full imaginative

⁵³¹ For the conceptual issues and background here, see above, Chapter 3, section I.

⁵³² It is nonetheless true that a sensitive 21st century reader of Heraclitus may well undergo an incomplete and intellectualized version of the perspective cancellation that for the Archaic audience would (potentially) have engaged the entire psyche. When Long 1992: 369-370 speaks of how Heraclitus, like Thomas Nagel, seeks a "self-transcendence" that leads to an "entirely objective view of the world," he is speaking of the sort of sense of alienation from self that the fragments can induce in the modern reader – the temporary loss, in Limanowski & Blakenburg's terms, of any phenomenological centre of the world.

identification with the immediate, physical-perceptual frameworks and conditions that made up the world of an epic or lyric poem. Havelock argues that the conditions of oral reception for the Archaic audience were such as to transform the immediate personal experience¹ of the poem's character(s) or speaker(s) into the immediate personal experience¹ of the audience – to the point that the events of frequently heard poems would be remembered and drawn upon with the same vividness and the same salience as events in their own lives.⁵³³ It is, of course, not quite as easy to imaginatively identify with a fish or donkey or pig as it is to imaginatively identify with another human. In other words, the imaginative act of adopting the volitional, perceptual and cognitive responses of another human is, naturally, more straightforward than the parallel imaginative act where the creature in question has a different constitution than one's own. Nonetheless, Archaic epic and lyric would have provided an audience with ample training in imaginative absorption in the perspectives of characters whose constitutions were very different from their own. The most obvious example is the gods of epic. While Xenophanes and Heraclitus were certainly justified in pointing to the anthropomorphized qualities of the Homeric and Hesiodic gods, a god is still quite clearly a different kind of creature than a human, with different constitution-based capacities, and, consequently, a different orientation towards the world. The audience, in imaginatively identifying with the gods, identifies with creatures whose difference from humans is marked out, for instance, through their perceptual capacities⁵³⁴ and their manner of locomotion.⁵³⁵ On a deeper level, their immortality seems to alter the nature of

⁵³³ Havelock 1963: 145-160. Havelock is not, of course, claiming that every listener imagined what it was to be Achilles (for instance) in the exact same manner as every other listener, nor that those who had never fought in a war, or been to sea, imagined these experiences¹ with complete accuracy. Similarly, I do not claim that Heraclitus' audience was capable of gaining a wholly accurate picture of the way in which fish actually experience¹ the world. My claim is simply that their grasp of certain external facts about a fish's behaviour and conditions of flourishing, combined with their learned capacity for imaginative identification with other perspectives, gave them the necessary tools for adopting a view of the world that was in explicit conflict with the human view of the world.

⁵³⁴ For instance, in the capacity for seeing from a distance (e.g., *Il.* 13.1-14).

⁵³⁵ E.g., *Il.* 15. 80-83.

their attachments, which lack the depth of feeling and stability of human attachments (an absence that we might think arises from their relative invulnerability, which frees them from the human need for longstanding reciprocal loyalties⁵³⁶). This is true of their commitments to one another, which seem to be forged of rather fleeting ties of mutual self-interest or sexual desire; it is also true of their comparatively passionate engagement with favoured humans. For instance, in the *Iliad*, a fight threatens to break out between Hera and Zeus over the fact that Zeus has just made a promise that will lead to the death of multitudes of Hera's favoured Achaeans; Hermes brings order back to their feast by speaking of the inappropriateness of gods squabbling over the lives and deaths of mere mortals. At this point, Hera not only masters her anger, but is able to give herself to enjoyments of the evening untroubled by any overpowering anxiety for her humans of choice.⁵³⁷ Another significant support for the audience's facility in adopting the perspective of creatures with different constitutions derives from their familiarity with Homer's use of animals in extended similes. While the presentation of animals in simile is, in some cases, sufficiently detached that no identification with the animal need occur, there are other cases where the actual experience of the animal in question is depicted so vividly that even a 21st century reader is likely to feel some tug towards identification. Since the vehicle of these similes often carry the audience a great distance from the tenor, it may be impossible to grasp the affective, perceptual and cognitive content of the vehicle from within the imaginative and perspectival context of the tenor.⁵³⁸ This is the case in a striking simile in Book 22 of the *Odyssey*, where the audience is

⁵³⁶ On the importance of reciprocity-based models of attachment in ancient Greek morality, see, e.g., Dover 1974: 180-187.

⁵³⁷ *Il.* 1.531-611. On Hera's rapid shift from the desire to protect the Achaeans to suspension of anxieties and easy enjoyment, see the references to "unquenchable laughter" (ἄσβεστος...γέλως; 599) and to the heart (θυμός) that receives the benefit of both the feast and the accompanying music (602-603). While this is a general description of the gods' experience of the feast, and does not specifically reference Hera's response, the fact that Hera's smile and peaceful rest flank the episode (595-596; 610-611) suggests that she is included in the general experience of light-hearted pleasure.

⁵³⁸ Halliwell 2019.

invited into the perspective of the desperate fish drowning in air and for whom the sun is death, and where the tenor is the dead and dying suitors cast out of their native element of air and sunlight.⁵³⁹ For Homer's audience, such a perspectival shift would almost certainly have involved tension – and may even have created a degree of alienation from the context of the tenor.⁵⁴⁰ Nonetheless, the movement between perspectival contexts would have remained possible for the Homer's audience and need not have created the kind of deadlock between perspectives found in Heraclitus' perspective juxtapositions. This is because Homer, unlike Heraclitus, has not led his audience to expect that an understanding of his logos can only be achieved through the grasp of the fitting together of conflicting parts, nor does he map the two perspectives directly and explicitly onto one another. Rather, as argued in Chapter 2, section I, the poet, unlike Heraclitus, allows his audience to be carried moment-to-moment in the poem's narrative, imagistic and rhythmic flow, without demanding that they seek an active comprehension of how the conflicting parts cohere.⁵⁴¹

The animal-human juxtapositions, then, draw out the implicitly perspectival elements of the unity of opposites. In doing so, they bring the audience's attention back to their own cognitive dependence on an immediate physical-perceptual context (whether actual or imaginative), foregrounding the inextricable connections between conception, perception and volition. Yet these juxtapositions also demand that this dependence be experienced within the frame of the common conceptual relations of the logos. The result is a psychologically unsustainable conflict that, on the surface, challenges the viability of the logos as an epistemic tool, and the plausibility of the unity of opposites. Yet it is in this way that the real value of the logos becomes visible, since the unsustainable conflict between the juxtaposed perspectives leads

⁵³⁹ *Od.* 22.383-390.

⁵⁴⁰ Halliwell 2019.

⁵⁴¹ See pp. 98-100.

to their mutual collapse. The audience is, in this way, able to achieve a perspectiveless state in which they move beyond the ignorance Heraclitus has shown is intrinsic to the perspectives of both animals and of humans – and, in fact, to any and all perspectives.⁵⁴² From here, all differentiations vanish – including the differentiation, basic to minimal self-awareness and to perspective, between self and not-self.

This, then, allows us to harmonize some apparently conflicting elements of Heraclitus' thought. First, it allows us to take Heraclitus' claims concerning of human ignorance at face value without treating him as an epistemic pessimist. For Heraclitus, Humans qua humans truly do not understand the nature of reality. In order to apprehend reality as an undifferentiated unity – that is, as unity-without-plurality – humans must arrive at a perspectiveless state that belongs properly to the divine. What this means is that humans must, in order to achieve understanding, cease to be human and become quasi-divine.⁵⁴³ This brings us, however, to a further difficulty. If understanding requires the loss of the capacity to make distinctions and form volitions, it seems obvious that it will be a highly dysfunctional state for an epistemic agent with a human

⁵⁴² Long 1992: 272 also notes Heraclitus' focus on "collaps[ing] distinctions that are fundamental to ordinary life." He, too, recognizes in this a technique for drawing the audience away from a perspectively constrained view of the world.

⁵⁴³ The notion of divinization is widespread in Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic Greek thought. Empedocles, with his assertion that he is (or at least, gives numerous signs of being) a god (D4/B112) is an infamous early Greek example; Parmenides also seems to cast his epistemic initiation as a form of divinization (as argued by, among others, Tor 2017; Miller 2011). The connection between epistemic achievement and assimilation to the divine appears throughout Plato (e.g., *Phd.* 81a, *Tht.* 176a-b). For Aristotle, contemplation using the theoretical intellect constitutes "immortalisation" (*Eth. Nic.* 1177b34-35) and involves the engagement of that part of the soul that is immortal (*De An.* 408b18-19; 430a23). In this sense, Heraclitus belongs to a long tradition that both co-opts the special epistemic status gained by the poet by virtue of his access to the divine (e.g., *Il.* 1.384-5; *Il.* 1.69-70) and offers a solution to the more general problem, in Archaic and early Classical poetry, that humans are doomed to ignorance, while knowledge is reserved for the gods (e.g., Pind. *Nem.* VI. 5-6, XI.42-46; *Od.* 18.136-7; Semon. fr. 1; for context, see, e.g., Leshner 1999: 225; Tor 2017: 82). This is not, however, to suggest that the notion of divinization had the same character throughout Greek philosophy. For instance, Heraclitus' mode of "becoming divine" also involves extinguishing those characteristics that mark us as human. By contrast, Aristotelian "immortalisation" involves the exercise of those faculties with which our humanity is most closely connected (*Eth. Nic.* 1178a6-8).

constitution. Here, the most plausible answer seems to me to be the one adopted by Tor to address a parallel issue in Parmenides. Our achievement of divine perspectivelessness is like “holding [our] breath”: it is at odds with our mortal condition and constitution so that, while we retain that condition and constitution, we can only temporarily attain the understanding that belongs to the divine.⁵⁴⁴ The epistemic agent then moves back and forth between a human life lived in line with logos-based human perspective (in which reality is cognized as unity-in-plurality) and a divine perspectiveless state (in which reality is understood as unity-without-plurality).⁵⁴⁵

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that the nature of reality, for Heraclitus, is unity-without-plurality – that is, it is an undifferentiated unity that can only be apprehend from a perspectiveless state.

⁵⁴⁴ Tor 2017: 283.

⁵⁴⁵ There are a number of fragments that would seem to support this notion that the understanding of reality is a state in some way at odds with our nature, and that it is achieved through a “double death” that involves moving back and forth between human ignorance and divine understanding. In D70/B62, for instance, the transition from mortality to immortality and from immortality to mortality is, in both cases, a simultaneous movement towards death and towards life. The movement from human ignorance to divine understanding is death from the point of view of the individual human, whose individuality and humanity do not exist in the undifferentiated unity-without-plurality. The movement from divine understanding to human ignorance is also a death, since it involves cognitive separation from the true nature of reality. This notion of a “double death” also shows us where the two kinds of death suggested in the fragments – death understood as the attainment of understanding, and death understood as an extreme version of ignorance – overlap. Both complete understanding and complete ignorance stand apart from logos-rooted comprehension – the former because the distinctions of the logos are at odds with unity-without-plurality, the latter because the state of the dreamer involves privileging one’s idiosyncratic physical-perceptual context over the common conceptual relations of the logos. (For similar readings of this fragment, see also Andic 1985: 266; Nussbaum 1972b: 166, who notes that “the gods are dead...to the essential features of human language and human life.”) This “double death” also appears in D100/B36. As Betegh 2007: 27 notes, both the individuation of the soul from the undifferentiated *ψυχή*-as-elemental mass and the loss of individuation through the dissolution of the multiple *ψυχᾶι* into an elemental mass appear as different forms of death in this fragment. In more general terms, a model of divine understanding that is, from the human perspective, deeply dysfunctional, is perhaps supported by the degree to which Heraclitus’ imagery suggests an epistemic process experienced by the agent as (perpetually) destructive (see, for instance, the exchange of all things for fire in D87/B90, or the high value placed on “war” in D63/B80 and D64/B53). We need not assume that the imagery has no other purpose in Heraclitus. Clearly, such destruction-related tropes as war have significance, for instance, in relation to the unity of opposites. What makes this imagery a potential source of support for the epistemic process outlined above is not its specific use in particular contexts, necessarily. The important consideration here is that the consistent use of such imagery (even where other imagery might have served the same purpose in bringing the audience to recognize the logos) and the kinds of experiences^{1 or 3} such imagery might have been intended to provoke.

Heraclitus treats the understanding of the reality as the exclusive province of the divine, through animal-human juxtapositions that emphasize the equivalent ignorance intrinsic to the perspectives of all creatures, and through divine-human juxtapositions that reiterate human ignorance while emphasizing the non-dual, and, ultimately, perspectiveless nature of divine understanding. This seems, at first glance, to imply that Heraclitus is an epistemic pessimist; it also makes it hard to account for Heraclitus' emphasis upon the epistemic importance of the logos. However, Heraclitus does not so much deny that humans can achieve understanding as suggest that, in achieving understanding, they both become quasi-divine and cease (temporarily, cognitively) to be human. Heraclitus uses the juxtaposition of human and animal perspectives in order to suggest that both perspectives are marked by an equivalent ignorance. He further undermines the prospect of human understanding through his human-divine juxtapositions, suggesting that divine awareness, unlike the human, is both non-dual and perspectiveless. Yet he also implies that understanding is still possible for human beings, and offers a way in which it may be achieved through the bringing-together-in-conflict of the logos.

Thus, logos-based comprehension of the unity of opposites (or bringing-together-in-conflict) does not constitute understanding. The comprehension yielded by the logos turns out not to be an end in itself; it is, rather, a means by which the common conceptual tools of human thought, applied with rigour and consistency, facilitate the self-cancellation of human thought – or, more precisely, of the human perspective. Moreover, as I'll show in the next chapter, this use of the logos for the cancellation of perspective is not limited to those juxtapositions where divergent perspectives play an obvious, and unavoidable, part in the audience's reception of the unity of opposites. Once an audience comes to recognize that the purpose of the animal-human juxtapositions, and the goal of the logos, lies in the cancellation of perspective, they can also

revisit other instances of the unity of opposites. This provides them with the opportunity to re-engage the (implicit or explicit) perspectival content of these other instances, using them to repeat and reinforce their experience of unity-without-plurality.

We appear, here, to come up against a tension between the logos and its ultimate goal. The fact that true understanding apprehends reality as an undifferentiated unity seems to suggest that discourse, with its dependence upon differentiation, will tend to reinforce an approach to the world focused on the distinctions and concepts. This seems a potential liability, given that the goal of the logos is to facilitate the overcoming of such distinctions. Yet, as I'll show in the next chapter, Heraclitus' logos incorporates a range of techniques which allow him to produce a bringing-together-in-conflict that both facilitates the use of consistent conceptual tools of human thought, and, at the same time, breaks down human concepts and thought. Moreover, the function of the logos is not purely negative; it has a positive component that arises, in part, from the fact that understanding is implicit in logos-based comprehension which is, in turn, implicit in (usually) uncomprehending discourse. This relationship means that it is possible to point towards the unity-without-plurality of understanding via the unity-in-plurality of comprehension, and to recognize the presence of unity-in-plurality in the logoi of plurality-in-unity.

Chapter Five: Paradoxes of the Logos

Introduction

In this chapter, I defend the epistemic value of the logos – specifically, the model of the logos for which I argued in Chapter 2 – in the face of an apparent conflict between that model and the Heraclitean model of understanding for which I argued in Chapter 4. I consider objections arising from: (1) the incompatibility of an understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality with the distinctions and oppositions which are inherent in those tools of language and conceptual thought essential to the logos; and (2) the conflict between the perspective-free character of understanding, and the perspective-based (and therefore idiosyncratic) character of the oppositions upon which the logos depends.

My purpose in this chapter is twofold. I intend to show that these conflicts between the logos-as-method and the understanding of reality which is its goal: (1) are compatible with the effective use of the logos to move the audience towards an understanding of reality; and (2) actually help prevent the audience from conflating either the operations of the logos, or any specific formulation in language, with the understanding towards which these point.

In the first section, I look at how the view of reality as unity-without-plurality seems to be at odds with the use of language and of concepts – thus creating a puzzle around Heraclitus’ insistence on the importance of the logos, and even problematizing the attempt to convey the nature of reality through language. I also briefly explore Heraclitus’ conception of names and naming in order to show that Heraclitus is aware of this puzzle.

In section II, I consider some of the ways that Heraclitus addresses this puzzle. In one sense, the solution to the puzzle has already been given in Chapter 4 – the logos is a tool that,

when followed through consistently, dissolves itself, along with the form of cognition that it expresses and supports. As I argued in Chapter 2, the tools of language and opposition play an essential role in orienting the audience towards the consistent use of conceptual relations with which the logos is concerned. This, as I argued in Chapter 3 and 4, becomes the basis of the demand that the audience adopt mutually-cancelling perspectives, thus facilitating the movement towards a perspectiveless understanding of reality. In a practical sense, then, the importance of the logos is clear: As argued in Chapter 2, the character of language, and, specifically, discursive connections, reveals and even constitutes human thought. The logos' insistence on consistent conceptual relations draws out the implications of all our thought and discourse. Specifically, it shows how the structure of our thought and discourse depends upon the interdependence of equal, conflicting terms – that is, opposites. At the same time, it creates in the audience the expectation that the nature of reality and the things or materials of which it is composed should be sought via the interrelation between opposites, as unity-in-plurality. Yet as shown in Chapter 4, the attempt to follow through on the implications of these structuring principles leads us to a point where they break down: the view of reality as unity-in-plurality is ultimately only a human view, created by the character of human cognition. The true nature of reality is found in unity-without-plurality. On the one hand, human thought depends upon consistent conceptual relations between equal, interdependent opposites. On the other hand, as the human-animal juxtapositions suggest, the inherently perspectival and value-laden nature of opposites tends to generate conditions under which these very relations that structure human thought cannot be grasped by human thought. Rather, the attempt to grasp “pure” and “polluted” as equal, interdependent opposites breaks down due to the motivational/action-guiding valences that underpin the distinctions and relations that, in turn, underpin human thought. In other words, by following

through consistently on the discursive relations and distinctions that constitute human thought, the audience is led to a place where those same relations and distinctions break down. Moreover, the audience needs to accept that truth is revealed through the logos – they must believe that the true nature of reality is found in the unity of opposites – or they will not be willing to undergo the difficult effort to grasp the conflicting perspectives in the human-animal juxtapositions. In other words, a strong acceptance of the logos is a precondition for moving beyond the logos.

Notwithstanding the self-deconstructing nature of the logos, certain practical puzzles and dangers remain. In order to lead us towards understanding, Heraclitus, we would expect, needs to provide some intimations of the goal (that is, the apprehension of the true nature of reality as unity-without-plurality) – if only so that the audience, on first returning from the perspectiveless state, retains their sense of the significance of what they apprehended in that state. At minimum, he must circumvent the danger that the logos will appear as so “complete” as to generate an immovable belief that it is a direct expression of the nature of reality as it is in itself. In section II, I consider how Heraclitus navigates these issues while using the logos-based comprehension of unity-in-plurality to point towards unity-without-plurality.

In section III, I consider an objection to the epistemic value of the logos: The logos, as I argued in Chapter 2, involves a grasp of the bringing-together-in-conflict of equal, interdependent opposites. Yet, as argued in Chapter 3, the interdependence of opposition and perspective raises questions about our ability to grasp such equal opposites, since perspective-driven opposition is characterized by a valencing of opposites. In other words, the nature of opposition itself leads to the favouring of one opposite over another, and this, in turn, makes it impossible for us to grasp the opposites as equal and interdependent. I argue that this objection, far from undermining the value of the logos, helps to explain the fact that the same tools and

even the same fragments act in both a “positive” manner in assisting the audience to organize their thoughts with greater conceptual consistency in order to construe reality in terms of unity-in-plurality, and in a “negative” manner in leading to the cancelling out of perspective and the dissolution of conceptual thought. This section deals in detail with the relationship between the audience’s encounters with the unity of opposites as outlined in Chapter 2, and their encounters with the more challenging instances of the unity of opposites represented by the animal-human juxtapositions as analysed in Chapters 3 and 4. While the differences and similarities between the two kinds of instances of the unity of opposites are discussed in Chapters 3 and 4,⁵⁴⁶ section III of the current chapter can be regarded as a kind of bridge between the discussions offered in Chapter 2, on the one hand, and in Chapter 3 and 4, on the other hand. As argued in Chapters 3 and 4, the less challenging instances of the unity of opposites emphasized in Chapter 2 differ from the animal-human juxtapositions in that the former do not foreground their immediate concrete (or perspectival) content to the same degree – such content can, therefore, be attenuated (to some degree). Yet the opposites involved possess the same basic conceptual and psychological structure as the opposites involved in the animal-human juxtapositions; thus, it is hardly surprising that their perspectival content is easily re-engaged. Section III of the current chapter will show how the relationship that these less challenging instances of the unity of opposites have to their concrete content allows them to serve both the functions of the unity of opposites discussed in Chapter 2 and in Chapter 4 – they serve the dual functions of reinforcing the logos, and of undermining the logos or leading the audience beyond it. More specifically, it will show how the fact that the less challenging instances of unity of opposites are able to function in this way depends upon both their difference from (in terms of immediate audience

⁵⁴⁶ See pp. 145-147.

impact) and their similarity to (in terms of basic conceptual and psychological structure) the instances of unity of opposites found in the human-animal juxtapositions.

Since my primary focus in this chapter is on stages in the audience's epistemic process that precede the final movement towards the apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality, I often speak in terms of the particular view of reality that Heraclitus elicits from the audience prior to the apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. In other words, I speak in terms of reality as unity-in-plurality, and discuss issues such as the nature of particular materials. By speaking in such terms, I do not intend to suggest that reality for Heraclitus is, in fact, unity-in-plurality, or that he holds that such things as particular materials with natures are ultimately real: this would be at odds with the claim that the ultimate nature of reality is unity-without-plurality. Rather, I mean to focus on the kinds of views and expectations that Heraclitus elicits from his audience at a particular stage in the epistemic process.

I: The Logos as a Misleading Guide?

In this section, I explore some of the challenges and puzzles raised by the attempt to use language, and, in particular, language rooted in conceptual relations, in order to convey anything about undifferentiated reality. My purpose here is not only to bring out into the open an apparent objection to my interpretation of Heraclitus' logos and its purpose, but to show that Heraclitus is aware of and responsive to the problems that the use of language raises for his philosophy.

The logos, as argued in Chapter 2, uses the conceptual tools fundamental to language to draw out the implications of ordinary human thought⁵⁴⁷ and discourse, thus providing an

⁵⁴⁷ In speaking of conceptual thought and language, I do not mean to imply that these faculties are distinct for Heraclitus from the perceptual faculties, or that he has a clear conceptual distinction either between perception and

expression of the way in which human beings think about, talk about, and experience^{1 548} the world and showing how these imply a conception of reality as unity-in-plurality. The audience comes to comprehend “common” human thought-in-language⁵⁴⁹ through the consistent use of conceptual relations, the basic tools that allow thought and discourse to function. Moreover, as I argued in Chapter 4, section II, the bringing-together-in-conflict that arises from this consistent use of conceptual relations ultimately leads towards the loss of perspective and an understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality. Yet if, as I argued in Chapter 4, this language-based comprehension must fall short of any genuine understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality, and if the latter is at odds with the distinctions inherent in language, any explicit claims Heraclitus might make for the epistemic value of the logos become psychagogically problematic, since the logos is not only unable to truly describe reality, but, insofar as it gives the impression that reality can be described, seems likely to mislead, rather than to enlighten.

Even at the most basic level, language relies upon the making of distinctions. Any kind of linguistic expression implies, at least, the dualism of “same” and “different” (or, at an even more rudimentary level, “this” and “not-this”). This is fundamental to the idea of reference, since it is differentiation of this sort that allows us to pick out an object.⁵⁵⁰

Thus, duality is present at the root of language. Moreover, as I argued in Chapter 2, Heraclitus himself treats duality (or opposition) as the fundamental tool and structural principle

intellection or between the perceptual apprehension of distinctions or language and the intellectual apprehension of the same. On these issues, see, e.g., pp. 84-85, 161-163. In what follows, I use the word “thought” as shorthand for something like “perception-cognition” or even “perception-cognition-volition”.

⁵⁴⁸ See pp. 66-67 for my use of the terms experience¹, experience² and experience³.

⁵⁴⁹ In using this phrase, I don’t mean to commit personally to a position on the relationship between thought and language (that is, the qualification “in language” is not meant to suggest that some form of non-language-dependent thought exists – though neither is it meant to suggest that thought is necessarily language dependent). Rather, my purpose is to draw attention to Heraclitus’ view in which, as discussed in Chapter 2, language and human thought are essentially connected.

⁵⁵⁰ For the role of differentiation and of the same/different duality in language and categorization, see pp. 67-68, 85-87.

of human conceptual thought and discourse. Specifically, the logos demands and facilitates a consistent approach to sameness and difference through the juxtaposition of opposed, interdependent concepts that aid the audience in moving from a physical-perceptual contact-based model of comprehension to a conceptual relation-based model.⁵⁵¹

In other words, duality is not merely a part of the logos – it is the logos’ core, as the relation that underpins human discourse and thought, as well as the unity-in-plurality based view of reality.⁵⁵² Thus Heraclitus’ logos appears to be at odds with the character of reality as unity-without-plurality not simply because it uses the distinction-dependent medium of language, or even because it focuses, in particular, upon the duality-based medium of conceptual thought and discourse, but also because it focuses emphatically, and approvingly, on duality itself.

At first glance, the importance that Heraclitus gives to language and to conceptual thought in his epistemology constitutes a challenge to the interpretation offered in Chapter 4 of Heraclitean understanding as the perspectiveless apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. Yet Heraclitus himself gives indications that he is aware of the connection between language and distinctions (including the distinction between opposites), and, at the same time, reaffirms the link between the making of distinctions and the idiosyncratic approach to reality that, for him, constitutes ignorance.⁵⁵³ In other words, despite the fact that he emphasizes its epistemic importance, Heraclitus also raises doubts about the ability of language to express the nature of reality.

D48/B67, in particular, seems to raise questions about the relation between language and reality. The fragment reads: “The god is day night summer winter war peace surfeit famine. It

⁵⁵¹ See pp. 94-102.

⁵⁵² See Chapter 2, section I.

⁵⁵³ See pp. 193-196.

changes just [fire], when mixed with spices, is named according to the ἡδονή of each one.”⁵⁵⁴ As discussed in Chapter 4, section II, this fragment uses the term ἡδονή (understood as both “pleasure” and “scent”) to pick out the decisive factor in a process of differentiating opposites. At the same time, it identifies this process of differentiating opposites with the process of naming. The word ἡδονή, when qualified by ἐκάστου (“each one”) identifies the decisive factor in this process as idiosyncratic preferences and desires grounded in particular individuals with particular constitutions.⁵⁵⁵

D48/B67 is not the only Heraclitean fragment that uses the image of smoke to undermine the practice of distinction making.⁵⁵⁶ D34/B7, too, speaks of making distinctions within smoke. The fragment runs as follows: “If all things should become smoke, the nose would distinguish them.”⁵⁵⁷ There are two primary interpretations of this fragment. The first is that it refers to the importance of making use of the perceptual tools appropriate to a given context. The second is humans tend to make distinctions on the basis of illusions⁵⁵⁸ or idiosyncrasy.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁴ ὁ θεὸς ἡμέρη εὐφρόνη χειμῶν θέρος πόλεμος εἰρήνη κόρος λιμός· ἀλλοιοῦται δὲ ὅκωσπερ <πῦρ?> ὁκόταν συμμιγῇ θυώμασιν ὀνομάζεται καθ’ ἡδονὴν ἐκάστου. As discussed at pp. 193-196, the ambiguity between the translation of ἡδονήν as “pleasure” and as “scent” seems to be deliberate, as does the ambiguity between ἐκάστου as “each man” and “each thing.”

⁵⁵⁵ See discussion of this fragment at pp. 193-196 above.

⁵⁵⁶ In D48/B67, neither smoke nor the sense of smell are named directly; however, the distinctions between opposites are made on the basis of the scent created when a spice is blended with fire, suggesting that discrimination occurs through the olfactory perception of smoke.

⁵⁵⁷ εἰ πάντα τὰ ὄντα καπνὸς γένοιτο, ῥῖνες ἂν διαγνοῖεν. I’ve translated the fragment in such a way as to leave out what I take to be an anachronistic use of the substantive τὰ ὄντα in the technical sense of “the things that [actually] are” or “reality”, and to treat τὰ ὄντα as reinforcing πάντα rather than as conveying a distinct idea. See, e.g., Kirk 1962: 233, who points to other instances in pre-Platonic philosophy where the phrase πάντα τὰ ὄντα is used as a pleonasm for “all things”, and without its later technical meaning. Kirk, however, omits the phrase as an Aristotelean interpolation, as does Marcovich 1967: 418; Kahn 1979: 333n362. Robinson 1987: 80 tentatively retains it. Kirk’s argument that the use of pleonasm is at odds with Heraclitus’ style seems to me a strong one. Nonetheless, since there is no strong majority opinion about the phrasing of this fragment, I use the version of the text supported by Laks & Most, in accordance with my usual practice.

⁵⁵⁸ For the use of the term “illusion” and “illusory” with respect to Heraclitus, see p. 157 above.

⁵⁵⁹ A third option is that Heraclitus used smoke as an illustration of the simultaneous perception of unity and plurality, either through (1) the intellectual unification of the visual perception of the smoke as undifferentiated with the olfactory perception of the smoke as differentiated (Kirk 1962: 235-236); or (2) the intellectual insight into the unified fire beyond the olfactory perception of the differentiated smoke (Marcovich 1967: 419-420). While neither

On the first of the two interpretations, all of the senses have their proper sphere, and that we should use the most appropriate sense according to the circumstances. Thus while the eyes may be the more reliable sense organ under normal circumstances, the nose may be more useful in circumstances where the eyes fail.⁵⁶⁰ This reading, while it is certainly in accord with Heraclitus' insistence that his audience use the tools at their disposal to help them reflect on their experience¹, may lean too far towards the kind of systematization of the nature and role of the senses less appropriate to Heraclitus than to a more traditional φυσιόλογος (such as Empedocles, in whom we find just such a sentiment expressed at D44/B3).⁵⁶¹ However, if we leave this sort of systematization of the perceptual equipment aside, there seems to be an attractive aspect to this reading, brought out by Kahn, who stresses the connection to D121/B98, and argues that the very need to employ the sense of smell suggests that the soul has been consigned to the "lower, murkier atmosphere" – as opposed to the best souls, which enter the purified upper air. In such a context, the sense of smell, and the distinctions made via smell, are a necessary evil that goes along with inhabiting a more rudimentary moral-epistemic "level". One particularly appealing aspect of this reading is that we do not need to rely upon the kind of clear conceptual distinction between the senses and the intellectual faculties that was unlikely to be available to Heraclitus' audience.⁵⁶² While I do not accept the eschatology or cosmology implied by Kahn's interpretation, it seems to capture one layer of meaning in the fragment, suggested also by the

reading strictly requires a clear conceptual distinction between the intellectual and perceptual faculties, they are less likely to recommend themselves to an audience to which such a distinction is not available.

⁵⁶⁰ See, e.g., McKirahan 2010: 128. See also Robinson 1987: 80, who offers it as a possible reading, but does not strictly endorse it.

⁵⁶¹ It seems telling that, as Betegh 2007b:31 notes (in a different context), Heraclitus goes almost unmentioned in Theophrastus' long discussion of Presocratic theories of perception.

⁵⁶² Heraclitus clearly recognized that something more was required than passive absorption of information through the senses. This did not, however, prevent him from treating the senses as an unmediated expression of the cognitive faculties – although it does mean that, paradoxically, in order to truly "see" or "hear", the audience must do more than passively see or hear. On these paradoxes, and on the likelihood that Heraclitus did not have a clear conceptual distinction between the faculties of thought and perception, see pp. 84-85 and 161-163 above.

“each faculty in its sphere” reading. As the distinction-making faculty in this fragment, the sense of smell is presented as a sub-optimal epistemic faculty⁵⁶³ which is, nonetheless, the best that we have under sub-optimal epistemic conditions. This looks a bit like the picture of logos-based cognition presented in Chapter 4: On the one hand, the very fact that we make distinctions at all is a result of the sub-optimal epistemic conditions attendant on thinking with and through the human constitution. On the other hand, logos-based distinction-making *is* the best that we have under the circumstances and can even lead us into “optimal epistemic conditions” – that is, the conditions under which we apprehend reality as unity-without-plurality.

To this (modified) version of the first interpretation might then be added the second interpretation of the fragment, according to which the distinctions made in smoke fail to get any purchase upon what actually exists.⁵⁶⁴ Such a reading fits with the fact that even the common human form of thought is idiosyncratic, in that it is guided by the human constitution and, for this reason, falls short of the apprehension of the world as it is. The reading does, moreover, seem a plausible one, given the fact that smoke is proverbially associated, in ancient Greek, as in English and French, with trifles and illusions. The phrase “shadow of smoke” (καπνοῦ σκιά)⁵⁶⁵ denotes things of no worth,⁵⁶⁶ while hair splitting and arguments over nothing are described as “quibbling over smoke” (περὶ καπνοῦ στενολεσχεῖν),⁵⁶⁷ “smoke and nonsense” (καπνὸς καὶ

⁵⁶³ For evidence that the role of cognition-through-smell might have had a role akin to, though lower than, that of sight and hearing, see Onians 1951: 70.

⁵⁶⁴ See especially Rankin 1995: 250-251 who argues that γένοτο directly implicates not only our modes of distinction-making, but the language and cognition with which those distinctions are associated. On Rankin’s view, B7 illustrates the fact that our thought and speech are inextricably bound up with the kinds of senses that we have, rather than by the true character of things. If all we have is the sense of smell, the way in which we make distinctions will be dictated by the nature of olfactory perception. In other words, our constitution dictates the distinctions we make.

⁵⁶⁵ See also the association between smoke and shadow in Pind. *Nem.* 1.24-1.25; 7.61-7.63, where both are used to represent blame. They are not merely a source of pollution, obscuring the truth, but are actually associated with nonexistence. (This is perhaps because, in the tradition of epinician ode within which Pindar works, a praiseworthy action does not exist if it is not praised [Carson 1992: 190]).

⁵⁶⁶ LSJ, s.v. καπνός.

⁵⁶⁷ Ar. *Nu.* 320.

φυλαρία).⁵⁶⁸ On this evidence, the implication of D34/B7 seems to be that the distinctions made, and the items distinguished within the smoke do not map onto anything in the nature of reality.⁵⁶⁹ This interpretation also accords with the fact that Heraclitus associates the sense of smell with ignorance in D121/B98, where we are told that “Souls smell [things] in Hades.”⁵⁷⁰ The link between souls in Hades and cognitive vacuity is a traditional one, and manifests in senseless activity,⁵⁷¹ forgetfulness⁵⁷² and lack of cognition-perception.⁵⁷³ More importantly, as Herbert Granger has shown, it is an association that Heraclitus appropriates, attributing to the “many” a lack of sense perception⁵⁷⁴ and an unconscious⁵⁷⁵ approach to life – thus using the parallel to the dead to underscore both the ignorance of the many, and the idiosyncratic nature of their thought (cognition-perception).⁵⁷⁶ On the second reading of B7, then, we end up with a dramatic illustration of the idiosyncratic nature of even “common” human thought, which leads us to make distinctions where there are no distinctions to be made.

These two readings, moreover, map onto the two forms of “idiosyncrasy” found in Heraclitus – specifically, the idiosyncrasy of the wholly private thought (which is idiosyncratic in relation to reality as it is for us), and the idiosyncrasy of the common human thought (which is

⁵⁶⁸ Pl. *Rep.* 581d.

⁵⁶⁹ Of course, the close relationship between smoke and fire, along with Heraclitus’ use of fire imagery to express the notion of an overarching reality, suggests that smoke may not be wholly illusory. It may, however, be what we could call, metaphorically, an illusory effluence of reality. In other words, smoke implies fire, much as our illusory perception-cognitions “imply” reality, connecting us to true understanding of its nature via the logos. This, moreover, accords with the interpretation of D48/B67 for which I argued in Chapter 4, section II, since, on that reading, the distinctions made through human names involves adding an element to some existing reality which, while not obliterating that reality, nonetheless serve to make the perception, cognition and expression of that reality a human fiction.

⁵⁷⁰ αἱ ψυχαὶ ὁσμῶνται καθ’ Ἄϊδην.

⁵⁷¹ See, for instance, the comparison between the activity of disembodied souls and the activity of bats (*Od.* 24.5-9, *Il.* 24.101) or birds (*Od.* 11.605-6).

⁵⁷² E.g., *Il.* 22.389-90; *Il.* 16.776.

⁵⁷³ *Od.* 11.476; *Od.* 10.492 (where Tiresias is the exception among the mass of dead who lack intelligence (νόος) and fail to understand (πέπνυμαι).

⁵⁷⁴ D4/B34; D5/B19; D22/B56.

⁵⁷⁵ D1/B1.

⁵⁷⁶ Granger 2000 *passim*.

idiosyncratic in relation to reality as it is in itself). On the first reading, the distinctions made by olfactory perception-cognition provide the epistemic agent with the best possible link to reality given sub-optimal epistemic conditions. On this reading, the epistemic agent avoids idiosyncrasy through a consistent and reflective approach to the structure of distinction-making common to all humans. On the second reading, however, the epistemic agent's consistent adherence to what is common among humans in their distinction-making does not provide an escape from idiosyncrasy, since no distinctions could map onto reality-as-it-is-itself – that is, reality as unity-without-plurality. Such distinctions, instead, provide a picture of reality that reflects the human constitution and the perceptual, conceptual and volitional orientation that it dictates.

When played against one another, these two readings reinforce the central paradox of the logos, as a language-centred vehicle for achieving an understanding of a reality that cannot be linguistically expressed.⁵⁷⁷ On the one hand, learning how to describe and distinguish things in the right way is crucial to the method by which the logos ultimately yields understanding. The logos, in providing a mode of comprehension that allows the audience to parse its experience¹ in accordance with the basic structure of their thought, not only provides a clear view of the common human reality, but, in doing so, provides them with a picture of the structure of human thought.⁵⁷⁸ In doing so, it points towards the edges and limits of the human perspective, helping to ensure that the audience is prepared to look beyond the human perspective in the process of seeking understanding, when the structure of the logos itself demands it of them (as it does in the human-animal juxtapositions). Yet if we remain stuck in making distinctions, we are stuck in duality – dependent, at minimum, on the duality of sameness and difference that makes distinctions possible to begin with. This means that we are also stuck parsing dualities in

⁵⁷⁷ For this paradoxical facet of the logos, see, e.g., Rankin 1995: 371-372; Tor 2016: 107, 113.

⁵⁷⁸ So, e.g., D1/B1. See my reading of this fragment in Section III below.

accordance with our needs and values,⁵⁷⁹ and cannot reach understanding. This suggests that there is a danger that the logos might be taken by the audience as an endpoint: While Heraclitus might intend to *show* his audience the way to understanding, he runs the risk of seeming to *tell* them the content of that understanding.⁵⁸⁰ This is, perhaps, a particularly pressing danger where Heraclitus is trying to point towards the actual nature of reality, in order to give his audience some sense of an epistemic goal that, by its nature, cannot be expressed in language.

II: Shifting Unities

Thus far, the logos has appeared exclusively as a “negative” means or method. Through its focus on the conceptual relations that underpin language, and the resultant view of reality as structured through the unity of opposites, it guides the audience to seek understanding via a method that ultimately results in the cancelling out of perspective – and the dissolution of the duality-based structure of logos-based thought – through the apprehension of unity-without-plurality.

Similarly, as noted in Chapter 2, section II, since the logos constitutes the structure of human thought and discourse, the grasp of the logos provides the audience with a picture of the structure of the human perspective.⁵⁸¹ In doing so, it brings them closer to a recognition of the limits of the human perspective, and, perhaps, prepares them to look beyond it in seeking understanding. In this case, too, the logos is understood as a negative means alone, as a tool whose proper use is to

⁵⁷⁹ See Chapter 4, section II.

⁵⁸⁰ This concern seems to strongly mark the play of paradox in D46/B50, for instance. It is also a presupposition of at least some commentators that Heraclitus’ logos can be stated in words – or at least could have been, had Heraclitus possessed the necessary conceptual apparatus. For an extreme form of this proposition-focused approach to Heraclitus, see Barnes 1979. Increasingly, however, commentators have begun to recognize the importance of Heraclitus’ hints regarding the non-propositional nature of what his discourse points towards. See, e.g., Tor 2016; Rankin 1995; Halper 2017.

⁵⁸¹ More precisely, as highlighted in Chapter 2, section II, the logos provides the audience with a picture of the structure of the human perspective by giving them a picture of reality as it appears to them by *their* nature (when the latter is seen clearly) – which the audience, however, mistakes (initially) for a picture of reality as it is by *its own* nature.

lead the audience to the point where the tool itself is undone. This self-collapsing characteristic of the logos is, of course, essential to the value of the logos, since, as noted above, the very distinctions and duality that are integral both to the nature of the logos and to the role that it plays in leading the audience towards an understanding of reality are, at the same time, at odds with the nature of reality as unity-without-plurality. In the sections that follow, I look at the “positive” function of the logos in providing intimations of the actual nature of reality. Specifically, I look at ways in which Heraclitus uses the logos to point towards unity-without-plurality through unity-in-plurality. At the same time, I explore how he achieves this while circumventing the danger, explored in section I above, of any such “positive” use of language – that is, the danger that the audience will become “stuck” at the human level of cognition, mistaking signs with which Heraclitus intimates and points towards the logos’ epistemic goal for a straightforward expression of the nature of reality.

As argued in Chapter 2, the logos’ emphasis on language and duality allows for the development of a mode of thought rooted in bringing-together-in-conflict – which, in turn, leads to a view of reality as unity-in-plurality.⁵⁸² Again, as discussed in Chapter 2, unity-in-plurality involves the relation between distinct but interdependent parts that together create an organic unity or whole. Its underlying structural principle, for Heraclitus, is that of the unity of opposites – that is, the interweaving and interdependence of two conflicting items or concepts. Unity-in-plurality performs an important function in inviting the audience to imagine a universe that is unified even while containing all the distinctions and differentiations that are essential to human conceptual thought. At the same time, Heraclitus’ treatment of the two central opposites involved in unity-in-plurality – i.e., unity and plurality – raises questions about the very coherence of unity-in-plurality, since he gives clear indications that these two opposites are unequal. This

⁵⁸² Chapter 2, sections II and III.

highlights the primacy of unity for Heraclitus. Yet in doing so, it raises questions about our ability to conceptualize the unity of reality in accordance with the same conceptual tools as we have used to conceptualize the other pairs of opposites, and invites us to ask questions about whether the unity Heraclitus intends when he speaks about the unity of reality might be “unity” in a different sense than in the unity of opposites.⁵⁸³

The model of organic unity provided by unity-in-plurality implies reality the unity of which is bound up with the oppositions that are necessary to its very coherence.⁵⁸⁴ Yet such a unity has a paradox at its core, to which Heraclitus repeatedly draws our attention. Heraclitus’ model of unity-in-plurality incorporates a privileging of unity over plurality that ultimately points away from unity-in-plurality towards unity-without-plurality.

Heraclitus presents us with a twofold vision of unity-in-plurality. On the one hand, it involves the unity of opposites as found in particular kinds of things (roads, carding wool, seawater) and in the relations between particular kinds of things/actions (bows and lyres, day and

⁵⁸³ Ultimately, as noted at pp. 145-147, and explored in greater detail in section III of the current chapter, we cannot hold any of the opposites as truly equal, since the valencing of the opposites is built into our constitution, and forms the basis by which the opposites are distinguished to begin with. Yet the inequality of unity and plurality in Heraclitus has a different character than the inequality of other opposites. While the inequality of opposites such as “straight” and “crooked” is *implicit* in the discourse, supplied by the audience’s own responses, and reinforced by subtle rhetorical cues, the problematic inequality of unity and plurality is an explicit focus in Heraclitus’ discourse (e.g., it supplies the material for paradox in D108/B33 with its notion of a senate or council of one [the νόμος-making βουλή of a single man]. See also Robinson 1987: 103).

⁵⁸⁴ In Chapter 1, section II, and throughout Chapter 2, I discussed the ways in which Heraclitus points to unity-in-plurality through the interplay of multiple pairs of interdependent opposites. However, it’s worth stressing that Heraclitus’ primary mode of expressing unity-in-plurality was not through the notion of multiple, simultaneous cross-hatchings of interdependent processes but simply through the unity of opposites – on the one hand, the unity of pairs of particular opposites, and, on the one hand, the unity of all these pairs of opposites through the higher-order opposition of unity and plurality (one and many). The degree of emphasis upon these individual pairs is such that Kirk even put forward the hypothesis that Heraclitus regarded the illustration of the unity of opposite things as sufficient proof of the unity of all things, on the assumption that if the least compatible kinds of things turned out to be unified, the general unity of things was implicit (Kirk 1962: 72). This does not, I think, quite do justice to the different layers operative in Heraclitus’ work, but it does draw attention to an important feature of Heraclitus’ epistemic method that can be easy to lose track of when describing Heraclitean unity from a theoretic (and modern) vantage. The weight that Heraclitus places on the unity of opposites is such that his audience, even once they have grown used to thinking of reality as unity-in-plurality, will continue to see the grasp of the unity of individual pairs of opposites, and the consequent grasp of the nature of individual things as found in interdependent opposites, as part and parcel of the grasp of unity-in-plurality as a whole.

night). Second, it involves the unity of all these opposites through the general unity of “one” and “all.”⁵⁸⁵ The structural parallelism between the “particular” and “general” instances of the unity of opposites plays an important role in ensuring that the audience conceives of the “universal” instance, like the particular instance, as involving the unity of equal, interdependent opposites.⁵⁸⁶ Moreover, the audience’s continued conceptual dependence upon the particular exemplar ensures that the unity of the whole will be understood through and in the light of the unity of individual parts.⁵⁸⁷ Thus unity-in-plurality, as the unity of all things, involves the joining together of the equal, interdependent opposites, “one” and “all.” At the same time, Heraclitus gives clear indications that one of these opposites – “one” or “unity” – must predominate. Yet since this pair of opposites seems to have pride of place in Heraclitus’ account of the nature of reality, the gap between this crucial, “universal” relation, on the one hand, and the relation between “particular” opposites such as night and day, on the other, seems to raise questions about whether the unity of reality as conceptualized through the logos and through unity-in-plurality fully captures the true, overarching unity of reality as Heraclitus wishes his audience to understand it.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁵ This is not to say that he gives no hint as to how the unity of particular kinds of opposites leads to the kind of interweaving that would unify “one” and “all” – merely that it is not his focus. See pp. 62-64 for some areas in which this interweaving is suggested.

⁵⁸⁶ See Lloyd 1964: 98 on the more general tendency of early Greek philosophy to treat the conceptual interdependence of opposites as implying and necessitating their equality. (The Pythagoreans, at least as represented by Aristotle’s testimony regarding their “table of opposites”, might be perhaps regarded as exceptions to the rule: the table of opposites has all the hallmarks of the traditional mode of treating pairs of opposites as hierarchically connected via “better” and “worse”.)

⁵⁸⁷ See Chapter 3, section I.

⁵⁸⁸ Again, the audience’s ability to grasp *any* pair of opposites as equal and interdependent is ultimately challenged by the fact that all oppositions contain an implicit or explicit perspectival dimension. In section III below, I address this problem in further detail. However, it’s worth reiterating here that the impossibility of seeing the opposites as truly equal and interdependent is at its most marked where their experiential¹ contents are foregrounded (as in the human-animal juxtapositions). It’s true that the genuine perception of the opposites as equal is ruled out by the valences arising from the interdependence of opposition and perspective. Nonetheless, the conceptual equality and interdependence of most of the opposites is consistently illustrated by Heraclitus. The difficulties raised by unity and plurality possess another dimension, in that Heraclitus explicitly problematizes their conceptual equality and interdependence. Other oppositions, by contrast, involve an insistence on that equality and interdependence of opposites, even in the face of the audience’s inability to fully cognize them as such.

The unity of all things, as the focal unity comprehended through the logos,⁵⁸⁹ seems to be such that the logos ought to allow us to apprehend reality as both a unity and a plurality,⁵⁹⁰ just as we appear to be able to apprehend, for instance, the *ὁδός* in D51/B60 as both a way upwards and as a way downwards. This is supported by the fact that unity (*ἓν*) and plurality (*πάντα*) are Heraclitus' most important pair of opposites, and in many ways, behave like any other pair of interdependent polar terms. Both syntactically and logically, Heraclitus marks these two terms as a pair of opposites to be unified via the logos' bringing-together-in-conflict. For instance, the unmediated juxtaposition of *ἓν* and *πάντα* in D46/B50 uses what is perhaps Heraclitus' most characteristic syntactical approach to the opposites.⁵⁹¹ This syntactical manoeuvre serves to bring out simultaneously the coming together of and the tension between unity and plurality, just as it does when used upon other opposites – that is, it implies that these two terms are similarly joined through the unity of opposites. The syntactical juxtaposition also underscores a paradoxical relationship between *ἓν* and *πάντα* that mirrors the paradoxical unity of any other pair of opposites, since it brings out the logical incompatibility of the two terms when applied to the same thing: in saying with the logos “all things are one thing” (*ἓν πάντα εἶναι*), we are stating what appears, at least on the surface, to be a contradiction.⁵⁹² The interdependence of “all things”

⁵⁸⁹ See especially, D46/B50 “Listening not to me but to the logos, it is wise to agree that all things are one” (trans. Laks & Most). οὐκ ἔμοῦ ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου ἀκούσαντας ὁμολογεῖν σοφόν ἐστὶν ἓν πάντα εἶναι. As multiple commentators have observed, this fragment seems to be as close as we get to a statement of the “content” of the logos. (See, among others, Hussey 1999: 96; Stokes 1971:102; Robinson 1987: 183. Cf. however Minar 1939: 329-330.)

⁵⁹⁰ See also Chapter 1, section III.

⁵⁹¹ For the same approach see, e.g., D56/B111, D67/B126.

⁵⁹² Compare the identification of *εἷς* with *μῦριοι* in D12/B49. Emlyn-Jones 1976: 108 notes that this paradox would have had more force for the early Greek, accustomed to considering such concepts as “all” and “one” in much closer proximity to concrete objects. The contradiction might also be brought out by thinking about the “one” and “all” in relation to early Greek models of counting. As Klein 1968: 41-42 emphasizes, quantifying terms were traditionally expected to be in relation to the things quantified. Thus the audience would be predisposed to think of “one” as a counting-unit applied to some particular thing (for instance, one apple), and “all” as applied to the same kind of thing (all apples). In this example, we end up with a paradox along the lines of “all apples are one apple.” This is not to say that the audience is incapable of thinking in a more general way about “all things” and “one thing,” but merely to bring out that, as compared to a modern audience, the early Greek audience would place a greater

and “one thing” also seems to be affirmed in D47/B10, in which Heraclitus identifies a series of opposed properties that inhere in (pairs of) “things taken together” or recognized in “comprehension”⁵⁹³ (συλλάψεις)⁵⁹⁴ in the unity of opposites. The fragment ends, as Kahn observes,⁵⁹⁵ with a statement of the dynamic interdependence of unity and plurality on a more general level: (“from all, one and from one, all”⁵⁹⁶).

Heraclitus, then, brings together the opposites “unity” and “plurality” in the same manner that he brings together “the way up” and “the way down” (D51/B60).⁵⁹⁷ Yet this means that the unity-plurality pairing must possess the same basic traits that bring together other pairs of opposites – specifically, the equality and interdependence that undermine our tendency to weight

emphasis on the “things” aspect of “all things” and “one thing.” This accounts for a level of paradoxicality in their reception of a fragment that a 21st audience might not regard as markedly paradoxical.

⁵⁹³ For the translation of συλλάψεις as “comprehension” in D47/B10, see Kahn 1979: 282. The primary sense of the term seems to be “things taken together” – in this sense, descriptions such as “wholes and not-wholes” refer to the pairs of objects which are “taken together.” However, as multiple commentators have noted, the fragment is laden with cognitive significance; it seems to describe the “things taken together” as they are construed in the act of comprehension or taking together (see, e.g., Kirk 1962: 176; Kahn 1979: 282).

⁵⁹⁴ Although I typically follow the Laks & Most edition of the fragments, I diverge from their reading here. In line with the majority of contemporary commentators, I take the first word of the fragment as συλλάψεις rather than συνάψεις. See Kirk (1962); Stokes (1971); Graham (2010); Marcovich (1967); Kahn (1979); Robinson (1987). Cf., however, Conche (1986) who accepts συνάψεις, and Mouraviev (1999), who proposes συνάψει. I am convinced by Kirk’s argument (1962: 172) that the lack of any other occurrences for συνάψεις or its cognates prior to Plato renders συλλάψεις the more plausible reading. The use of the latter within the legal context to mean “arrest” may provide some additional support for συλλάψεις, given Heraclitus’ tendency to emphasize the juridical terms (see also Kahn 1979: 282.) As Gagarin 2016: 19-24 argues, much of Heraclitus’ legal vocabulary foregrounds the role of strife within the legal context – that is, a relationship of opposed parties. This makes the legal language apt in this context, in the sense that we are again dealing with things brought together in conflict with one another.

⁵⁹⁵ Kahn 1979: 283; see also Robinson 1987: 82 on this transition.

⁵⁹⁶ καὶ ἐκ πάντων ἓν καὶ ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντα.

⁵⁹⁷ For further evidence of Heraclitus’ use of unity and plurality as opposites see D12/B49, D13/B29 [implicit], and D2/B2 (where the contrast is between “one” and “many”) as well as D44/B41, D87/B90, D94/B99, and D105/B114 (where the contrast is between “one” and “all”). The claim that unity and plurality are opposites for Heraclitus which must come together on the model of the unity of opposites is compatible with the recognition that Heraclitus also uses the word ἓν to express the relation among opposites (e.g., at D25a/B57; D51/B60). Unity and plurality exist as higher order opposites which are themselves united in the unity of lower order opposites. For instance, in D25a/B57, day and night are not merely one, but are, rather, both multiple and one. Multiplicity and oneness are the two key opposites that the logos brings together, and their simultaneous presence is implied in the unity of opposites (compare the similar role of sameness and difference). Thus, as long as we construe the world on the model of the unity of opposites, Heraclitus gives us no reason to think that unity ought to trump plurality. In telling us that day and night are one, or that the way up and the way down are “one and the same” (μία καὶ ὡυτή, D51/B60), he offers both an expression of plurality and difference (in that the opposition, on its own, foregrounds these relations) and an expression of unity and sameness. In this case, the explicit statement of unity counterbalances the self-evident presence of conflict and multiplicity.

the opposites according to our physical-perceptual context.⁵⁹⁸ Yet Heraclitus repeatedly suggests that unity and plurality are neither equal in value, nor always interdependent: unity is frequently presented as surpassing plurality in importance and value, while plurality appears, at times, as non-reciprocally dependent upon unity.⁵⁹⁹ For instance, in D13/B29, the value of “all things” is less than the value of “one thing”.⁶⁰⁰ In D105/B114, the one divine law not only rules (κρατέω) and nourishes (τρέφω) the many human laws, but also exceeds (περιγίγνομαι) them; this implies that the one is, in this instance, independent of the many, though the many are certainly dependent upon the one. In the epistemic realm, too, “oneness” is associated with wisdom, while “manyness” yields ignorance. In D43/B108 and D98/B45, multiplicity is associated with the failure to grasp the character of one thing: in D43/B108, the (one) wise is set against the many logoi, while in D98/B45, the soul’s “deep logos” (βαθύς λόγος) is contrasted with the many paths by which one might seek, but fail to find, its limits. Moreover, Heraclitus repeatedly contrasts σοφόν and πάντα,⁶⁰¹ while aligning σοφόν and ἓν. Wisdom involves a single insight (D44/B45), which is possessed by only one “thing”, and which wholly constitutes that thing’s nature (D45/B32⁶⁰²), and which is, further separated from “all men/things” and the many

⁵⁹⁸ This feature of the unity of opposites plays a crucial role in overcoming the audience’s automatic tendency to discard the animal perspective as “inferior” in the animal-human juxtapositions. It is only because the unity of opposites requires the audience to see the opposites here as interdependent and *equal* that the audience recognizes that they must look for the equivalence of the value judgements that are inherent in the opposites. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 2, section I, the ability to contemplate the opposites in terms of the conceptual relations of entailment and incompatibility (on the basis of which, the opposites appear equal and interdependent) plays a crucial role in allowing the audience to think in terms of the logos’ bringing-together-in-conflict of the opposites, in part by distancing the audience from an approach to the opposites organized on the character powers model (which depends heavily upon unequal – or negatively and positive valenced – opposites derived from an immediate physical-perceptual context).

⁵⁹⁹ On Heraclitus’ clear preference for unity over plurality, see also Marcovich 1967: 446, 452; Kirk 1962: 385; Long 2017: 2-8; Mourelatos 1973: 39; Curd 1991: 534-535, 537. See also the extended discussion of this point in Chapter 4, section II.

⁶⁰⁰ See also B94/B99.

⁶⁰¹ Or πάντες; the word frequently appears in the genitive plural, so that it is ambiguous between “all things” and “all men.”

⁶⁰² I read the ambiguity on μόνον in this fragment as systematic, and as signalling the presence of multiple, interrelated meanings. That is, it qualifies the phrase ἓν τὸ σοφόν as a whole, emphasizing the fact that the one wise

accounts of men (D43/B108).⁶⁰³ As noted in Chapter 4, section II,⁶⁰⁴ these fragments – and, in particular, D43/B108 – suggest a notion of the “one wise” as a radical unity that is both the thing that apprehends reality as unity-without-plurality and *is* that reality – in other words, the fragment implies that knower and known are the same. For an audience at the stage of logos-based comprehension, this is a provocative notion. If the wise is so completely separate from plurality, and so identified with unity, it seems unlikely that it “sees” plurality in reality at all – which seems to leave it incapable of apprehending reality as unity-in-plurality. Yet it also seems to represent the highest epistemic achievement (D43/B108; D44/B41). This highlights an apparent inconsistency in the logos-based approach to unity. The logos, which seems to serve as an (overlooked) remedy for the ignorance of the many (D1/B1), accomplishes this by connecting isolated experiences¹ and concepts into an organic whole through the coming together of equal, interdependent opposites. The logos is fundamentally concerned with the unity of all things, finding its central expression in the coming together of the opposites unity and plurality (D46/B50). Yet Heraclitus develops these two opposites in such a way as to undermine both the equality and interdependence that serves as the basis of the unity of opposites. What this means is that the relations between these two key concepts fail (at least at times) to adhere to the very conceptual structure which takes their relation, as unity-in-plurality, as paradigmatic. Again and again, Heraclitus illustrates the conceptual interdependence of opposites – yet he also describes

is also the *only* (thing) that is wise; it qualifies σοφόν, indicating that the one wise is *only* wise – that is, it possesses no other “attribute”; it qualifies ἓν, with the translation, “one thing alone, the wise” and emphasizes the separateness of the wise (as in B108) and even implies that it alone exists (Sullivan 1984: 287.) For the reading of wisdom as the god’s single “property”, see Long 2007: 6-7, Kirk 1962: 394; Stokes 1971: 300n75. (Long 2007:14-15, 7-8, 10 also reads wisdom itself as unitary, involving one insight into the world’s single character.) For the reading that wisdom is possessed by the god alone, see Marcovich 1967: 446; Kahn 1979: 268. For the reading that it is wisdom itself that is exclusively unified (as distinct from the plurality of phenomena) see Curd 1991: 334-335.

⁶⁰³ Long 2007: 2 emphasizes that these characteristics of the wise thing mark it as an exception to the unity of opposites.

⁶⁰⁴ See pp. 196-198.

unity and plurality in such a way as to create a relation of non-reciprocal dependence (D105/B114) and even mutual exclusion unaccompanied by mutual entailment (D43/B108).

In this way, Heraclitus offers his audience intimations of a reality in which unity exists severed from plurality. Such a reality is not linguistically expressible, since the structure of language is such that a given concept depends for its coherence on the opposed concept. Nor – again – is such a reality aligned with the logos, which is rooted in this same feature of linguistic structure.

This brings us close to the core of the paradox that Heraclitus faces in guiding his audience's attitudes to language. On the one hand, the logos is crucial to the process that leads to the cancelling out of perspective – and, through this, to the apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. That process depends upon the audience's continued conviction that the logos-based comprehension of the unity of opposites offers the best possible account of the nature of reality. For this reason, there is a limit to how direct a challenge to language and duality the audience can tolerate while continuing to be guided by and to adhere to the logos. On the other hand, the audience may need at least some inkling of a further unity beyond unity-in-plurality. Such intimations might also serve to help an audience retain their recognition of the ultimate nature of reality at the point when they return to logos-based apprehension after achieving their first, temporary apprehension of unity-without-plurality. Moreover, a continued motivation to strive to return to the latter experience³ might depend, in part, upon a clear conception of the gap between the nature of reality and any formulation of that reality in speech. Thus, it would seem important to correct the tendency to see the spoken maxim as itself containing the wisdom it points towards.

Heraclitus, then, must navigate between two requirements. He must (initially) maintain the audience's conviction that logos-based comprehension reveals the true nature of things (for those who have not yet achieved the temporary state of understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality). At the same time, he must hint that the logos may not embody the ultimate truth, both by pointing towards a unity beyond unity-in-plurality, and by undermining the tendency to identify epistemic achievement with a particular formulation in words.⁶⁰⁵ He accomplishes this through intimations of a unity surpassing and independent of plurality, where these are carefully structured in such a way as to remind the audience of their inability to conceptualize unity independent of plurality.

For instance, as noted above, D43/B108 offers what seems to be a picture of unity exclusive of plurality. In this fragment, the unity of what is wise (the “one wise”⁶⁰⁶ of D44/B41 and D45/B32) is described as “separated from all [things/men]” (πάντων κεχωρισμένων). Again, as argued in Chapter 4 section II,⁶⁰⁷ the nature of perspectiveless understanding or wisdom is such that no distinction can be made between understanding and what is understood (that is, understanding involves the dissolution of any knower-known distinction, since such a distinction would re-introduce plurality into unity-without-plurality). Reality and the one who understands it (“the wise”) are indistinguishable. Thus, in treating what is wise as a unity exclusive of plurality, Heraclitus seems to point towards reality as unity-without-plurality. Yet even as he does so, Heraclitus emphatically reminds the audience of their inability to think unity and plurality in isolation from one another – and, at the same time, hints at the connection between this feature of

⁶⁰⁵ The latter, of course, is not strictly at odds with the logos, provided it is understood only as a tool or orientation. Yet given that this tool or orientation also embodies the structure of things as comprehended by human thought (see Chapter 2, section II), we would expect that, if logos-based comprehension provided a picture of the ultimate nature of reality, this comprehension *could* be adequately expressed by and thus to some degree identified with, particular formulations in words (though other psychagogical factors might still make such an identification problematic).

⁶⁰⁶ ἓν τὸ σοφόν

⁶⁰⁷ See pp. 196-198.

plurality, and language itself. More specifically, he expresses the idea of a unity that lacks all plurality through a statement from which any explicit reference to unity is markedly absent, even while terms for plurality abound. The fragment runs: “Of all those whose accounts I have heard, not one has come so far as to recognize that what is wise is separated from all.”⁶⁰⁸ D43/B108 begins with a term expressing manyness in the form of the quantitative relative ὁκόσων (“of all those whose”), which then serves as the antecedent for a negated term for unity (οὐδεὶς, “not one”). It also severs the (one) wise from all things/men (πάντα).⁶⁰⁹ The use of manyness to articulate unity is all the more emphatic given that this is the only fragment concerning the “what is wise” where it is *not* referred to as “the *one* wise”⁶¹⁰ (emphasis mine) – yet it is also the fragment that most directly expresses the break between the unity associated with what is wise and the plurality associated with ignorance (the all things/all men which are separated from what is wise, and the epistemic failure of the many men with their many accounts). In this way, B108 navigates between the conflicting requirements that arise from the need to affirm the necessity of logos-based comprehension, while pointing beyond it. On the one hand, it allows the audience to construe the wise thing (i.e., reality, as well as the one who knows the nature of reality) as unified in such a way as to exclude all plurality. In other words, it suggests that the epistemic goal may in fact lie beyond the unity-in-plurality comprehended through the logos. At the same

⁶⁰⁸ ὁκόσων λόγους ἤκουσα, οὐδεὶς ἀφικνεῖται ἐς τοῦτο ὥστε γινώσκειν ὅτι σοφόν ἐστὶ πάντων κεχωρισμένον. Trans. Laks & Most (with modifications).

⁶⁰⁹ We can infer the strong connection between unity and the wise from (1) the fact that, in the two other fragments where τὸ σοφόν appears, it is specifically described as one; (2) the fact that its exclusion from things in their multiplicity (πάντων) means, by default, that it must somehow be apart from that multiplicity (though we might choose to qualify that multiplicity. My reading accepts the view that there is a deliberate use of ambiguity here; Heraclitus allows the audience to read the multiplicity both as qualified and – as the opposite of the implicit “one” – as unqualified).

⁶¹⁰ I leave aside here D46/B50 since it leans more heavily on the adjectival character of σοφόν, whereas the other three fragments in this group emphasize its grammatical character as a substantive, so that the audience would hear it as “the wise thing.” While Heraclitus’ reality cannot be described as a “thing” (since the term tends to refer to unified individuals), the use of a substantive invites an audience to think in terms of (individual) knower and (thing) known in a way that the adjectival use does not. Nonetheless, even in B50, ἓν appears in close proximity with the σοφόν, and in a context where what is wise is a single insight involving the unity of all things.

time, its mode of expression emphasizes the logos' method of comprehension through interdependent opposites, thus discouraging the audience from believing that they can articulate or conceptualize the idea of unity-without-plurality without reference to the concept of plurality – that is, it discourages them from thinking that such a unity can even be conceptualized or articulated.

In this way, Heraclitus maintains his emphasis on the importance of logos-based comprehension – that is, the model of thought as structured by the unity of opposites. Yet he also helps the audience avoid becoming stuck in that model by frequently presenting the key pair of opposites, unity and plurality, as lacking the characteristics of equality and interdependence that would permit them to come together as a unity of opposites. In doing so, he highlights the overarching importance of unity in the nature of reality – and hints that the ultimate unity may be beyond both the ontological model expressed by, and the conceptual resources involved in, unity-in-plurality.

III: Revisiting the Unity of Opposites

In this section, I return to the logos' method of bringing-together-in-conflict, as developed in Chapter 2, re-examining it in the light of the ultimate goal of that method, as discussed in Chapter 4, section II. First, I examine an apparent conflict between, on the one hand, the logos' method, which requires the audience to grasp the opposites as equal and interdependent, and, on the other hand, the valencing inherent in opposition-based thought. Second, I briefly revisit ways in which the logos provides the audience with a degree of distance from their immediate physical-perceptual conditions by encouraging them to see the opposites together in ways that never appear within physical-perceptual experience¹. I show that, while this does not eliminate

the valencing of the opposites, or the consequent tendency to give one opposite greater weight than another, it does attenuate or dampen the force of the valences. In doing so, it allows the audience to learn to think in terms of the patterned relations of the opposites and to recognize the coherence of a view of reality structured through the unity of opposites – that is, structured in accordance with the nature of their own thought. Finally, I look at how the audience, once exposed to the technique of cancelling out through the animal-human juxtaposition, can return to these other instances of the unity of opposites, this time restoring the full force of the valences to the opposites. These instances of the unity of opposites can now be regarded in a new light, as another opportunity for the cancelling out of perspective that leads to understanding.

As I argued in chapters 3 and 4, perspective is structured by the needs and values that accompany a given physical-perceptual context (whether this is understood as the narrow individual context or the broader species-wide context). Since opposition arises from judgements rooted in such needs and values, perspective and opposition are inextricable from one another. I further argued that the animal-human juxtapositions do not merely imply that the human constitution, with its associated needs and preferences, is responsible for the creation of opposites in cases where a shared human perspective is contrasted against a non-human perspective. Rather, these extreme cases draw attention to the fact that our physical-perceptual context and its associated value judgements pervade all oppositions, even those brought together through the juxtapositions of different human perspectives (whether the perspectival element is implicit or explicit).⁶¹¹ Yet, I argued, the understanding of reality that results from the cancelling

⁶¹¹ In other words, our shared constitution does not simply lead us to categorize the nature of seawater (for instance) in accordance with the needs and values that we share with all other humans. Rather, our shared constitution inclines us to perceive all things according to the needs and values arising from our physical-perceptual orientation within a given context, even where those needs and values might differ for another human being who encounters the same things from a different physical perceptual context. Compare, for instance, the doctor's and the patient's contrasting experiences¹ of the same instance of therapeutically-motivated burning or cutting (D57/B58).

out of perspective is achieved only through the audience's attempt to fulfil the logos' demand that they grasp the opposites as equal and interdependent – and, thus, to simultaneously adopt both of the perspectives in which the opposites are rooted. The cancelling out of perspective arises, in turn, from the fact that the paired opposites,⁶¹² cannot truly be grasped together without also bringing together the mutually-exclusive perspectives, or sets of needs and values, upon which the opposition depends. This is a fact that the human-animal juxtapositions exploit by bringing out the fundamental features of perspective, both by using the needs and values themselves as the direct subject of the juxtaposition, and by choosing needs and values that are basic to the human constitution and perspective.

This creates a puzzle. The juxtaposition of opposed perspectives involved in the animal-human fragments would seem unable to make any demand upon the audience – and thus unable to effect a cancelling out of perspective – unless that audience already has some compelling reason to follow the logos' bringing-together-in-conflict where it leads them. This implies that the audience must have derived some cognitive benefit from construing their experience¹ on the model of the unity of opposites – specifically, they must have succeeded in moving towards a more common, consistent mode of thought. Yet this means that the logos' approach to reality on the basis of consistent conceptual relations has helped them to achieve some distance from the shifting, idiosyncratic judgements rooted in their narrow perceptual-physical context.⁶¹³ If the logos failed to offer any such initial advantage, they would have little reason to believe that the nature of things can be discovered through the logos, and thus little reason to attempt to adopt both of the two juxtaposed perspectives.

⁶¹² As discussed in Chapter 3, section I, an important factor here is the fact that Heraclitus' relatively abstract concepts still retain a pull towards the concrete. This means that the concepts are never fully divorced from their experience¹-based sources, with the result that the audience is more readily drawn back to the level of experience¹ in attempting to make sense of the oppositions.

⁶¹³ Chapter 2, section I.

Yet it's unclear how the logos can help them in this way if it involves the application of two incompatible models of connection-making. On the one hand, the conceptual relation-based, bringing-together-in-conflict of the logos demands that the audience take the opposites as equal and interdependent. This requires the audience to achieve a certain distance from the valencing of the opposites which arises from a mode of thought rooted in one's own physical-perceptual context and condition, and which is bound up with an inconsistent use of conceptual relations. On the other hand, the physical-perceptual conditions on which the opposites and the discrimination between opposites depend bring with them a predisposition to favour one opposite over another, and to do so in accordance with one's own physical-perceptual context and condition (and the associated needs). This plays a crucial role in facilitating the cancelling out of perceptive, and the attainment of the perspectiveless view.⁶¹⁴ Thus the mechanisms that allow the logos to function also, at the same time, threaten its coherence.

This section will develop upon the initial outlines offered in Chapters 3 and 4 to show how the logos maintains its epistemic function in the face of these puzzles, providing the audience with a degree of distance from their immediate experience¹ and responses and using the common structure of human thought to facilitate an approach to opposition that is relatively abstract (particularly when contrasted with the character powers-based approach⁶¹⁵). We've already seen (in Chapter 2) how this process works. At this point, however, I'd like to offer a clearer picture as to how Heraclitus balances the inevitable valencing that, as we saw in Chapter 3, ultimately means that humans cannot ever fully grasp the very thing that structures their own idiosyncratically human thought and language: the unity of equal, interdependent opposites.

⁶¹⁴ Chapter 4, section II.

⁶¹⁵ On the "character powers model", see pp. 105-111.

The logos attenuates the force of the opposites' valences by re-directing the audience's attention towards the patterns of conceptual relations that obtain among the opposites, de-emphasizing their immediate experiences¹ of the individual objects in and among which those relations obtain. This does not imply an entirely abstract consideration of these patterns. It seems unlikely, for instance, that Heraclitus' audience would have reflected on the interrelation of the concepts "same" and "different" in quite the same way as us. Even on the logos-based approach, objects and images still constitute a significant feature of conceptual thought, though they no longer possess the same power that they did on the old "character powers" model. On the latter model, individuals within the context of one's immediate perceptual-physical experience¹ were "categorized" through other, paradigmatic individuals whose salient features (for the purposes of categorization) were easily re-interpreted to fit the particular context to which they were applied. By contrast, logos-based comprehension, in emphasizing consistent patterns of relation (primarily the relations of interconnection and conflict, or interdependence and opposition, or mutual entailment and mutual exclusion), requires the audience to go beyond their immediate experience¹ of individuals within a particular physical-perceptual context. For instance, to think of a creature as equally alive and dead (D68/B88) is to think of a creature sufficiently abstracted from our familiar mode of physical perceptual experience¹ as to possess traits that never appear together in any single creature in any single context. This removal from the objects of immediate experience¹ helps to dampen the impulse to interpret ideas or statements through the heavily-valenced lens of a particular perceptual-physical context. In other words, the pull of the perspectives (with all their affective and sensory baggage) associated with each of the juxtaposed opposites is at least partially suppressed. This relatively abstract approach affords the opportunity for the audience to practice the logos' method of bringing-together-in-conflict that

plays an essential role in achieving the cancelling out of perspective. At the same time, it appears to provide them with a convincing model of the world, through unity-in-plurality, allowing them to unite previously discrete or incoherent areas of experience. In this way, the logos-based approach to reality gains the audience's trust and comes to displace the character powers-based approach, to the point that they attempt to apply the former even in the animal-human juxtapositions, where the full force of the valences returns, along with the physical-perceptual conditions from which they arise.⁶¹⁶

One important way in which Heraclitus' discourse elicits from the audience a more abstract orientation towards its objects is by taking familiar elements of human experience¹ and lifting them out of their context. Havelock notes Heraclitus' tendency to express his ideas via "the kinds of events which are woven into the flow of the Homeric and Hesiodic pictorial consciousness", with the difference that in Heraclitus, these events are "distilled out and concentrated."⁶¹⁷ This removal of the events and images from their narrative context is crucial, since that context is the source of the audience's identification with the characters (which, on Havelock's view, is total – the audience actually undergoes the events of the narrative, which then become part of their personal and collective memory⁶¹⁸). By removing the events and images from their narrative context, Heraclitus provides the basic materials for engaging the perceptual-physical imagination of an audience still tied to concrete modes of thought, yet invites a greater degree of abstraction by disrupting their usual way of engaging with such perceptual materials. In other words, as noted above, he uses the familiar objects of perceptual-physical experience¹, but interrupts the familiar patterns of response and judgement by describing those

⁶¹⁶ See Chapter 3, section I and Chapter 4, section II.

⁶¹⁷ Havelock 1982: 241. Compare Long 1992: 269 who notes that in Heraclitus "we detach appearances from their ordinary perceptual conditions."

⁶¹⁸ Havelock 1963: 145.

objects in a way that does not easily fit into any single perceptual-physical context. In this way, he helps them to consider the opposites from a less emotionally/physiologically charged vantage – such that, without entirely overcoming the implicit valencing, they can turn their attention away from it and reflect, instead, on the kinds of puzzling patterns that their experience¹ presents. For instance, in D52/B59, Heraclitus takes the everyday event of carding wool and overlays it with a second image that redirects the audience’s attention away from the level of immediate experience¹. D52/B59 runs: “The way of cloth-carders: straight and crooked.”⁶¹⁹ On the one hand, the image can be readily understood through the processes that make up carding: the wool fibers are combed out and aligned, but the different fibers are also wound together to create a more or less homogeneous blend. As in other instances of the unity of opposites, it seems as though the two opposites are to be regarded as of equal importance and value in enabling the performance of this essential everyday task.⁶²⁰ It almost seems as though we need not go beyond the immediate impressions of physical-perceptual experience¹ to recognize how the act of carding both straightens and makes crooked. The problem is that the opposites straight (εὐθεῖα) and crooked (σκολιή) are heavily valenced, drawing out associations with conflicting circumstances and experiences¹. While εὐθεῖα is associated with forthrightness and justice,⁶²¹ as

⁶¹⁹ γνάφῳν ὁδὸς εὐθεῖα καὶ σκολιή. I follow LM in accepting γνάφῳν over γραφέων (on which, see, e.g., Kirk 1962. Cf. however, Robinson 1987: 122). Against Kirk’s argument for the anachronism of the carding-screw based interpretation of the fragment see Marcovich 1967 and Kahn 1979. While it is my view that the cylindrical carder was probably already in use by Heraclitus’ time, γνάφῳν remains a possible reading even if we allow for brush-carding alone, and rather than attempting to reconstruct the kind of cylindrical carding apparatus that might have been in everyday use, I’ve focused my interpretation on the simplest sort of carding that one might expect would still go on in many homes.

⁶²⁰ The equality of the opposites is less explicit here than in many other fragments, though it becomes considerably more explicit if we include the full citation in Hippolytus: “With respect to wool carding, the straight and crooked way is one and the same.” γνάφῳν, ὁδὸς εὐθεῖα καὶ σκολιή μία ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ αὐτή. LM omit μία ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ αὐτή. If, however, the original fragment does contain this phrase, it would perhaps stress not only the unification and interdependence of the opposites (insofar as they are one) but their equality (insofar as they are the same). Such a move is, in any case, present in another ὁδὸς fragment, D51/B60, where the phrase “one and the same” (μία καὶ ὡυτή) does appear.

⁶²¹ LSJ, s.v. See also the verbal cognate εὐθύνω.

well as freedom from obstacles and difficulties,⁶²² σκολιή is associated with injustice and obscurity.⁶²³ Even when grounded in a familiar image, then, the opposites resist unification: the audience balks at giving equal weight to both justice and injustice, hardship and ease. This is underlined by the presence of a second, implicit physical-perceptual image directly expresses conflict between the opposites. The word ὁδός in this fragment refers in the most immediate sense to the character of the carders' work and the character of its outcome, in the form of the carded wool. Yet the trope of the straight or crooked road or the straight and crooked travel, is a familiar one from early Greek poetry.⁶²⁴ This trope, again, carries the associations of justice and injustice, or hardship and ease, experienced within the immediate (imaginative) context of a road travelled by an easy and direct route or a difficult and winding one (or the kind of obscure and off-the-beaten-track route by one who wished to take their victims by surprise). On the one hand, the audience is now faced with an explicit physical-perceptual conflict: no path can be, simultaneously, crooked and straight. On the other hand, the "path" trope is broad enough to encompass, for instance, ways of acting, character, and even goal or intent. The breadth of possible interpretations for ὁδός here provides an opening for the audience to think of the relation between "straight" and "crooked" as a (partially) abstract puzzle, testing out how the opposites might fit together in different contexts (e.g., understood as a way of acting, as someone's character, or as a goal).

Thus, in D52/B59, the audience recognizes some feature of their own immediate experience¹ in the claim that the way of carding is both straight and crooked, even as they cannot grasp the import of that claim, with its implication of the equality of straight and crooked, so long as they remain within the frame of immediate experience¹. This means that audience finds

⁶²² See, e.g., Pind. *Ol.* 6.103 (εὐθὺν δὲ πλόον).

⁶²³ LSJ, s.v.

⁶²⁴ See, e.g., Pind., *Pyth.* 2.85, *Nem.* 1.26, *Ol.* 6.103.

themselves faced with a problem: in order to make sense of their immediate experience¹, they must go beyond their immediate experience¹. Provoked by the paradox of the two opposites' compresence in one and the same "path", they turn their attention to the conceptual puzzle of the relationship between straight and crooked, using the concrete image as a vehicle for re-orienting the attention to the more abstract features of the opposites.⁶²⁵

Heraclitus' use or evocation of concrete objects, then, facilitates logos-based comprehension by encouraging the audience to abstract the objects, and the opposites to which they are applied, from their contexts, thus diminishing (or altering) their affective and sensory charge and allowing the audience to direct more of their attention to their conceptual features. At the same time, the use of such everyday objects plays a key role in obtaining the audience's conviction that their world can be made sense of through logos-based comprehension – that is, through the unity of opposites. The conceptual relations of mutual exclusion and mutual entailment with which the logos is concerned are shown to be the best way of making sense of the perceptual-physical relations and objects that constitute the audience's immediate experience¹. In order to do this, Heraclitus both evokes an immediate perceptual-physical experience¹ and draws the audience's attention towards the conceptual relations of entailment and exclusion within that experience¹, offering a convincing account of the natures of particular kinds of objects and materials, and also, in the process, highlighting patterns of relations implicit within the human experience¹ of reality in general. For instance, day and night⁶²⁶ and sleep and waking⁶²⁷ are unified not only conceptually, but through constant mutual succession;

⁶²⁵ In this case, the aspects of the opposites that contribute most immediately to the valencing are addressed as interdependent opposites in other fragments. For instance, the interdependence of justice and injustice appears in D55/B23, while obscurity and directness are linked in D41/B93.

⁶²⁶ D25a/B57.

⁶²⁷ D68/B88.

convergence and divergence⁶²⁸ and up and down are unified not only conceptually, but through compresence within a single thing.⁶²⁹ Similarly, hunger and satiety are unified not only conceptually, but through the conditions of physical experience¹ that allow each to be recognized only in relation to the other. That is, the perception of satiety (and the perception of it as “pleasant and good”⁶³⁰) depends not only on a current physical experience¹, but the juxtaposition of that experience¹ with the memory of the physical experience¹ of hunger (Stokes calls this form of unity “mutual validation”⁶³¹). Heraclitus’ use of such illustrations of the unity of opposites has the effect of permitting the audience to see that the consistent patterns found in the relevant conceptual relations allow them to make sense of their physical-perceptual experience¹ in a more coherent way. At the same time, by highlighting certain puzzles that cannot be resolved within the frame of immediate physical-perceptual experience¹, Heraclitus encourages the movement towards a conceptual relation-based mode of thought. This movement is associated with an increasing abstraction from the immediate physical-perceptual conditions from which the opposites arise, and an attenuation of their valences. The process is further reinforced by focus on the same conceptual relations (i.e., unity or mutual entailment and conflict or opposition or mutual exclusion) as they occur in different modes of physical-perceptual connection (unity through mutual succession,⁶³² unity through compresence, unity through mutual validation),

⁶²⁸ D49/B51.

⁶²⁹ D51/B60.

⁶³⁰ ἡδὺ καὶ ἀγαθόν (D56/B111).

⁶³¹ Stokes 1971: 93. What is perhaps most striking about the examples that Heraclitus has chosen is that if we are to experience them at all, we must, to some extent, still be in the opposite state. For instance, by the time we reach the full vitality of health after serious illness, we have often been relatively well for long enough not to take pleasure in our renewed capacities. It is when those capacities are returning that our health is felt and that the concept of fully recognized as a discrete “thing” in its own right.

⁶³² The sense in which mutual succession functions as a kind of physical-perceptual relation is less than straightforward. On the one hand, mutually successive opposites provide one of the most clear-cut cases in which conceptual relations are required in order to allow one to grasp the unity of opposites, since such opposites, which never appear in the same place at the same time, can never be in physical contact. Yet the evidence of physical-perceptual experience¹ is contradictory here, since of any given pair of mutually successive opposites, one member is always present in the same place that the other has departed from. Since there is no space between the

since it encourages a movement away from the immediate and specific physical-perceptual connections, and towards the patterns of conceptual relations found among them. This, in turn, supports the audience's conviction that logos-based comprehension, and, more specifically, the unity of opposites, provides the best way of making sense of their experience¹ both of reality in general, and of the objects and materials within it.

As noted above, such conviction is a necessary condition for motivating the audience's attempt to occupy both of the incompatible perspectives in the human-animal juxtapositions, since the need to grasp both opposites as equal will only be present in an audience convinced that in grasping the simultaneous, equal presence of the two opposites in a given material, they will also grasp the nature of the material. Moreover, as argued in Chapter 3, section I, the audience's efforts to grasp the nature of reality as a whole as unity-in-plurality remain mediated by their effort to grasp the nature of the exemplars of that unity. In other words, their tie to concrete thought is such that they continue to seek to grasp the nature of reality as a pattern that is expressed in the nature of particular kinds of objects or materials, as found in the unity of opposites. In other words, while they recognize that unity-in-plurality operates as a description of the unity of reality as a whole, they continue to think about it through the different varieties of objects and materials that form the subject matter of Heraclitus' images and illustrations. These images and illustrations are, after all, the focus of Heraclitus' approach to logos-based comprehension, which primarily concerns the unity of opposites in particular pairings.⁶³³ Only twice does he offer what appears to be an illustration of the interweaving of opposites to form the

disappearance of the one opposite and the appearance of the next, they ought to be (at least by the rules of physical-perceptual experience¹) in physical contact with one another.

⁶³³ Heraclitus' complaint about those who fail to engage in logos-grounded comprehension, like his method of inducing it in his audience (which he himself describes, in D1/B1, as focusing on apparently individuated objects or materials [ἑκάστων]) emphasizes the failure to recognize the unity of opposites in specific things or the nature of those things (e.g., D25a/B57).

unity of reality as a whole;⁶³⁴ in most cases, that interconnection seems to be assumed either through an image of cosmic unity-in-plurality (e.g., D85/B30) or through the unity of the opposites “all” and “one”. Ultimately, of course, the model of reality as unity-in-plurality that the logos provides has value not because it provides a true picture of reality, but because it articulates the structure of human thought/experience¹ with such clarity and consistency that the latter is led to deconstruct itself due to a fundamental incoherence: the unity of equal, interdependent opposites is incompatible with the value-based weightings that are inscribed into their (perspective-grounded) structure, and into the structure of distinction-making itself.⁶³⁵ Yet the deconstruction of human thought through the logos – and the glimpse into the actual nature of reality – cannot occur unless the audience expects the logos itself, and the unity of opposites, to yield the truth about the nature of things.

These two sides of the logos as, on the one hand, an apparent guide to the nature of reality, and, on the other, a mirror of human thought, are reflected in Heraclitus’ combined methodological statement in D1/B1, where he says that people “are like the inexperienced when they experience words and things such as I describe according to [their/its] constitution analysing each thing and telling how it is.”⁶³⁶ The placement of *κατὰ φύσιν* generates ambiguity – it can be read either with *ἐγὼ διηγέσθαι* or with *διαίρεων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅπως ἔχει*. The former reading emphasizes the manner in which Heraclitus describes words and things, while the latter emphasizes the character of those words and things, as analysed by Heraclitus.⁶³⁷ Like the majority of commentators, Heraclitus’ audience would begin, presumably, by reading *κατὰ*

⁶³⁴ Specifically, in D47/B10 (where the pairs of opposites are evoked in such a way that they themselves need to be applied, as Kahn 1979: 1983 observes “to some particular substantive term, such as *day* or *night*, *life* or *death*”) and in D48/B67 (where the overarching image of fire and smoke provides a more concrete focus for the application of the interwoven opposites).

⁶³⁵ See Chapter 4, section II.

⁶³⁶ *καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων, ὁκοίων ἐγὼ διηγέσθαι κατὰ φύσιν διαίρεων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅπως ἔχει*.

⁶³⁷ See Tor 2018: 18 on this ambiguity and its significance.

φύσιν with διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅπως ἔχει, with the meaning “according to the constitution [of each thing].” This interpretation might be further encouraged by previous encounters with similar claims at the start of other discourses by other practitioners of *historiê*; these might create the expectation that what followed would, in fact, provide an account of the character or constitution of things.⁶³⁸ However, as the audience became accustomed to Heraclitus’ method of exploiting ambiguity – and, at the same time, began to recognize the importance that language assumes in his thought – their focus might shift to second meaning: κατὰ φύσιν could also modify ἐγὼ διηγέσθαι, and so emphasize that Heraclitus’ mode of speech, his manner of describing words and things, is in accordance with the character or constitution of something. Of course, the character or constitution in question may still be that of the words and things – in which case, the difference between the readings is only a difference of emphasis. Yet this second reading opens up other possibilities: Heraclitus’ description may be in accordance with the language itself⁶³⁹ and/or in accordance with the natures of the subjects of the main clause (i.e., the uncomprehending humans who experience¹ words and things) to which ἐγὼ διηγέσθαι refers back. The ambiguity between “according to the constitution [of things]” and “according to the constitution [of people]” is, arguably, present even in the reading that takes κατὰ φύσιν with διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅπως ἔχει. It is reinforced if we follow Hippolytus’ rendering of this fragment, from which the ἕκαστον is absent, so that διαιρέων and

⁶³⁸ I am assuming, here, the existence of a cluster of works that, like Heraclitus’ D1/B1, begin with some sort of reference to the author’s logos or composition, followed by a methodological statement, as seems to have been the case with the opening of works by Ion of Chios (DK 36 B1), Diogenes of Apollonia (DK 64 B1) and Hecataeus (fr. 1). In the first and second cases, the works concern the general constitutions of things or of reality; in the third case, the account may have been one that focused more narrowly on the (true) character of the past, as contrasted with that presumed by the uncritical believers in myths and legends. This assumption is necessarily speculative. Of the three *historiê* mentioned, only Hecataeus is contemporaneous with (or perhaps even a generation or so older than) Heraclitus; Ion of Chios is about a generation younger than Heraclitus, while nearly a century separates Heraclitus and Diogenes of Apollonia.

⁶³⁹ One might argue Heraclitus prepares us for a dual reading of this sort – where the constitution or character signalled by κατὰ φύσιν might be that of things, or that of language – through his reference, in the previous clause, to “words and things.”

κατὰ φύσιν are thus without an explicit object.⁶⁴⁰ The ambiguity also seems particularly appropriate given the account I have given of distinction-making – and of the role of the logos (Chapter 2) and of the human constitution (Chapters 3 and 4) in it. If we take this as a deliberate ambiguity, the “nature” of things (as they appear to humans), and the distinctions appropriate to that nature, will simply be the distinctions demanded by the character of speech or language. The character of language is, in turn, dictated by the constitution of those same human beings whose failure to comprehend the logos results, in B1, in a failure to recognize the words and things that they continuously or repeatedly experience¹.⁶⁴¹

Again, understood as a reflection of the human constitution, logos-based thought turns out to be self-deconstructing or self-collapsing. On the one hand, the structural pattern of duality requires that the opposites be equal and interdependent. On the other hand, the valences that are also part of the structure of duality (and the needs and values that dictate those valences) obstruct an audience’s ability to fully grasp the unity of those opposites.⁶⁴² As argued in Chapter 3, the human mode of carving up opposites depends, not simply on reflective cognition, but upon the reflexive, and constitution-based, perceptions and volitions with which cognition, reflective or not, is bound up. Such reflexive responses include the automatic categorization of things as, for instance, “desirable” rather than “undesirable”⁶⁴³ – a categorization that is among the most basic differentiations and dualities that underpin opposition and human thought. The audience’s shift of attention towards the abstract conceptual relations diminishes the power of the opposites’ valences to the point that they can recognize this structure on a more abstract level, allowing

⁶⁴⁰ This is the reading preferred by Lebedev 2017: 239.

⁶⁴¹ See also Tejera 1991: 498, who understands Heraclitus’ promise in D1/B1 to describe how each thing is to involve “pronouncing upon human experience rather than physical nature.” Similarly, Dilcher 1995: 19-20 argues that this fragment is concerned, not with the nature of the world as such, but with human behaviour and thought.

⁶⁴² See Chapter 3, section I and Chapter 4, section II.

⁶⁴³ See pp. 145-147.

them to recognize a common pattern of relations that run through all human experience¹. However, as the human-animal juxtaposition show clearly, this reflective recognition of patterns among things is not sufficient for a genuine experience³ of the unity of reality. Moreover, even a conceptual appreciation of the unity of opposites is placed out of reach when we come face to face with oppositions that engage directly with our fundamental values and needs (e.g., desirable vs. undesirable; deadly vs. life-preserving).⁶⁴⁴ As I argued in Chapter 4, Heraclitus' human-animal juxtapositions serve to re-ground the audience in their perceptual-physical context and conditions (or, more accurately, to draw their attention back to their grounding in such a context) by emphasizing, rather than dampening, the valences of the opposites, even while still demanding that the audience regard those opposites as equal and interdependent. This opens up the possibility that, having achieved the cancellation of perspective through the human-animal perspective juxtapositions, the audience may be able to revisit the other, less obviously challenging instances of the unity of opposites, and to do so with a new attention to the physical-perceptual conditions in which the opposites are grounded.

Given the dependence of oppositions upon valences derived from a particular physical-perceptual framework, the audience's comprehension of the unity of opposites will never be quite complete, since they will never truly regard any given pair of opposites – the pull of the associated valences remains present, though it can be dampened enough for the audience to achieve a “good enough” grasp of the equality and interdependence of the opposites.⁶⁴⁵ The cancelling out of perspective that the audience experiences through attempting to apprehend the unity of opposites in the human-animal juxtapositions might, initially, yield only a very brief

⁶⁴⁴ See Chapter 3, section I and Chapter 4, section II.

⁶⁴⁵ This, as emphasized in Chapter 3, section I and in Chapter 4, section II, would have been a particularly serious obstacle for Heraclitus' audience, whose resources for regarding the opposites abstractly were far less extensive than our own.

glimpse of unity-without-plurality. Nonetheless, this glimpse helps to once again re-orient the audience's epistemic aims. Where initially the logos' bringing-together-in-conflict served as a means for comprehending the unity of opposites, or unity-in-plurality, it now provides an opportunity for understanding unity-without-plurality by facilitating the loss of perspective.⁶⁴⁶ This, then, provides the audience with an opening to revisit other apparent expressions of the unity of opposites – but to do so, this time, with complete attention to the conflicting perspectives that the juxtaposed opposites imply, and the conflicting needs and values that ground those perspectives. In other words, the inevitable valencing of the opposites, which was initially attenuated by the focus on conceptual relations, now comes again to the fore. As in the animal-human juxtapositions, the attempt to hold both conflicting sets of needs and values undermines the action-guiding structure of perspective and facilitates its dissolution or collapse.

On re-encounter, then, the unity of opposites fragments⁶⁴⁷ support a cancelling out of perspective by drawing the audience's attention back to the two conflicting sets of physical-perceptual conditions (and associated needs and values) in which two juxtaposed opposites are implicitly grounded. This means that the essentially valenced nature of the opposites – dampened, but never extinguished, by logos-based thought – comes once again to the fore. The valencing, and associated principles of opposition, are embedded in what I have called the broad or species-wide physical-perceptual context or conditions (that is, the shared human

⁶⁴⁶ Chapter 4, section II.

⁶⁴⁷ In this section, I use the term “unity of opposites fragments” to refer to all of those fragments that concern the mutual succession, compresence, mutual validation, and/or conceptual interdependence of the opposites (see pp. 59-62 on my definition of “opposites”). Unless otherwise stated, the term does not include those fragments which form the focus of Chapters 3 and 4 – that is, the human-animal perspective juxtapositions as well as the human-god perspective juxtapositions. This is in part because, as I argued in those two chapters, these fragments do not, even on the audience's first encounter with them, involve a grasp of the unity of the relevant opposites (though the power of the human-animal juxtapositions does, of course, depend upon the audience's predisposition to approach them as instances of the unity of opposites). My particular focus in this section will be those “unity of opposites fragments” where opposition is a primary focus, since these seem to provide the clearest illustration of the impact of the oppositions and their function within Heraclitus' epistemic method. I recognize, however, that nearly all of the fragments are informed by the basic structure of the unity of opposites, construed under the broad model of the logos' bringing-together-in-conflict (see pp. 71, 120-121).

constitution). Thus, understood as part of a patterned structure for human thought, they are shared, or “common”. However, their application in any given context may depend upon more idiosyncratic features of the physical perceptual condition of a particular subject – in other words, the particular context changes the way in which the fundamental needs and values inscribed in the human constitution are expressed.⁶⁴⁸ Thus, even where an illustration of the unity of opposites involves a human-human (rather than animal-human) perspective juxtaposition, the conflicting valences attached to the opposites by the two perspectives still spring from the basic needs and values dictated by the human constitution.

For instance, in D57/B58, the doctors who complain of insufficient payment for cutting and burning their patients clearly see the cutting and burning as instances of “healing”. The patients who undergo the cutting and burning see these same acts as instances of “harming”. It’s clear, here, that the opposites are tied to the individual perspectives and individual needs and values involved. For the doctor, the treatment is simply applied to one patient among many others; he is an artisan, and like any artisan, he depends for his livelihood on the final product or outcome. This final outcome, rather than the intermediate effects, is the focus of his concern.⁶⁴⁹ This does not necessarily mean that he is wholly without compassion for his patient’s pain – merely that his primary concern is the long-term result. He views the human body with the detachment necessary in order to cauterize or cut with any skill – that is, he sees it as the object on which he works his craft. The patient, however, experiences the treatment in a much more immediate fashion, since it is applied to his own body, and his focus and judgement are trained on the short-term effects alone. The attention-grabbing sensation of pain is such as to restrict his or her physical-perceptual context to the moment, with the result that even an interest in long-

⁶⁴⁸ See also Lloyd 1966 on the issue of opposites with fixed vs. context-sensitive valencing in early Greek thought.

⁶⁴⁹ See, e.g., the Hippocratic *Vict.* 1.15, where the repair of the human body is compared to the art of cobbling.

term recovery may disappear temporarily from view in the present experience¹ of being harmed.⁶⁵⁰

The process of juxtaposing human perspectives follows the same pattern as the animal-human juxtapositions.⁶⁵¹ The juxtaposition of perspectives on a particular material or phenomenon serves the purpose of pitting against each another two sets of those needs and values that guide our speech, cognition, volition and perception pertaining to phenomena. Having become accustomed to the logos' juxtaposition of equal, interdependent opposites, the audience seeks to grasp both opposites together, giving both equal weight. On the basis of the human-animal juxtapositions, they recognize the need to take on the full experiential³ impact of the juxtaposition, with the result that what they originally encountered as the patterned unity and tension between opposites, now becomes the experience³ of the mutual collapse and cancelling out of perspectives. This is the result of the fact that they are now re-engaging the content that was previously dampened or attenuated through the engagement with conceptual relations – that is, the material drawn from the two conflicting physical-perceptual contexts juxtaposed in the bringing-together of the opposites.

On the audience's first approach to the various instances of the unity of opposites, then, the perspectival element, and the affective and physiological content it carries, is either de-emphasized or presented in such a way that it is, for instance, dwarfed by the pre-reflective belief in the unity of the object. In many of the latter cases, this is connected to the fact that the two conflicting *human* perspectives are relatively close together in the context of the valence-determining conceptual framework. Both are familiar to the audience, and both belong to the

⁶⁵⁰ See also, e.g., Kirk 1962: 93-94; Emlyn-Jones 1976: 104.

⁶⁵¹ For the full account of this process, see Chapter 4, section II.

same overarching set of needs and values in which their perceptual and conceptual framework is rooted.

The dual function served by the human-human perspective juxtapositions⁶⁵² can be briefly illustrated by examining the different orientations that the audience is invited to take on fragment D16/B15. On the initial, conceptual relation-focused reading, fragment D16/B15 draws out the unity between the opposites “life” and “death.”⁶⁵³ The fragment runs: “If it were not for Dionysus that they performed a procession and hymned the shameful parts, they would be acting very shamelessly. But Hades is the same as Dionysus, for whom they go mad and celebrate Lenaia.”⁶⁵⁴ The processions and hymns to Dionysus and the celebration of the genitalia act as an affirmation of the life instinct, which only escapes shamelessness and remains within the bounds of propriety through the intimate connection to death (Hades).⁶⁵⁵ Death implicitly imposes appropriate limits on this display, just as it enforces boundaries upon humans’ greed and desire⁶⁵⁶ in D118/B20, where our desire to have our portions (μόροι) is linked to the generation

⁶⁵² I don’t mean to imply, in what follows, that every single exemplar of the unity of opposites immediately lends itself to a perspectival reading. These aphorisms serve an important independent purpose in leading the audience towards a view of the world as unity-in-plurality (and away from a view of the world as plurality-in-unity), and towards a logos-based approach to thought (and away from a character powers-based approach), and thus in preparing the audience for the cancellation of perspective in the human-animal juxtapositions. My discussion of the perspectival implications of some of the unity of opposites aphorisms is intended only to show how, read from a different angle, they can reinforce the insight offered by human-animal juxtapositions concerning the interdependence of perspective and opposition, and support the view of reality as unity-without-plurality. An audience member who experienced even some of these aphorisms as pointing first towards unity-in-plurality and then to unity-without-plurality (especially one who had already had the temporary apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality) might be able to extrapolate the presence of both possibilities in all such aphorisms. For the centrality of perspective in Heraclitus’ unity of opposites fragments, see Robinson 1987 (e.g., 86-87, 183-184); Osborne 1997.

⁶⁵³ For other instances of this important pair of opposites in Heraclitus, see, e.g., D53/B48, D70/B62, D118/B85, and D71/B26. Gadamer 2002: 31 seems to begin from the all-pervasiveness of this resonance when he suggests that any direct reference to death in D71/B26 may be unnecessary, since Heraclitus would already “expect that when he said ‘life’, we would understand ‘death’ at the same time.”

⁶⁵⁴ εἰ μὴ γὰρ Διονύσῳ πομπὴν ἐποιεῦντο καὶ ὕμνεον ᾄσμα αἰδοίοισιν, ἀναιδέστατα εἶργαστ’ ἄν· οὗτος δὲ Ἄιδης καὶ Διόνυσος, ὅτεω μαίνονται καὶ ληναίζουσιν.

⁶⁵⁵ Cf. Adoménas 1999: 92-93.

⁶⁵⁶ For the meaning of ἀναιδής (shameless) as greed and uncurtailed desire see LSJ, s.v. Compare, perhaps, the limits enforced upon fire in D89c/B94, D85/B30, D112/B43.

both of our children and of our deaths (μόροι).⁶⁵⁷ On such a reading, the actions of the celebrants are both justified by and expressive of truth because they do not celebrate the life instinct alone – they celebrate (albeit unintentionally) the unity of life and death.⁶⁵⁸

When the audience returns to consider this fragment in relation to the perspectives implicit in it, however, it's less evident that the life-Dionysus side and the death-Hades side can be reconciled so easily. The points of view involved in this particular instance of the unity of opposites cannot be disentangled from traditional ideas concerning the gods. In this sense, the fragment invites a different approach from the de-anthropomorphizing orientation of the fragments concerning τὸ σοφόν or ὁ θεός (with the article). As discussed in Chapter 4, section I,⁶⁵⁹ Heraclitus' references to the divine as θεός (without the article), or to the gods as a plurality, invite a different kind of orientation from the audience than the references to τὸ σοφόν and ὁ θεός (with the article). The latter are slanted towards the perspectivelessness of the divine and invite an orientation that pushes the audience beyond the Hesiodic and Homeric models of the gods; the latter tend to draw upon traditional attitudes concerning the gods and their relation to

⁶⁵⁷ I am assuming here that μόροι has a double meaning, suggesting both that the generation of children (and the children themselves) is our “portion” and that the children are our “dooms”. Both statements make sense on practical grounds. One's full measure of what life had to offer was bound up with the kinds of offspring one had; the absolute character of the child's duty to the parent (see Dover 1974: 273-275) meant that the child was also the parent's possession (or “portion”). At the same time, a dutiful citizen and parent would want to preserve his material portion for its inheritance by the next generation (Dover 1974: 173). The generation of children – and the recognition, as those children come into their prime, that one's own vitality is waning – was also, presumably, as familiar an experience for ancient as for modern parents. For the Greeks, there was an additional mythic logic to the idea that children might be a parent's dooms (and in a very literal sense), as illustrated in the succession of the gods in Hesiod's *Theogony* (see also Soph. *OT*; Aesch. *Cho.*). Cf., however, Robinson 1987: 89-90 for a reading that emphasizes the meaning “fates” for μόροι. Robinson argues that it is children who are subject to their *own* fates or dooms, rather than constituting the parental doom. Perhaps these two readings can be harmonized if we take this as another fragment in which the perspective juxtaposition is visible. Parents and children, and different kinds of parents and children, might conflict with one another in emphasizing either “portion” or “doom” in their reflections on issues such as, e.g., inheritance or duty to elders. (To give one possible example among many: a dying parent might be concerned with the inheritance that they pass on to the child, seeing the child as their portion – that is, as their mode of continuance in the world. To a child, that inheritance might appear as a duty and a fate – as well as a doom, since the death of a parent can serve as a reminder that that child is “up next” in the generational line, as far as death is concerned.)

⁶⁵⁸ Adoménas 1999: 92-93.

⁶⁵⁹ See pp. 174-176.

particular aspects of human experience. This includes, in many cases, the god's significance in organizing the audience's conceptual framework. It's true that the audience's grasp of logos-oriented thought involves a movement away from the character powers model's reliance upon the gods as the categorizing element when it comes to particular concepts such as beauty, fierceness-in-battle, etc.⁶⁶⁰ Yet, again, the audience retains a partial dependence upon the concrete or image-based thinking represented by the character powers model.⁶⁶¹ This means that Hades' relation to a concept such as death would have involved, for them, a more substantive sense of the god as an individual, and wider-reaching implications for the organizing of the conceptual domain connected to death, than could be encapsulated by such terms as "association" or "symbol."

In the case of D16/B15, this opens the possibility of an experiential³ conflict for an audience engaging fully with the juxtaposed perspectives. The traditional attitudes towards the gods that this fragment draws upon, along with associated notions of the sacred and the profane (or, in other words, that which maintains the appropriate order of human life and that which disrupts it) may problematize the audience's attempt to maintain both the "Dionysus perspective" and the "Hades perspective".

If we see these rituals from the point of view of "life", and of the worship of Dionysus, the frenzy and bawdy displays are an appropriate and traditional part of the celebration of the god of generation, in part because these activities are limited to the specific places and times designated for the god's worship. If this were not the case, the fragment tells us, these actions *would* be shameless, and would undermine the appropriate order of things, to which even Dionysus and his worship belongs. Yet if we see the rituals, instead, as part of the worship of

⁶⁶⁰ On the "character powers model", see pp. 104-111.

⁶⁶¹ See Chapter 3, section I.

Hades, they *are* shameless, and they *do* undermine the order of things, since, as Osborne notes, they “would be inappropriate in the funerary contexts we associate with Hades” and “what is appropriate for Dionysus would not be done for Hades.”⁶⁶²

The conflict between perspectives in D16/B15 is perhaps not so extreme as the conflict between the animal and human perspectives, in part because an audience that has followed Heraclitus this far may have de-anthropomorphized the gods to a sufficient degree that they no longer experience a concrete, immediate connection between a particular god and the sphere of human life with which that god is associated. However, insofar as the traditional ideas about the sacred and profane, and the connected ideas of appropriate order and limits, form a fundamental part of the audience’s physical-perceptual context (from which the most deeply inscribed cultural conceptions cannot be separated), the attempt to see the rites of Dionysus-Hades from both perspectives – to see the very same actions as an expression of sacred, appropriate order (in relation to Dionysus) and as an expression of profane disorder (in relation to Hades) – may effect a cancelling out of perspective via concepts that play a key role in guiding desire, thought, and emotion – the sacred and profane, order and disorder, life and death.

The dual function of the human-human perspective juxtapositions can also be illustrated by examining the different orientations that D51/B60 invites the audience to take, by turns, on the *óðós* (road, way, route, journey) that forms its subject matter.

D51/B60 runs as follows: “The way up the way down: one and the same.”⁶⁶³ As Graham notes, part of the richness of this fragment arises from the double meaning of *óðós*. If the word is understood as “route”, with its sense of movement or travel, it is hard to make sense of the assertion that the route up and the route down are one and the same. As a route upwards, the *óðós*

⁶⁶² Osborne 2003: 85-86. For a different proposal of perspective conflict in this fragment, see Robinson 1987: 86-87.

⁶⁶³ *óðós ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ αὐτή*.

takes us, for instance, towards Miletus and away from Ephesus; as a route downwards, it takes us towards Ephesus and away from Miletus. Read in this sense, the character of the ὁδός changes depending on our position in space, the direction in which we look, and the function that we need the route to serve.

However, if ὁδός is translated as “road”, we can see the unity of opposites present in it. We recognize that it is one and the same strip of land on which we travel up towards Miletus and down towards Ephesus.⁶⁶⁴ In order to make sense of this latter meaning, the audience must recognize the necessary interdependence of the upwards and downwards direction of the road. It is not merely that these two opposites are simultaneously present in one thing, but that the presence of one of the opposites in the road guarantees and depends upon the presence of the other.⁶⁶⁵ Such an orientation towards the *road* moves the audience away from the idiosyncratic significance of the road understood as their individual *route* up and down – for instance, the physical exertion involved in the climb as compared to the ease of the descent.⁶⁶⁶ The audience is asked to focus on the nature and definition of the road, which means they must attenuate any emotional or physiological associations and valences that the *route* upward and downwards evokes. In shifting their attention to the conceptual relationship between “upwards” and “downwards” (a conceptual relationship, however, grounded in the image of the unitary road) it also provides them with tools to aid them in dampening idiosyncratic valences.⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁴ Graham 2009: 78-79, 81. The example is one offered by Graham.

⁶⁶⁵ Graham 2008: 177-178.

⁶⁶⁶ See Osborne 2003: 85-86; 92-93. There are likely other perspectival elements to this fragment. See, e.g., Kirk 1962: 110-112.

⁶⁶⁷ See also Schur 1998: 46-51. Schur argues that Heraclitus’ treatment of road imagery is aimed at transitioning the audience away from an epistemic method that conflates the orientation of the attention with physical orientation. He contends that Heraclitus plays on the “contrast between the mental and physical conception of method” in order to make the point that the kind of search with which Heraclitus is concerned “does not follow the rules of method that we have derived, so to speak, from physical roads” (48). Schur’s claim that Heraclitus’ notion of the path implies that the way of understanding possesses a share of oblivion also seems to suggest that he is responding, albeit in a

Yet an audience that has come to recognize the importance of the perspectival dimension of the opposites through the human-animal juxtapositions might notice a difficulty here. The meaning “road” can hardly be separated from the meaning “route”, since a road is defined by its fulfilment of a certain function – that is, the fact that we can use it to get from one place to another. Its character as a road cannot, in fact, be separated from its perspectival features as a route. This is, in part, because the two opposite directions that constitute it (upwards and downwards) depend entirely on physical-perceptual context (i.e., where one stands and where one looks).⁶⁶⁸ Yet it is also because the question of whether it is a road upwards or downwards (and even, perhaps, whether it is a road at all) depends upon our needs – for instance, whether we need to get to Miletus or to Ephesus.

This second, need-based element in the upwards vs. downwards perspective is made most apparent if we imagine ourselves standing halfway up the road. Here, the question of whether it is a road up or a road down depends upon what function we need it to serve – that is, where we want to go. If the audience orients themselves to these defining features of roads, and, at the same time, attempts to grasp the opposites “upwards” and “downwards” together, they may be led into another cancelling of perspective – though this is, again, a somewhat subtler cancelling out than we find in the human-animal juxtapositions. The attempt to experience simultaneously and equally the vantage points and needs associated with the road up and the road down may have the effect of nullifying any sense of the road’s directionality: it’s difficult to imagine how we can truly experience³ the road in both ways at the very same moment, and the effort of attempting to do so seems likely to put pressure on, and perhaps to annul entirely, a function-based conception of the road. Yet the road seems, again, to be defined in terms of the function

different way, to the strain in Heraclitus that I have connected with the necessity of losing one’s human and individual perspective in order to gain understanding.

⁶⁶⁸ Robinson 1987: 123.

that it has for us – since it is the fact that a given stretch of ground can take us from one place to another that distinguishes it as a road.

If this is so, then someone who ceases to see the road in terms of its function, ceases to see the road at all, both in ceasing to conceptualize it as a road, and in ceasing to differentiate some particular strip of land from the rest of the landscape. Yet like the animal-human juxtapositions, this cancellation of perspective both relies upon and has implications rooted in the overlap between conceptualization, volition, perception and emotion for Heraclitus' audience. More specifically, the audience's cancellation of their view of the road may have more significant implications that would allow for a more robust cancellation of perspective (such as we see in the human-animal juxtapositions). For instance, the fact that this cancellation is mediated through the cancellation of "up" and "down" may also lead to an undermining of the kinds of self-orientating perceptions associated with the two directions, the judgements and desires associated with goal-directed movement (and facilitated by a function-based perception of the landscape), and the needs and values with which the positively valenced "up" and the negatively valenced "down" are closely associated.⁶⁶⁹ Since all three of these are tied to the basic action- and inference-guiding structure of perspective, a successful cancelling out of the concepts of "upwards" and "downwards" may also have the effect of a robust cancelling out of perspective.

The unity of opposites aphorisms initially function to guide the audience towards a logos-oriented approach to reality, helping them to attenuate their dependence upon an immediate, idiosyncratic physical-perceptual frame of reference and to adopt the view of reality as unity-in-plurality. Yet these aphorisms serve a further purpose at a later stage in the epistemic process. They encourage the audience to experience³ a range of phenomena in terms of juxtaposed sets of

⁶⁶⁹ Lloyd 1966: 46.

incompatible needs and values – and, in doing so, they reinforce the cancelling out of perspective presented more starkly in the human-animal juxtapositions, providing the audience with new opportunities to “practice” the temporary apprehension of unity-without-plurality achieved through the latter.

The audience remains dependent on the logos even in the second approach to the human-human perspective juxtapositions, since the method of bringing-together-in-conflict serves to guide them in their approach to the aphorisms, while the success of the unity of opposites in providing a coherent conceptualization of reality helps to orient them on their “return to the human perspective” and to motivate their continued attempt to grasp juxtaposed, conflicting perspectives. Moreover, the audience’s re-grounding in various physical-perceptual contexts/conditions for the purposes of the perspective juxtapositions should not be confused with a relapse into their own, private physical-perceptual context (and the idiosyncratic modes of connection-making it implies). It’s true that each of the different perspectives that the audience takes on constitutes a narrow or idiosyncratic physical-perceptual context – or, to put it another way, each constitutes the broader, species-wide physical-perceptual conditions as they express themselves within a particular physical-perceptual context. It’s also true that the ability to become fully absorbed in such alternative perspectives derives from the audience’s grounding in an oral tradition through which they were encouraged to undergo the events of a given narrative part with such immediacy that those events became, in a sense, part of their own autobiography.⁶⁷⁰ Yet it is the logos’ bringing-together-in-conflict and the reflective space it

⁶⁷⁰ Havelock 1963. This should not be confused with the kind of attenuation of the physical-perceptual context afforded by the logos. The audience becomes sensuously absorbed in the oral performance through a variety of means (including the sensuous character of the language itself, as well as the imagery and the existing cultural and pragmatic associations), all of which serve as cues to fully inhabit another physical-perceptual context, or perspective. Under such circumstances, the audience is guided by concrete thinking rooted in a particular (imaginative) physical-perceptual context; and the connections that they make between categories and ideas are still dictated by their physiological and affective experiences¹.

opens between conceptual connections and the physical-perceptual considerations in which they are ultimately rooted that makes it even conceivable that the audience should attempt to take on two conflicting set of needs and values. This, in turn, allows the human-animal perspective juxtapositions to reveal the epistemic value of re-engaging with the physical-perceptual content associated with opposite concepts and conflicting perspectives. As a result, the audience's re-visiting of the unity of opposites fragments incorporates both the more abstract, conceptual relation-oriented approach involved in the logos, and the more concrete, experientially³-oriented approach reintroduced by the animal-human juxtapositions. As in the animal-human juxtapositions, it is the combination of these two approaches that leads to the (temporary) cancelling out of perspective.

Conclusion

Heraclitus' logos, then, with its emphasis upon language and conceptual thought, might initially seem at odds with an expression of reality as unity-without-plurality, and even at odds with itself, insofar as it acts as a reflection of human thought. First, the logos privileges distinctions and duality, since these are the basis of language and concepts, while unity-without-plurality excludes both distinctions and duality. Second, the logos implies a model of reality – that of unity-in-plurality – that is incompatible with unity-without-plurality. Third, the logos appears to be internally incoherent, implying a model of a human thought that looks to be inaccessible to his audience. That is, it demands an approach to the opposites – as equal and interdependent – that is in conflict with the interdependence of opposition and perspective, and the consequent valencing of the opposites.

However, Heraclitus not only seems aware of the obstacles that distinctions and duality present for achieving an understanding of reality, but also offers ways that the various “inconsistencies” and obstacles associated with the logos might be navigated. His model of the world as unity-in-plurality does not simply help the audience to move away from the idiosyncratic character powers-based approach to the world, and towards a more “common” conceptual relation-based approach. It also promotes reflection upon nature of opposition – especially given that unity-in-plurality, as a conception of the unity of all things, is rooted in and structured through the unity of opposites. This means that when Heraclitus challenges the structure of the unity of opposites by undermining the status of unity and plurality as equal and interdependent opposites, he also raises questions about unity-in-plurality, ultimately using unity-in-plurality to point towards unity-without-plurality.

Similarly, in guiding the audience away from an approach to the opposites focused upon concrete individuals, and towards an approach rooted in conceptual relations, Heraclitus helps the audience to attenuate (though not to extinguish) the valences associated with the opposites. This means that they can recognize the coherence of a view both of individual phenomena and of the cosmos as a whole as structured by the co-occurring relations of mutual exclusion and mutual entailment – that is, by the balanced interdependence of opposites. This is a necessary pre-condition for the cancelling out of perspective, which occurs when the physical-perceptual or perspectival content of the opposites is brought back to the fore. Such a process of cancelling out is, moreover, supported not only by the more extreme juxtapositions of human and animal perspectives explored in Chapters 3 and 4, but also by the subtler juxtapositions of human perspectives found in other unity of opposites fragments.

Thus far, I have spoken of the view of reality encouraged by the logos either in somewhat abstract terms – as the unity-plurality relation and the patterns of conceptual relations it draws attention to – or in terms of the natures of specific phenomena (seawater, roads, etc.) Yet Heraclitus’ logos is generally thought to offer more than this; most scholars would argue that Heraclitus offers us a cosmology, at least in the sense of providing a general account of some of the features and principles that provide the overarching pattern that govern phenomena on a concrete level. The final chapter of my thesis is devoted to an account of how such an account can be squared with an ultimate conception of reality as unity-without-plurality.

Chapter Six: Cosmology without Cosmos: Heraclitus' Psychagogic Use of Cosmology

Introduction

This thesis has argued that Heraclitus conceives of reality as unity-without-plurality. One of the implications of this claim is that reality is not a cosmos, or ordered whole, since it has no parts. The purpose of this chapter is to address possible objections arising from the apparent presence of a cosmology within Heraclitus' fragments. I will argue that we need not view this cosmology as a description of the ultimate nature of reality – and that there are indications that Heraclitus did not intend for us to do so. I claim that the cosmological elements of Heraclitus' account: (1) play a part in allowing the audience to recognize that the logos does, in fact, offer the best available account of the way in which they experience¹ the world⁶⁷¹ and organize their experience¹; (2) frustrate the attempt to take them at face value, thus preventing the audience from getting “stuck” in the view of reality as a cosmos.⁶⁷²

In section I, I present a brief sketch of a classic reconstruction of the cosmological account Heraclitus offers. I argue that this cosmology is in line with Heraclitus' epistemic method as I have sketched it in the previous chapters, in the sense that it invites the audience to transition from a model of reality as plurality-in-unity to a model of reality as unity-in-plurality. This transition is significant for two reasons. As emphasized in Chapter 4, section I and Chapter 5, section III, the audience's engagement in the perspective-cancelling process that generates

⁶⁷¹ See pp. 66-67 for my use of the terms experience¹, experience² and experience³.

⁶⁷² See pp. 65-66 on my use of the terms, “cosmos” and “reality.” Briefly, “cosmos” involves a conception of reality as an organized whole. “Reality” by contrast, signifies “things as they really are” – i.e., unity-without-plurality. At the same time “reality” is also what an epistemic agent attempts to grasp, or believes that he grasps, even when his orientation rules out any genuine understanding of reality. Thus, while the model of reality as cosmos or unity-in-plurality is not, in fact, an expression of the nature of reality, it is (ambiguously) presented as such by Heraclitus, and is received as such by an audience constrained by the human perspective. For this reason, I've chosen to speak of “reality organized as unity-in-plurality/cosmos” or “reality organized as plurality-in-unity” as an expression of the audience vantage to which Heraclitus is appealing in a given context.

understanding depends upon prior acceptance of a view of reality as unity-in-plurality (organized via the nature of opposition).

In section II, I look at hints built into Heraclitus' cosmology that suggest that it is not meant to be taken as the final truth about the nature of reality. I examine Heraclitus' depiction of fire, arguing that he constructs it in such a way that it embodies the essential components of his cosmological story. At the same time, it incorporates contradictions that place it in conflict with his cosmological story – and of any cosmological story at all.

Before I begin on the argument, I want to reiterate some of the caveats that I made in the introduction to Chapter 5. My concern in this chapter is with the audience's epistemic state before and between the actual apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. As a result, I will often speak in terms of the view of reality which Heraclitus elicits from an audience at any given moment in the epistemic process, as they move towards (or back towards) the apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. In other words, I won't speak of reality as Heraclitus believes that it ultimately is (i.e., as unity-without-plurality); rather, I will speak of reality as Heraclitus intends the audience to see it at a particular moment and for a particular psychagogic purpose.

Moreover, even where my discussions of Heraclitus' "cosmological fragments" indicate places where they seem to point towards the ultimate nature of reality as unity-without-plurality, I analyse these fragments in the manner that I understand him to present them to his audience. Since these fragments involve concrete images, employing materials such as fire, they naturally convey their meaning, in part, through the audience's knowledge of such materials. In discussing the kinds of interpretations such images invite, I do not intend to offer a particular answer to the

question of whether Heraclitus was, or was not, a materialist. I do not completely rule out the possibility that for Heraclitus, unity-without-plurality was (literally) a reality of complete, homogeneous fire – though if this were so, it would not be fire in the sense that we, or his audience, understand it, since it would involve a complete homogeneity and lack of any possible location or point of reference which is at odds with the fire we encounter in our daily lives.⁶⁷³ Nor, however, do I argue in support of the position that unity-without-plurality is (literally) an undifferentiated, all-encompassing flame. The ontology that I have ascribed to Heraclitus is not, of course, compatible with a material model of reality, if only because the spatial extension involved in the latter implies divisibility even in the most homogeneous material. This fact, in itself, however, may not be relevant, from the point of view of history of philosophy. More specifically, the relevance of this fact depends on the question of whether Heraclitus himself recognized it. I don't think that the fragments provide us enough with information to answer this question – though, again, it seems that he at least recognized that no material with which we are familiar could constitute reality as unity-without-plurality.

In general, I am uneasy with the distinction between materialist and non-materialist when applied to Heraclitus, or the Presocratics in general. On the one hand, I don't think that this conceptual distinction was formulated by Heraclitus, or even by Parmenides,⁶⁷⁴ and this seems to

⁶⁷³ I leave to one side the question of whether this unknown fire might be something akin to αἰθήρ. I do, however, hold (*pace* Kirk 1962: 316; Robinson 1987: 97) that Heraclitus' cosmic fire is described in such a way as to privilege interpretation in terms of the "fire in the grate" (and to generate the resultant paradoxes), rather than "that purer kind of fire that in popular thought fills the upper heavens and is divine and immortal" (Kirk 1962: 316). Even if we bracket the issue of what element is actually intended in the early references to αἰθήρ, I think that Heraclitus draws upon the audience's every day experiences¹ of flame through his evocation of a cosmic fire that, even while "everliving" (ἀείζωος), has traits familiar from everyday fire, including the capacity to be extinguished (explicit in D85/B30; implicit in the exchanges of D87/B90), and the capacity for destruction (particularly through violent transitions D82/B64 [see Finkelberg 2017: 44]; D86/B31 [see Robinson 1987: 100; Kahn 1979: 142-143]; D84/B66; D87/B90).

⁶⁷⁴ This is an issue on which Parmenides scholars are divided (for a breakdown of the positions espoused by scholars for and against the view that *what-is* is corporeal, see Granger 2002: 104-105). My own (tentative) view is that Parmenides' spatial model of *what-is* as possessing a shape (spherical), a limit in space, and spatial continuity cannot be easily classed as a "metaphor" as we understand such things – though nor do I think that Parmenides

be a case where the lack of such a distinction within a thinker's conceptual scheme makes it difficult to apply that distinction with any precision.⁶⁷⁵ On the other hand, many of the traits of the corporeal are necessarily absent from reality as unity-without-plurality. Heraclitus may not have conceptualized these traits under the heading "embodiment" or "material reality" but he recognizes and zeroes in on a collection of perspectival features that partially define, or at least imply, embodiment: our physical constitution (D78/B61, etc.), our standpoint in space (D51/B60) and time (D68/B88; D67/B126), our cultural education and conditioning (as we would term it; D15/B5),⁶⁷⁶ our role (as agent vs. patient) in an action (D57/B58). He treats these perspectival features as occluding our cognition, and he regards them as something that must be overcome in order to apprehend the actual nature of reality, from which the kinds of distinctions that allow for, e.g., spatial location, are excluded. In this sense, he views reality as incorporeal.

understood reality as spherical in the sense of any spherical object we know (he would not have overlooked the problem of what lay outside the limit of the sphere). On my view, the model suggests that spatial homogeneity (the fact that no part of what-is is rarer or denser than any other) is a genuine concern for him – which implies that *what-is* is spatially extended. Yet Parmenides also seems to have recognized that spatial extension implies divisibility. His insistence on spatial homogeneity seems to have represented his attempt at a solution to this. Just as a *what-is* that is always "now" has a temporal character of sorts, yet cannot be broken down into different temporal units, so, Parmenides may have argued, a spatially extended *what-is* that is completely homogeneous does not admit of divisions because there is no reason for "cutting" in one place rather than in another. (See Collobert 1993: 278 and *passim* on this tension in Parmenides' use of *vōv*). This, in my view, represents another example of the uneasy and difficult-to-pinpoint space the Presocratics occupied between concrete and abstract thought. There is a sense in which Parmenides (again, as I understand him) is offering an image of reality as incorporeal, lacking all the usual characteristics by which we understand spatial extension. At the same time, he could only conceptualize such a reality corporeally, through the idea of spatial extension. If this is a metaphor, it is not the modern sort of philosophical metaphor – since in Parmenides' case, the image by which the idea is expressed cannot be cashed in, either by Parmenides or by Parmenides' audience, for the idea conceived non-imagistically.

⁶⁷⁵ See, e.g., Moravcsik 1991: 557; Rankin 1994: 291. For a discussion of the problematic issue of "materialism" in pre-Platonic philosophy, given the absence of a conceptual distinction between form and matter, see, e.g., Prier 1973: 24.

⁶⁷⁶ These are features of embodiment insofar as they are necessary components to human existence, in part because they arise from one's geographical and temporal location. See Osborne 2003 and Adoméas 1999 for a defence of these fragments as more than mere criticisms of convention. Heraclitus did not, at least according to the (not especially reliable) biographical accounts we have, travel widely – unlike his predecessors, Xenophanes and Hecataeus. Yet like both, he seems to use (the idea of) another cultural viewpoint to critique his own culture – without, of course, suggesting that the viewpoint of another culture might be genuinely superior. The introduction of the viewpoint of a cultural outsider is particularly apparent in the "if any [scil. other] human noticed him" (ἐἴ τις [scil. ἄλλος] αὐτὸν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιφράσαιτο) of D15/B5.

Heraclitus' own views on the presence or absence of corporeal traits (or lack thereof) in reality should be distinguished from the views of his audience. This distinction, I think, is an important one in interpreting the way in which Heraclitus uses imagery to point towards unity-without-plurality, since Heraclitus frequently exploits assumptions that are not his own in order to problematize certain viewpoints or to create paradoxes. The assumptions of Heraclitus' audience almost certainly correspond more closely with the idea that reality is material than the idea that it is immaterial (though, again, they would not formulate it in such terms).

Here is where the absence of material/immaterial conceptual distinction is important, since Heraclitus' paradoxes will be effective even for those audience members who have had the temporary experience of unity-without-plurality. Given that they lack the conceptual distinction between material and immaterial, the fact that they have apprehended reality as unity-without-plurality will not be sufficient to allow them to defuse certain kinds of paradoxes by applying the concept of immateriality. This is because when they return to the human view from the divine, they also return to the human conceptual scheme.⁶⁷⁷ Thus, Heraclitus is able to use paradoxes and images that assume a "materialist" reality in order to point towards unity-without-plurality, despite the fact that the latter lacks the material traits upon which his rhetorical and argumentative strategies depend.

The background assumption of this chapter is that a number of the fragments – in particular, those concerning elemental bodies and war – do, in fact, indicate that Heraclitus meant to give his audience some kind of cosmological story about the unity of all things, congruent with the nature of human thought. For this reason, it might be helpful to offer a few general reasons why

⁶⁷⁷ This is not, of course, meant to imply that there is a "divine conceptual scheme" – since, of course, unity-without-plurality is not conceptually expressible. It is simply meant as a reminder that, in returning to the human perspective, and, thus, to conceptual thought, the audience returns to *their own* late Archaic conceptual scheme.

Heraclitus might have chosen to tell such a story if it was not intended to be a description of the actual nature of reality. We might note, first off, that Heraclitus has a rather small number of clearly cosmological fragments.⁶⁷⁸ Moreover, it's worth remembering that the use of elemental bodies in pre-Heraclitean cosmologies could have acted as valuable tools for illustrating various sorts of unity-plurality relations, especially as associated with the unity of all things.⁶⁷⁹ This does not necessarily exclude the possibility that Heraclitus' cosmological fragments might really be about the cosmos or natural world (as modelled in accordance with human thought and experience¹) – that they are instead, for instance, ways of speaking of politics (as Diodotus held⁶⁸⁰), theology (as Heraclitus Homericus believed⁶⁸¹), or simply (as Charles Kahn put it) “the human condition.”⁶⁸² It is a precondition of the approach to unity-without-plurality described in Chapter 4, section II that the audience accepts the logos as a way of looking at the world that accords with the structure of their thought and makes a coherent whole from their experience¹. One of the demands that this might be thought to place on the logos is that it give evidence of its application to the world as it presents itself to human thought and experience¹ on the most

⁶⁷⁸ This is not to deny that we can increase this number if we begin from the assumption that Heraclitus is primarily an “Ionian cosmologist” and read the bulk of his fragments as veiled references to cosmological processes, following, e.g., the account found at Diog. Laert. 9.8-11. This approach has perhaps been met with increasing scepticism in the century since Cherniss 1935's sustained interrogation of the Peripatetic doxographical traditions by which such assumptions are generally informed. Cherniss' work is, arguably, somewhat hampered by its own anachronistic baggage, and Aristotle's value as a source has been more recently re-evaluated (see, e.g., Collobert 2002; Finkelberg 2017). Such issues, however, may pose a less significant challenge to the cosmology-focused testimonies than increasing recognition of the centrality of Heraclitus' unique mode of expression within his philosophical project, and the challenge that this creates for any interpretation that relies extensively on the doxographies (see Chapter 1, section I).

⁶⁷⁹ I've left out of this chapter the few references to astronomical bodies that we find among the verbatim fragments. While we can certainly apply the term “cosmological” to these fragments, they do not deal with the cosmos in the sense of an ordered whole, but merely to discrete planetary bodies. Moreover, any “cosmos-focused content” in the relevant fragments seems to be found in their affirmation that the cosmos that humans live in and attempt to define is governed by an order that tends to dissolve into progressively higher level unities, where the stars that give order to the night sky (D93/B120) give way to the light of the sun (D94/B99), whose surprisingly human limitations (D89b/B3; D89c/B94) place it in marked contrast to the all-encompassing fire through which reality as a whole is imaged (D83/B16; D85/B30).

⁶⁸⁰ Diog. Laert. 9.15.

⁶⁸¹ Heracl. *Alleg.* 24.3-5.

⁶⁸² Kahn 1964: 194.

general level, as a cosmos.⁶⁸³ For this reason, even a Heraclitus for whom reality was not, ultimately, a cosmos, might have reason to include in his account a cosmological story, in order to secure his audience's belief in the efficacy of logos, thus preparing them for an apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality.

I: Basic Principles of the Cosmological Story

In this section, I look briefly at a traditional outline of Heraclitus' cosmology. The specific details that would fill out this cosmology are obviously a matter of extensive debate, and it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to settle these debates. Instead, my goal in this section is to provide a general overview of some widely accepted principles of Heraclitus' cosmos, and to offer one common model of how these principles fit together. Specifically, I look at the character of and interrelation between strife, flux and opposition within Heraclitus' "cosmology." I explore how these three principles compose an order governed by the strife between opposites – where this strife both unifies the opposites and acts to sustain the order of the universe through the constant flux or oscillation between opposites. I then point out ways in which such a model of the cosmos embodies unity-in-plurality, and, by the same token, provides us with a model of the cosmos that follows from the order implicit in human thought and language (that is, the logos).

Two key fragments inform us that war governs the cosmos. D64/B53 tells us: "War is father of all and king of all. He reveals some as gods, some as humans; he makes some slaves and others

⁶⁸³ Kirk 1951: 39 notes "if, as [Heraclitus] maintained, there is a single Logos or formula of things, this Logos must explain meteorological and cosmological changes as well as the reciprocity between opposites in categories such as life-death and war-peace."

free.”⁶⁸⁴ “Father of all and king of all” (πάντων μὲν πατήρ...πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς) echoes Zeus’ epithet “father of gods and men.”⁶⁸⁵ In echoing this phrase, Heraclitus points towards an association between strife and the traditional, anthropomorphic governor of the affairs of humans and gods. By the same token, he also connects strife to his steerer of all things in D84/B6, which itself evokes but does not fully embody the traditional deity, taking the form of one of Zeus’ attributes (the lightning-bolt), yet shorn of much of the anthropomorphic trappings. The fact that war’s power over all things involves both a greater degree of structure and a greater scope than is manifested by the whims of the Homeric or Hesiodic Zeus is emphasized by B63/B80, in which war is understood as the justice (δίκη), and necessity (χρεών)⁶⁸⁶ that governs the existence or activity of all things.⁶⁸⁷ In D64/B53, war’s governing of all things is couched specifically in terms of its power over opposition – and, in particular, two of the major oppositions by which humans are defined. Human beings as a class are defined by their opposition to the gods (as well as their opposition to animals); one primary way in which individuals within the class “human” are defined is through the opposition between “slave” and “free.”⁶⁸⁸ By having war govern these oppositions, Heraclitus reminds his audience that even these fundamental defining oppositions are subject to the constant gaining and losing of ground that binds together two opposing armies. In a city like Archaic Ephesus, beset by waves of Lydian and Persian invasions, it would seem intuitive that, in a sense, one human can only be free because another is a slave – that is, because

⁶⁸⁴ πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους (reading ἔδειξε and ἐποίησε as gnomic aorists).

⁶⁸⁵ πατήρ ἀνδῶν τε θεῶν; e.g., *Il.* 11.182.

⁶⁸⁶ Kirk 1951: 38-39 understands necessity here in terms of a regular measure to which all things are subject, and which is the source of cosmic order.

⁶⁸⁷ See Lloyd 1992: 197-199. Zeus is unable to save his son from death in battle – or rather, he is persuaded not to do so, because of the disapproval of the other gods (*Il.* 16.443) – which suggests that they are capable of checking and limiting his power. He can also simply absent himself from rule by choice, leaving the field open to other powers to take over (as at *Il.* 13.1-4).

⁶⁸⁸ Jaeger 1948: 120 argues that “the division of the world into gods and men, slaves and free [is] according to Greek ideas the foundation of all order.”

the tide of war turned in his favour, and therefore also turned against others. Heraclitus reminds his audience of the instability of any such outcome. Slaves rebel, and empires fall: the Lydian empire was defeated in the mid-6th century (by the Persians); Ionia staged an (unsuccessful) revolt against the Persians at the end of the 6th century BCE; the Persian empire was defeated, and Ionian autonomy briefly recovered through the Greek victory at the Battle of Mycale in the early 5th century. Slaves become free men, and free men become slaves. Heraclitus even invites the audience to contemplate the idea that the opposition between gods and humans involves a similarly dynamic relationship between the losses and gains suffered by two opposed groups, since he tells us in D70/B62 that immortals and mortals live one another's deaths and die one another's life.⁶⁸⁹

The cosmic applicability of this pattern of opposites bound through dynamic conflict is reinforced by the fact that a similar mode of expression appears in a fragment concerning the oppositions among elements.⁶⁹⁰ D100/B36 tells us, "For souls it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth. From earth, water comes to be, and from water, soul."⁶⁹¹ Here, the opposition between water and soul(s), like the opposition between mortals and immortals, and humans and slaves, implies a conflict whereby each class or body gains members or mass as the other loses it, and vice versa. Moreover, Heraclitus' description of opposition within cycles of elemental change reinforces the idea that the conceptual relations emphasized by the logos' juxtaposition-in-conflict are also the operations that order the cosmos. In Chapter 2, I looked at

⁶⁸⁹ As Kahn 1985: 247 reminds us, the conception of the opposites as enemies is actually "presupposed by the role of Conflict and War in the fragments." This mode of conceptualizing the opposites "probably goes back to the earliest period of Ionian cosmology." Compare Anaximander's B1, where the opposites seem to figure as opponents in a protracted legal battle and retributive cycle (see, e.g., Gagarin 2016).

⁶⁹⁰ I take the view that (1) the bodies involved in the cycle of elemental changes should be understood as opposites; (2) the elemental cycle is deliberately presented by Heraclitus not only as a cycle, whereby souls change to water which changes to earth which changes to water which changes to soul, but also a reciprocal back and forth movement, whereby soul changes to water even while water changes to soul. In defence of this model of elemental opposition and reciprocal change, see, e.g., Vieira 2013 *passim*; Vlastos 1955: 351.

⁶⁹¹ ψυχῆσι θάνατος ὕδωρ γενέσθαι, ὕδατι δὲ θάνατος γῆν γενέσθαι, ἐκ γῆς δὲ ὕδωρ γίνεται, ἐξ ὕδατος δὲ ψυχή.

how the conceptual relation between opposites emphasized by the logos involves (implicitly) an interweaving of sameness and difference that links the opposites not only to each another, but to a network of interconnected oppositions, which likely formed part of Heraclitus' notion of the world as unity-in-plurality.⁶⁹² The cycle of elemental changes shows us that on the cosmic level too, the conflict and exchange between opposites occurs, not simply between discrete pairs of opposites, but also between sets of interrelated oppositions suggestive of unity-in-plurality. For instance, in D86/B31,⁶⁹³ fire is in opposition to sea, into which it changes and by which it is routed in the *πυρὸς τροπαί* (the turnings/changes/routes of fire), just as sea is changed into and routed by fire, in the form of the *πρηστήρ*. Yet sea is also in opposition to earth, as these two elements, too, change into and are routed by one another.⁶⁹⁴ The fact that these oppositions are all couched as the *πυρὸς τροπαί* does not, I think, require us to believe that each of these

⁶⁹² See Chapter 2, sections I and II.

⁶⁹³ "Turnings of fire: first sea, and from sea, half earth, half lightning storm. Sea spreads out and receives payment according to the same measure as it had before becoming earth." *πυρὸς τροπαί, πρῶτον θάλασσα, θαλάσσης δὲ τὸ μὲν ἥμισυ γῆ, τὸ δὲ ἥμισυ πρηστήρ. [...] θάλασσα διαχέεται, καὶ μετρέεται εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον, ὁκοῖος πρόθεν ἦν ἢ γενέσθαι γῆ.* I've followed Laks & Most's translation of *πρηστήρ* as "lightning-storm" in order to avoid a more precise, but awkward phrase such as "whirlwind with lightning."

I've translated *μετρέεται* as "receives payment" in part to avoid the (suggestive, but likely anachronistic) air of the mathematical axiom. (Compare Euclid, Definition 1: "Those lengths are said to commensurable which are measured by the same measure, while those [measures] are incommensurable which do not admit of any common measure." [*σὺμμετρα μεγέθη λέγεται τὰ τῷ αὐτῷ μέτρῳ μετρούμενα, ἀσύμμετρα δέ, ὧν μηδὲν ἐνδέχεται κοινὸν μέτρον γενέθαι*]).

⁶⁹⁴ The same double opposition is also visible in B36, where water is set in conflict with both earth and soul(s), from both of which it comes to be and into both of which it dies. My reading accepts the view that Heraclitus probably wanted us to envision only three elemental masses in B36 and B31; it would, however, be consistent with the view of Kahn 1979: 140 (who adopts a four-element theory, but also recognizes that Heraclitus is working deliberately with elemental exchanges between opposites). I am not convinced that a four-element theory had been systematized at the time when Empedocles chose earth, air, fire and water as his basic elements (with Love and Strife). I am sympathetic to the views offered by Lloyd 1964 concerning the gradual systematization of this theory, with Empedocles as a plausible starting point. One of the challenges to systematization may have been the nature, in Heraclitus' time, of the simple "bodies" (hot, cold, dry and moist) whose consistent qualitative presence in the complex elemental masses (earth, air, fire and water) were part of the systematized four-element theory as it eventually came to exist in Aristotle's time. In Heraclitus' time, these simple bodies were conceptualized as "things" in their own right (see Chapter 3, section I). This means that fire may, conceivably, act both as a complex body of multiple ingredients and a representative of "the hot" in its own right. I do recognize the difficulties represented by the effort to map the *ψυχή* of B31 onto both the *πῦρ* of B36 and the *ὕγρὸς* of D104/B117 (see, e.g., Robinson 1987: 104-105). Yet Heraclitus' symbols and key concepts are infamous for resisting tidy mappings, and the paradoxicality of the soul's nature seems to have particular importance in the context of a philosophy in which, on the one hand, the soul must be conceptualizable as belonging to an individual, but in which, on the other hand, the individual does not ultimately exist.

elements are, in some sense, “essentially fire” – but it does underscore the dependence of all three elements upon the others, and the fact that they all share the same resources (and are subject to “the same measure” or “the same account” [τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον]) which must be passed among them through the cycle, so that all are implicated in all. Within the framework of B31, sea is partially defined in terms of the two elements – fire and earth – into which it changes and by which it is routed (and which it changes from and routs in its turn). These define both its limits and its nature or account. The cyclical model of the cosmic masses, when expressed in terms of relations among interdependent opposites, offers us an unusually direct (for Heraclitus) illustration of reality as unity-in-plurality, both because of the apparently universality of the model (which, particularly when read in the context of Milesian elemental *archai*,⁶⁹⁵ gives the impression of encompassing all things through a few elemental masses) and because the very notion of a cycle implies the kind of part-part and part-whole relations that obtain within unity-in-plurality. Like the parts of the organism⁶⁹⁶ that provide the most familiar illustration of unity-in-plurality,⁶⁹⁷ the elemental masses are dependent on one another – and, more specifically, on their mutual strife – to support their continued order, activity, and existence or identity.⁶⁹⁸ Moreover, the cyclical model makes visible something that we usually only glimpse sidelong in Heraclitus’ other sets of interconnected opposites (e.g., animal, human and god in D77/B83): these sets of opposites together make up an ordered whole, a cosmos, the maintenance of which depends on both its constituent parts and on the dynamic relation between those parts.⁶⁹⁹ This is, again, a central feature of unity-in-plurality, according to which the unity of any given whole is a

⁶⁹⁵ We should probably treat the attempt to reduce the Milesian project to a search for such *archai* with some scepticism. It does, however, seem likely that Anaximenes, at least, offered a vision of all things as transformations of air. Anaximander may also have had an interest in presenting a world view that began from a bare minimum of simple bodies (elemental or otherwise). See, e.g., Kahn 1994: 126-133.

⁶⁹⁶ Kirk 1951: 38 proposes “organism” as the most appropriate translation for “cosmos” in Heraclitus.

⁶⁹⁷ See pp. 57-58.

⁶⁹⁸ See the discussion of B80 above.

⁶⁹⁹ This dynamism is, of course, one of the things that connects the unity of opposites to strife, as discussed below.

function of the dynamic relations among its parts, such that the loss of any part, or a ceasing of the processes of exchange among parts, would lead to a dissolution or loss of identity of the whole.

On the cosmology I've suggested above, war governs all things because it governs the opposites, and does so through its particular manner of holding things together in tension, such that they are at once interdependent and in conflict with one another, since any gain or increase on the part of one must be matched by loss on the part of the other. This understanding of Heraclitus' notion of war as an expression of the relation between the opposites is widespread in the literature.⁷⁰⁰ The position that the dynamic strife between opposites is the engine of flux is another widespread view,⁷⁰¹ in part because the strife between opposites, their constant gaining and losing of ground from and to one another, is a form of ongoing change that supports and maintains the order of things on both the human (as in B53) and the cosmic (as in B31) levels. This model of strife between opposites as change is perhaps most apparent in one of the primary physical-perceptual relations through which Heraclitus illustrates the unity of opposites – that is, continuous succession between opposites.⁷⁰²

Evidence for Heraclitean flux, then, can be found in the implicit role of change in sustaining the strife between opposites. It is also more explicitly present in the *kukeon* fragment (D59/B125), river fragments (D65a/B49a, D65c/B91, D65b/B12) and fire fragments (in

⁷⁰⁰ See, among others, Barnes 1979: 79; Wiggins 1982: 18-19, 14; Guthrie 1978: 447; Freeman 1966: 113; Kahn 1964: 197; Vlastos 1955: 358.

⁷⁰¹ E.g., Vlastos 1955: 357-359; Barnes 1979: 72-73; Kirk 1951: 38; Guthrie 1978: 447, 449.

⁷⁰² E.g., D67/B126, D25a/B57, D56/B111, D48/B67, where the opposites involved are evidently those involved in continuous succession, and D68/B88, D70/B62, where continuous succession is directly, if somewhat counterintuitively, asserted. Kirk 1951: 38 gives the role of continuous succession particular emphasis, treating it as the relation to which all other oppositions are reducible.

particular, B85/B30). We can find evidence of strife readily enough within these fragments, which, in addition, serve as illustrations of unity in plurality.

B125 runs: “Even the *kukeon* separates if it is not stirred.”⁷⁰³ The traditional reading of this fragment takes the disturbance or stirring of the drink⁷⁰⁴ as a form of violence or strife⁷⁰⁵ that maintains, through constant movement, the unity of a single multi-part material.⁷⁰⁶ The parts that compose the *kukeon* are dissimilar (goat cheese, barley, wine⁷⁰⁷) and must remain in continuous interaction and tension with one another, rather than dissolving into one another, in order for the unity of the *kukeon* to be maintained. Without this constant movement among parts, as Robinson puts it, “the *kukeon* as such would not exist.”⁷⁰⁸ In other words, the unity of the *kukeon* is, specifically, a unity in plurality.

As is widely noted in the literature, Heraclitus’ choice of fire as the element responsible for governing (e.g. B82/B64), measuring (D87/B90, perhaps D86/B31), judging (D84/B66), and even constituting (e.g. B85/B30, perhaps D48/B67, D86/B31) his cosmos is of a piece with the

⁷⁰³ καὶ ὁ κυκῆων δίσταται <μὴ> κινούμενος. I’ve tentatively accepted (against Laks & Most, whose decision on this fragment is similarly tentative) Bernays’ emendation of this fragment, which inserts a μὴ following δίσταται. The addition seems required by the context in which the fragment is quoted in Theophrastus, which concerns the notion of a cohesion dependent upon constant movement.

⁷⁰⁴ See, however, Dalby and Grainger 2000: 40-41, for an argument that the *kukeon* is not a drink but a porridge (with some implications for the conditions under which it would separate or fail to do so – and ones that may speak against Bernays’ emendation).

⁷⁰⁵ The word κυκῆων also evokes strife through its verbal cognate κυκάω (LSJ, s.v., A.II).

⁷⁰⁶ See, e.g., Kahn 1979: 194. Both Kirk 1962: 256 and Guthrie 1978: 449 emphasize that the strife between opposites is implicit here.

⁷⁰⁷ Plutarch *De garr.* 17.511 tells an anecdote in which a *kukeon* is mixed by Heraclitus using water in place of wine. This is likely a reflection, not of the actual constitution of the drink, but of a tendency within the biographical tradition to depict Heraclitus as antagonistic towards the basic appetites and desires that help to weave a person into the fabric of society. (This includes, for instance, the stories claiming that he gave up his hereditary kingship, and that he left behind human society to live in the mountains, and that he subsisted off weeds and grasses.) The appropriate watering of wine is an expression of σωφροσύνη. Insufficient watering of wine is an expression of license. Excessive watering of wine is an expression of miserliness and/or an antisocial rejection of pleasure. The complete elimination of wine from the mixture takes this to the extreme – the wine has been so thoroughly watered that it has vanished entirely.

⁷⁰⁸ Robinson 1987: 172. See also Marcovich 1967: 157; Kirk 1962: 256.

view that change is one of the basic structural principles of the cosmos.⁷⁰⁹ It is the counterpart of both the river and the *kukeon* and provides an even more emphatic illustration of the idea that the unity and identity of a thing – that is, its very existence – could depend upon constant change. A fire’s continued existence depends upon constant interchange among the materials that constitute it, through its consumption of fuel and exhalation of waste gases (made visible through smoke). Similarly, the only kind of fire in which the “parts” – that is, the flames – have ceased to flow through one another is a fire that has been extinguished. Fire also offers an illustration of strife,⁷¹⁰ not only through its association with destruction (and, in particular, the destruction wrought by an invading army), but because its rapid and visible change draws attention to the inherent conflict between its continued existence and its destruction. As long as the fire continues to burn, it not only changes its shape, but changes its material (again, through the consumption of fuel and the exhalation of waste gases), so that in the very act of sustaining itself, it destroys itself (and vice versa). In other words, the fire’s continued life depends upon and, is in conflict with, its death. Moreover, some of the key associations with fire from the literary tradition are bound up with strife – or, more specifically, with the activity of warriors in moments of glory, destruction and hubris.⁷¹¹

The presence of opposition in fire’s strife is superficially less obvious (at least if we leave aside the life/death conflict).⁷¹² In fragment D85/B30, where fire constitutes the whole cosmos,

⁷⁰⁹ See, e.g., Barnes 1979: 67; Freeman 1966: 114; McKirahan 2010: 136; Burnet 1930: 145; Robinson 1987: 97-98; Kahn 1964: 196.

⁷¹⁰ Wiggins 1982: 12-15 treats fire as both an expression of the “struggle between [opposed] elemental processes” and the guarantor of stability through that struggle.

⁷¹¹ See Clarke 1995: 141-142 for this image pattern as it appears through the *Iliad*, with citations. See also LSJ, s.v. *πῶρ* for the metaphoric use of the word to refer to unsettled or violent psychological states (and to things that cause such states).

⁷¹² See, however, B67, for indications of how a fire that is finally one and homogeneous might nonetheless be experienced^{1 and 2} in terms of oppositions. See Hussey 1999: 100 for an examination of other possible layers of opposition at work in this fragment. See also Mondolfo 1958: 77 for the view that the principle of unity of opposites

the strife implicit in that fire is not, on the surface, a strife between opposites, as between water and fire. It is, rather, the strife of fire against fire – with some parts of the fire being extinguished, and others being kindled⁷¹³ – that sustains the ever-living (ἀείζωος) cosmic fire. There is an implicit opposition here, however, between the parts of the fire (which are kindled and extinguished) and the fire as a whole (which is ever-living). The opposition between part and whole overlaps with a favourite opposition of Heraclitus’ – the opposition between one and all (or one and many). This latter opposition does possess the kind of reciprocity seen in the strife between opposites, since the one repeatedly appears as exchanged for the many/all (D13/B29, D14/B121, D87/B90). Such an exchange between one and all is certainly visible in D87/B90⁷¹⁴ – but in this case, the opposition between one and all is not between individual flames and fire as a whole, but between fire as single, homogenous one and all other things in their variety and multiplicity.⁷¹⁵ In D85/B30, by contrast, the opposition between whole and part does not seem to involve the reciprocal gaining and losing of ground involved in the usual strife between opposites – that is, while the parts of the fire do, in some sense, lose ground to the whole, there’s no obvious sense in which the whole similarly loses ground to the parts. This is, in fact, in line with the problematic nature of the one/all opposition. As argued in Chapter 4, section II, this is

is inherent in fire itself. See Kahn 1964: 196 for the view that fire expresses the “cosmic flux between opposites” through the relation to the cold from which its heat emerges and to which it returns.

⁷¹³ This interpretation, of course, only applies if it is the case that part of the fire is being kindled while another part of it is extinguished – that is, if one understands the “measures” by which the fire is kindled as quantitative rather than temporal. On the quantitative reading, portions of the fire are constantly going out, while others are being kindled. On the temporal reading, the fire as a whole is extinguished and relit at intervals. While the quantitative reading is accepted by most contemporary commentators, more recent supporters of the temporal reading include Finkelberg 2017: 46-48; Kahn 1979: 145. Robinson 1987: 96-98 offers an important reminder that Heraclitus may not have wanted us to choose between the quantitative and temporal readings, since the “measures” can, in fact, be understood as simultaneously quantitative and temporal.

⁷¹⁴ “There is an exchange of all things for fire, and fire for all things, as goods for gold and gold for goods.” (πυρὸς τε ἀνταμοιβή τὰ πάντα καὶ πῦρ ἀπάντων ὅκωσπερ χρυσοῦ χρήματα καὶ χρημάτων χρυσός.) Translation follows Kirk 1962.

⁷¹⁵ This is in keeping with the notion that the coming-to-be of an individual is depicted by Heraclitus as a “death” in relation to the one (that is, unity-without-plurality), just as the disappearance of that individual into the one is depicted as a death from the point of view of the individual. See Freeman 1966: 124. As Freeman notes, this reading of Heraclitus also offers a compelling interpretation of D70/B62 and D100/B36. See also Betegh 2007b: 27-29.

both Heraclitus' core opposition in articulating the view of the world as unity-in-plurality (that is, a cosmos), and an opposition that fails to act in accordance with the rules of equality and interdependence that govern opposites: "one" exceeds "all" both on the ethical and the ontological plane.

For the key opposition in this fragment, we will have to return to the death/life conflict mentioned above. This is both a conflict between things (those portions of the fire being kindled and those being extinguished) and between actions (kindling and extinguishing). In fact, this shows a close parallel between the oppositions implicit in fire and those implicit in the cosmic masses, since fire is maintained by its own constant coming to be and ceasing to be, which is also the ceasing to be of fuel and the coming to be of smoke,⁷¹⁶ just as sea is maintained by the ceasing to be of its opposites, water and earth, which is also its own coming to be, and by its own ceasing to be, which is also the coming to be of water and earth.⁷¹⁷

Heraclitean fire, then, offers another possible illustration of unity-in-plurality, expressed in terms of flux through striving opposites. In addition, the scope of Heraclitean fire is more explicitly cosmological when compared with either the *kukeon* or the river. That is, while the application of the latter two to the cosmos requires us to understand them first as illustrations or as symbols, Heraclitus actually tells us that the nature of his fire is the nature of the cosmos – or, rather, he tells us in B30 that "this world order" (κόσμον τόνδε) *is* "fire ever-living" (πῦρ αἰεζῶον).

⁷¹⁶ See also McCabe 2015: 60, who identifies fire as an instance of the unity of opposites between "ever-living" and "ever-dying."

⁷¹⁷ This is not to deny that opposition and separation does begin to break down in Heraclitean fire, though I believe that the tension between the construal of fire as made up of distinct portions and the construal of fire as single and homogeneous is a deliberate one. Heraclitus carefully exploits the fact that fire can be used to represent unity-in-plurality and yet is, in some ways, an unstable and problematic representation of unity-in-plurality. As I argue in section III, this dual nature of fire makes it possible for him to use it as an expression of the cosmos even while undermining the very idea of a cosmos by pointing towards unity-without-plurality.

A final representation of flux as driven by strife between opposites, and as expressive of unity-in-plurality, can be found in Heraclitus' river fragment(s). One source of this fragment's⁷¹⁸ psychagogic value is that it is capable of expressing the relationship between the nature of individuals and the nature of the cosmos. This is particularly important given that, as I have noted throughout this thesis, the primary way in which Heraclitus expresses the nature of reality as unity-in-plurality is through instances of the unity of opposites expressive of the nature of particular individuals. Moreover, Heraclitus' river fragment does not simply provide an illustration of unity-in-plurality. Rather, the fragment connects the nature of the specific exemplar (i.e., the river) to the nature of the cosmos in such a way as to more directly facilitate the transition from a model of reality rooted in plurality-in-unity to a model of reality rooted in unity-in-plurality.

The first problem facing any interpretation of the river is philological: which of the three main contenders (D65a/B49a, D65c/B91a, D65b/B12) should we take as authentic? Laks & Most, whose ordinarily conservative judgement has formed much of the philological ground of this thesis, accept two river fragments as verbatim: D65a/B49a and D65b/B12. However, in this instance, I side against Laks & Most with what is now the majority view: most editions from the mid-twentieth century onwards allow for the authenticity of B12 alone.⁷¹⁹ Yet I also accept the

⁷¹⁸ I take the view that there is (probably) only one authentic river fragment. See below.

⁷¹⁹ See, e.g., Kirk 1962, Marcovich 1967; Graham 2010; McKirahan 2010. Robinson 1987: 112-114 accepts B12 as well as the first half of B49a (and allows the second half of B49a may also be authentic). Kahn 1979 accepts both B12 and B91, though he himself acknowledges that B12 is "the only statement on the river whose wording is unmistakably Heraclitean" (167). McCabe 2015 accepts all three on the basis of the dialectical progression that she sees the three as embodying. Conche 1986: 459 similarly accepts all three, and, like McCabe, takes the view that the three fragments are neither independent of one another nor uniform in their meaning. This general position, which is similar to that of Sterne 1991, is one with which I am in sympathy on a methodological level, though I think in this case the philological evidence supports B12, is against B49a, and is at least uncertain with respect to B91. Barnes 1979: 66 thinks that the attempt to determine a verbatim fragment has acted as a "smokescreen" and believes that we can get to the philosophical core (or quasi-argument) without worrying about the philological and rhetorical details.

view, held by both McCabe and Sterne, that Heraclitus uses the river image to support a sequence of interpretations. Unlike McCabe and Sterne, I think that he achieves this, not by describing the river multiple times in slightly different ways, but – with characteristic economy – by describing it once in a way that invites multiple construals. The audience encountering B12 initially finds in it a description of the nature first, of a particular individual (the river), then of individuals in general, and at last of reality as a whole. Similarly, they may initially find in B12 an expression of plurality-in-unity. On further reflection, however, they see that it might be better understood as an expression of unity-in-plurality.

Vlastos 1955: 339-343 argues for a fragment that combines elements of B12, B91, B49a, and offers the surprising view that B12 is “the flattest of the three” and thus the one least likely to be authentic (343). He seems, however, to overlook the carefully constructed ambiguity in the first four words of the fragment, along with the systematic use of both balance/symmetry and imbalance/asymmetry. The fragment falls into two halves which are balanced in that both offer distinct-but-parallel sequences of phonic patterns, with the liquid flow of vowels and sibilance that dominates ποταμοῖσι τοῖσιν αὐτοῖσιν ἐμβαίνουσιν (Kahn 1979: 167) emphasizing continuity as each word runs into the next, and the staccato march of the dactylic stresses and sharply defined dental consonants in ἕτερα [καὶ] ἕτερα ὕδατα emphasizing distinctions. This balance is apt in the context of a fragment expressive of the unity of opposites: the two halves of the fragment express contrasting concepts (the “same”, αὐτοῖσιν, in the first half; “different”, ἕτερα, in the second half) using similar techniques, in such a way as to give both concepts apparently equal emphasis. Yet the emphasis is unequal in other ways, and perhaps ultimately privileges difference over sameness: ἕτερα appears in the sentence’s main clause, αὐτοῖσιν in its subordinate clause. The former appears twice, the latter only once. Mouraviev 2006, III.3.B/iii: 59, like McCabe accepts all three fragments as genuine. Mouraviev is, I think, right in his suspicion that at least some scholars may have rejected B49a and B91 as the Platonic reading of Heraclitean flux became increasingly controversial. I think, however, that if we leave aside doctrinal reasons, we are still left with markedly Platonic features in the language and conceptual moves of the latter two fragments. For instance, the εἰμὲν τε καὶ οὐκ εἰμὲν of B49a does not just neatly encapsulate the Platonic reading of Heraclitus at *Tht.* 151e-183b and *Cra.* 439c-440c, but also does so in language which may be more Platonic than Heraclitean (compare, e.g., *Resp.* 479a-e). In particular, this kind of bald pairing of contradictories is very rare in Heraclitus and, I would argue, is used nowhere else as it is here – in a form that, though conceptually provocative, is stylistically and semantically flat. That is, there is no real expressive or linguistic tension in this use of contradictories as a mode of expression – the tension is exclusively the doxastic or logical tension between the common sense conviction that the statement expressed can’t be true (it can’t be true that we both exist and don’t exist) and the need to make sense of how it might be true. The tension and compression typical of Heraclitus is also slightly diluted by the number of connectives found in B49a. As Robb 1983: 198, the presence of an unusual (for Heraclitus) number of connecting particles is one of the first signs that one may not be dealing with a verbatim fragment. Τε καὶ is a very unusual expression for Heraclitus; it is particularly surprising to find it twice in one fragment. The tension of the fragment is also diminished by its uninterrupted symmetry: exact repetition of an unexceptionably prosaic grammatical structure in the main clause (ἐμβαίνουσιν τε καὶ οὐκ ἐμβαίνουσιν, εἰμὲν τε καὶ οὐκ εἰμὲν), which in each case involves the exact repetition a word (ἐμβαίνουσιν, εἰμὲν) linked by the exact same formula (τε καὶ οὐκ). Plato’s (often) lucid and conversational writing is far more likely to include this kind of well-formed instance of Attic prose style.

The text of B12 runs as follows: ποταμοῖσι τοῖσιν αὐτοῖσιν ἐμβαίνουσιν ἕτερα καὶ ἕτερα ὕδατα ἐπιρρεῖ.⁷²⁰ The beginning of the fragment presents us with an ambiguity – it isn’t clear whether τοῖσιν αὐτοῖσιν is to be read with ποταμοῖσι or with ἐμβαίνουσιν – that is, whether the adjective “same” ought to modify those who step into rivers, or the rivers into which they step.⁷²¹ Thus the fragment might be translated: “For those who step into the same waters, different and different waters flow,” or: “For those same men who step into the waters, different and different waters flow.”⁷²²

On a first-pass reading, B12 expresses an insight into the nature of rivers, and, as such, is (potentially) compatible with plurality-in-unity. The key features of plurality-in-unity, as described in Chapter 1, section III, are that individuals that belong to the same category are: (1) numerically distinct, independent entities (and therefore a plurality); and (2) uniform with respect to some common nature (and therefore a unity). If we take B12 as an expression of plurality-in-unity, Heraclitus is offering a description of the nature unique to rivers (but which all rivers share in common). More specifically, rivers retain their unity and numerical identity through time on the basis of certain basic structural continuities (though these structural continuities, given the time period, would likely bleed over into what we would consider merely material continuities).⁷²³ Thus, the self-identity⁷²⁴ of the river (the fact that it is “the same river”)

⁷²⁰ I follow Laks & Most, along with most modern commentators, in omitting καὶ ψυχὰι δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ὑγρῶν ἀναθυμῖνεται from B12 (“And souls vaporize from moisture”), which may be part of Cleanthes’ interpretation (perhaps inspired, as Kahn 1979: 260 suggests, by D100/B36), or may have been part of a separate aphorism. See also Robinson 1987: 84. (Cf., however, Conche 1986: 452.)

⁷²¹ See Graham 2009: 86 on the complex literary engineering required to create this ambiguity, and, given this, the likelihood that both meanings should be taken as part of the fragment’s significance.

⁷²² I’ve chosen to treat the dative here as a dative of reference, where the “for those who...” is to be understood as “in the eyes of those who...” My interpretation is, however, also compatible with the more traditional locative (e.g., Kirk 1962; Marcovich 1967) and temporal readings (e.g., Kahn 1979; Robinson 1987).

⁷²³ Compare the account of plurality-in-unity in Chapter 1 at pp. 58-59 (and its reframing and application to the character powers model in Chapter 2 at pp. 104-118). Note that “structural” here is meant here in a broad sense that can encompass a continuum of more or less abstract models of “form.” At one end of the continuum, we find the kind of unsystematized notions of “type”/“form” that belong to the character powers model (see pp. 104-111), that begins to move towards an interest in something more systematic and abstract perhaps as early as the Milesians, who

depends upon constant change of waters (the fact that “different and different waters flow”).⁷²⁵

The nature of the river – what makes a river a river – is to be found in this change.⁷²⁶ The issue becomes more complex, however, if we consider the fragment as an expression of the nature of individuals in general. Heraclitus, after all, rarely shows himself as interested in the unique nature of a particular kind of individual *as such*. Rather, his interest tends to be in the *patterns* that are exhibited in the natures of individuals of different kinds. This is readily illustrated in his various examples of the unity of opposites. These are not merely, or even primarily, concerned to draw out the unique nature that belongs (for instance) to paths alone (as on the plurality-in-unity model), but in the kinds of patterns that the nature of paths shares with the nature of days or the nature of bows. Thus we might suspect that the kind of patterned unity that belongs to the river through constant “exchange of matter” also maintains the existence of other “middle-sized objects.”⁷²⁷ The river illustrates a pattern common to all varieties of individuals,⁷²⁸ and in telling

may have attempted to create a kind of pattern model of structure through a kind of “recipe” or set of ingredients (a tendency which more clearly present, and on a more abstract level, later in Empedocles and Philolaus); with Heraclitus, the importance of the ingredients begins to give way to the importance of the relationship between them. The notion of structural continuity, while dominant in the river fragment, probably cannot be wholly divested of its “material elements” (as we would label them) given that the conceptual distinction between form and matter distinction is not yet current (as observed in the introduction to this chapter). See also Moravcsik 1991.

⁷²⁴ See pp. 55-62, 78-81, 121, for discussions of the concept of “identity” and its relation to Heraclitus’ thought. I use the phrases “self-identity” and “self-sameness” for the sake of clarity, but they should be understood as a potentially misleading shorthand. Heraclitus’ concept of sameness was neither so abstract nor articulated into quite the same conceptual parts as these terms suggest. “Same” seems to have been used by Heraclitus in ways that sometimes run together concepts within the general domain of “likeness” with the concept of “being one [thing].”

⁷²⁵ I do not deal here with the ways in which the alternative translation (where “same” attaches to “men” rather than to rivers) would bear upon this cosmological interpretation. However, the alternatives (along with the dative of reference) reiterate a recurrent feature of logos-oriented thought. Its picture of reality (as unity-in-plurality) appears, initially, to be a picture of reality as it is in itself. However, it is ultimately recognized as a reflection of human cognitive and perceptual processes.

⁷²⁶ See, e.g., Wiggins 1982: 24-26; Barnes 1979: 77-78. The latter provides a particularly extreme rendering of the quasi-Aristotelian model which one might apply to this kind of flux (complete with some problematic Aristotelean conceptual baggage). Barnes identifies a thing’s φύσις with an essence dependent on the constant change (maintained by strife between opposites) of the “identifiable constituent stuff or amalgam of stuffs” that “all identifiable things have” where the changes are “essential to the being of all that the stuff constitute” (78). The Heraclitean φύσις for Barnes is a Lockean “real essence” – that is, the set of properties that make up the identity of a particular kind of thing, and which also give the idea or concept of such a kind: “The real essence of a sort is given by its fundamental constitution, by those features or that structure which explains the remaining properties of items of the sort and without which nothing is an item of the sort” (77).

⁷²⁷ Graham 2008: 175.

us what it is to be an individual, unified thing of a specific sort (i.e., a river), it also tells us about what it is to be an individual, unified thing of *any* sort.

Yet if the river fragment offers insight into the basic nature of all “middle-sized objects,” it would be surprising if its concerns ended with such objects. As multiple fragments show us, Heraclitus’ interest in “all things” leads him to “one thing”⁷²⁹ – meaning that, if the scope of the fragment is wide enough to include all individuals, then individuals as such are unlikely to be its end-point. The maintenance of both the river’s sameness and the constant flow of different waters can be understood both in terms of changes internal to the river (the flow of water from one point to another) and exchanges between the river and its environment (evaporation and precipitation, the dynamic relationship between a river and the network of bodies of water to which it belongs, etc.) On this reading, then, the river expresses the unity both of reality as a whole and of differentiated individuals within it: the dynamism that maintain the river’s unity, along with the unity of other kinds of individuals, is also the source of the opposition and change that unifies all things into a cosmos. Thus, for Kirk, the connection between the change undergone by a river and the river’s unity or identity makes it an ideal illustration for a cosmos in which balance and unity is maintained through constant change and exchange among parts, since, in a river “only because the waters flow regularly and replace each other by balanced amounts is identity preserved.”⁷³⁰ Graham, similarly, emphasizes the patterned order that

⁷²⁸ See, e.g., Barnes 1979: 77, who also notes that flux and opposition go hand-in-hand in this context.

⁷²⁹ See Chapter 5, section II.

⁷³⁰ Kirk 1962: 377; see also 376-380. For Kirk, this involves, for both the river and the cosmos, the “preservation of...quantitative material proportions” which make it possible to maintain “the balance of its essential material constituents” (378-379). See also Kahn 1979: 167-168. Robinson 1987: 84 argues that rivers offer an illustration of the relation between unity and change which is also characteristic of the cosmos, since “the river is a striking example of precisely that which maintains structural identity and unity while undergoing constant and predictable change of content.”

belongs both to “middle-sized objects” and to the cosmos as a whole.”⁷³¹ This cosmic order is, more specifically, the order of unity-in-plurality – and here, again, we can see the presence of the other elements of Heraclitus’ cosmological story, in the form of the strife between opposites. The fragment is built around an opposition between the “same” (αὐτός) river, and the “different” (ἕτερος) waters.⁷³² The river remains the “same” – that is, it retains its nature and unity as a river – through constant difference (or the constant change of waters). Yet the “different and different” waters require a stable context in which such differences may appear.⁷³³ Moreover, there is a sense in which not only the unity of the river, but also its dynamism or flux, depends upon the conflict between these opposites – underscoring the fact that, like the *kukeon* and the fire,⁷³⁴ it is an illustration of the maintenance of unity-in-plurality through the strife between opposites.⁷³⁵ The constant influx and passage of different waters depends upon certain elements that maintain the sameness of the river (e.g., the riverbed, the banks). Yet the faster the waters change – the more “difference” appears in the river – the more that these “sameness”-maintaining features are eroded.⁷³⁶

⁷³¹ Graham 2008: 174-175 emphasizes the importance of this kind of patterned organization where the constituent matter is undergoing constant change and transformation (172), interpreting B12 as addressing the fact that “different things (here: material components) can make up the same thing (structures)...The structure supervenes on the matter and outlasts it, attaining at least a relative permanence through its channelling of the ephemeral matter” (174).

⁷³² E.g., Marcovich 1967: 213.

⁷³³ Such a “stable context” might be described in terms of a substrate (in the sense of a consistent bearer underlying changing properties). However, given the issues with the application of such concepts in Heraclitus’ time period (see Chapter 3, section I), I prefer to speak of “context”, or “pattern”, or “structure”.

⁷³⁴ For a detailed and systematic overview of the (widely observed) parallel between the flux of Heraclitus’ river and Heraclitus’ cosmic fire, see, e.g., Conche 1986: 454.

⁷³⁵ The view of the river as expressing the relation between individuals and the cosmos is related to the model of the body as a unity-in-plurality found in multiple Hippocratic works, where part-part and part-whole interdependence does not rule out the consideration of individual parts as things with their own natures (albeit natures that must be understood with reference to the relations that help to structure them). See Kouloumentas 2018: 55-56.

⁷³⁶ It is tempting to go beyond unity-in-plurality here, towards a model of reality as pure process – since such a model would bring us closer to unity-without-plurality. However, as argued in Chapter 3, section I, Heraclitus’ illustrations of the unity of opposites, or of the interrelations between sets of oppositions, prompt only a *comparatively* abstract recognition of unity-in-plurality, which the audience is invited to generalize across all things. Their dependence upon concrete thinking remains sufficiently strong that their conceptualization of this unity remains bound up with the natures of particular things as revealed in the unity of opposites (and, at the same time,

The thumbnail cosmology presented above, while relatively conventional, is by no means universally accepted in every point. I have generally tried to adhere to well-accepted ideas about the structure of Heraclitus' cosmological thought – the conception of the Heraclitean cosmos as guided by opposition, strife, and flux is one that has achieved a broad consensus among commentators. I've suggested that this model of the cosmos, with the dynamically interdependent part-part and part-whole relations that it implies, offers a helpful illustration of unity-in-plurality. This, of course, does not show that the purpose of Heraclitus' apparent cosmology is to use unity-in-plurality as a “stepping-stone” between the audience's initial view of reality as plurality-in-unity and their eventual apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. If, however, the audience's acceptance of unity-in-plurality (and of the logos-oriented thought with which it is bound up) depends upon their recognition of it as a model that makes the best sense of their experience¹, then we might expect him to provide a cosmic picture roughly along the lines sketched here. That is, we would expect him to provide a cosmology that motivates an acceptance of the unity-in-plurality model of reality – and we would expect him to provide such a cosmology even if he believed that the nature of reality was fundamentally at odds with the notion of cosmology (and with the notion of a cosmos). At the same time, we might also anticipate that such a cosmology would include self-undermining elements. This would not seem to be an absolute requirement, since other aspects of Heraclitus' epistemology –

with the unity of particular pairs of opposites as revealed in those particular things). Heraclitus does not provide the audience with the kinds of conceptual resources that would allow them to fully follow out the logical implications of unity-in-plurality. In particular, it seems unlikely that the model of the world as pure process, in which all distinctions have merely nominal reality, would be conceptually available to him at this time. It is, to begin with, at odds with his treatment of distinction- and category-making, which, arising through and with our basic physiological, affective, and volitional processes and constitution, have been shown to involve a reflexive, pre-theoretic realism. The “un-making” of that realism, by entertaining nominalism with respect to *any* concepts (much less concepts in general) would require a degree of abstract conceptualization that would seem to be inaccessible to Heraclitus in his time. See Chapter 3 for further discussion. (However, for more radical views of flux than those canvassed above, see Conche 1986: 453; Fränkel 1973: 384-385; Burnet 1930: 145-146; Popper 1963: 386-387, 391-392; Hegel 1995: 286-287.)

specifically, the perspective juxtapositions – are responsible for transitioning the audience from unity-in-plurality to unity-without-plurality.⁷³⁷ However, given Heraclitus' tendency to work multiple and layered meanings into his fragments, it would be surprising if this cosmological model of reality as unity-in-plurality did not, in some way, point towards unity-without-plurality, and/or towards the breakdown of the unity-in-plurality view of reality. In the remaining part of this chapter, I will look at the ways in which Heraclitus' cosmology does just that.

II: Using Cosmological Imagery to Point Beyond Cosmology

Thus far, I have attempted to show that Heraclitus' cosmological story is compatible with an ontology from which the very notion of a cosmos – an ordered whole of differentiated parts – is excluded. I have argued that we need not necessarily treat Heraclitus' cosmology as a literal statement of his beliefs about the way in which reality is structured. I have examined how Heraclitus' cosmological account, when it is not taken as a direct expression of his position on the nature of reality, might play an important role in the epistemology and ontology laid out in this thesis. In the following section, I look at ways in which Heraclitus might be understood as pointing his audience in this direction through devices built into the cosmology itself that complicate the attempt to treat that cosmology as descriptive of the true nature of reality. In order to do this, I focus on Heraclitus' treatment of the element that he presents as constituting, unifying, and structuring the cosmos – that is, fire. I argue that, although Heraclitus depicts fire in such a way that it contains and expresses essential elements of his cosmological story, he also uses it to challenge that story. I examine the importance of measure in permitting fire to play its pivotal role within Heraclitus' cosmological story, arguing that it is only by emphasizing the connections between fire and limit, and between fire and measure, that Heraclitus can suppress

⁷³⁷ See especially Chapter 4, section II.

the audience's common sense ideas about fire⁷³⁸ in order to: (1) overcome the ordinary associations between large scale fires and disorder; and, (2) account for the identification of fire, as an element that often appears to be undifferentiated, with a cosmic order in which opposition (and therefore distinctions) plays an essential role. I examine ways in which Heraclitus ultimately brings these common sense associations and assumptions back to the fore.

Specifically, I argue that the emphasis upon fire as expressive of measure and limit actually draws out a tension between fire as representative of Heraclitus' cosmos and some hard-to-ignore facts about fire's behaviour. Ordinary experience, as well as associations from Archaic poetry, tell us that fire tends to annul distinctions and overstep limits.⁷³⁹ Yet this is incompatible with a cosmos that, again, depends upon the distinctions without which oppositions cannot be sustained. Moreover, since measure, too, depends upon distinctions, Heraclitus' emphasis on the interrelations between measure and fire, and the resulting puzzles, further underline these points of tension and incompatibility. The latter, combined with Heraclitus' treatment of fire as that which brings together the key features of his cosmological story, ultimately undermines that cosmological story.

As argued in section I above, Heraclitean fire contains and expresses the essential components of Heraclitus' cosmological story. It embodies the principle of flux, since the continued existence of a fire depends upon constant movement and change. It represents strife both through its literary and pragmatic associations, and through its vivid illustration of a continuing life that depends upon constant death. It expresses the principle of the unity of opposites both by combining in a single image the opposition between coming-to-be and

⁷³⁸ In this section I will not directly address the question of whether Heraclitean fire might be understood as αἰθήρ. See, however, a brief discussion of this problem at p. 272.

⁷³⁹ Compare McCabe 2015: 60: "the notion that the all-consuming fire could underlie anything is extremely implausible."

ceasing-to-be, and the opposition between “one” and “all”. This latter opposition can also, in the case of D85/B30, be formulated in terms of the kind of part-whole relation that exists within Heraclitus’ model of unity-in-plurality. Since the order and unity of the Heraclitean cosmos is that of unity-in-plurality, this aspect of the cosmos-as-fire reinforces the interconnected nature of the three principles of the Heraclitean cosmology – i.e., strife, and flux, and the unity of opposites.

Fire, then, illustrates the three central principles of Heraclitus’ cosmological story. This is one reason why he can identify fire with the cosmos in D85/B30.⁷⁴⁰ It also helps to explain the emphatic significance he gives to this fragment through his use of epic formulae,⁷⁴¹ the investment of fire (as “everliving” [ἀείζωος]) with the key marker of divinity for the early Greeks,⁷⁴² and a weightiness and solemnity of style matched by few other fragments.⁷⁴³ Yet Heraclitus can neither identify fire with the cosmos, nor treat it as an expression of these three cosmological principles, without investing it with a nature that jars against with fire’s pragmatic and literary associations. Specifically, Heraclitus makes fire into a principle of measure. In B85/B30, this means that fire has measure inherent in it, allowing it to act as a world-*order*. It is, in addition, self-limiting or self-measuring.⁷⁴⁴

The fact that it is necessary to graft the notion of measure onto fire is nicely illustrated by commentators such as Burnet and Kirk, who seem to overlook the somewhat forced quality of

⁷⁴⁰ Kahn 1979: 132 stresses the significance of this fragment for Heraclitus’ cosmological story, identifying it, with D86/B31, as the giving us our “primary information on Heraclitus’ cosmological thought.”

⁷⁴¹ See, e.g., Kirk 1962: 311.

⁷⁴² Vlastos 1955: 366. See also Kahn 1979: 133, who notes that Heraclitus’ cosmic fire is “invested with the attributes of divinity: ‘it ever was and is and will be.’”

⁷⁴³ Kirk 1962: 311 argues for the centrality of the fragment on this basis, comparing its “complexity and discursiveness” to that of B1, and taking this as evidence that “this pronouncement was considered by Heraclitus as an especially important one.”

⁷⁴⁴ On the view of Kirk 1962: 306, 315, fire is the governing force that maintains a constant regular exchange among the elements, and that is itself regulated by these exchanges. Kahn 1979: 133-134 notes that the notion of an order that “no human or god made” implies that the cosmos-fire is self-ordered.

the connection, and who, instead, take fire as a natural expression of a principle of consistent quantities retained through the constant change of materials. As Burnet puts it: “The quantity of fire in a flame burning steadily appears to remain the same...And yet...it is always passing away in smoke, and its place is always being taken by fresh matter from the fuel that feeds it.”⁷⁴⁵ The observations Burnet makes here are applicable so long as the fire that is controlled and limited by human agency. Yet the fire described in D85/B30, in being identified with everything that is, hints at the kind of large-scale fire that we only encounter in out-of-control conflagrations in which the quantity of fire, along with the quantities of fuel consumed and smoke discharged, is subject to rapid and violent change. The only means by which this “threat” can be neutralized, on the conceptual level, is through the identification of the element to be controlled with that which controls it. It may not be the most intuitive identification, but it is a necessary one in the context of an ordered world where fire has primacy.⁷⁴⁶ Heraclitus invokes the connection or identification between measure and fire in three fragments: D85/B30, D87/B90, and D86/B31. Understood as judgement or governance, the fire-measure connection also appears in D82/B64, D84/B66, and D83/B16. In B90, fire measures the value of all things; in B16 and B66, it oversees and judges things; in B64, it governs. In both B31 and B30, fire measures both itself and the cosmos. In B30, the self-measuring character of fire is tied to its self-organizing character as a world-order (κόσμος) which “none of the humans or gods made.”⁷⁴⁷ Since the fire is also kindled in measures and quenched in measures,⁷⁴⁸ these measured changes that at least partly constitute its order must be ones imposed by the fire upon itself. B31 gives measure a

⁷⁴⁵ Burnet 1930: 145. See also Kirk 1962: 317-318.

⁷⁴⁶ See also Vlastos 1955: 364-365, who holds that Heraclitus is only able to give fire primacy in his cosmos by “imputing to fire the common measure.” Heraclitus’ motivation for making this connection, on Vlastos’ view, is an intuition that the cosmos ought to be made up of the same stuff as the human soul – which for Vlastos’ means that it must be made of fire.

⁷⁴⁷ οὔτε τις θεῶν οὔτε ἀνθρώπων ἐποίησεν

⁷⁴⁸ ἀπτόμενον μέτρα καὶ ἀποσβεννύμενον μέτρα

central place in the transformation of the cosmic masses (fire, sea, earth), by placing the measured changes⁷⁴⁹ of those bodies under the heading of “the turnings of fire” (πυρὸς τροπαί). By framing the transformations in this way, Heraclitus suggests that fire is not simply a part of the changes (through which fire becomes sea, and, as lightning-storm, turns back to fire) but defines them: each change is identified through its relation to fire, but not vice versa. In other words, sea and earth are framed as stages in the transformation of fire to something else and back to fire – whereas fire is not framed as (merely) a stage in the transformation of sea or earth to something else and back. Thus, as in B30, fire measures at once the cosmos (here, the cosmic masses) and itself (since it is among the cosmic masses).⁷⁵⁰

Yet Heraclitus’ decision to make measure inherent in fire provides only a surface solution to the puzzles arising from the identification of the cosmos with fire. In fact, the ultimate effect of this bond between measure and fire is to emphasize characteristics of fire that are at odds with both measure and the nature of a cosmos. Specifically, both the cosmos (as an ordered whole) and measure depend upon distinctions – yet, once again, fire has a tendency to annul distinctions. Nor is the pragmatic reality of fire something that we might regard Heraclitus as choosing to ignore on theoretic or poetic considerations. In fact, Heraclitus even draws attention to the conflict between the nature of fire and measure in D112/B43. This fragment, in turn, may invite a reconsideration of other fragments in the light of the questions that it raises.

In B30, fire contains a principle of self-measure. In B90, fire is the one thing by which all things are measured. Specifically, fire measures the value of things when they are transformed

⁷⁴⁹ Measure plays a significant role in Heraclitus’ description of the transformation of the elemental bodies. He even offers a degree of specificity – unusual in Heraclitus – with respect to the proportions by which the sea is divided (“half is earth, half is lightning storm”: τὸ μὲν ἥμισυ γῆ, τὸ δὲ ἥμισυ πρηστήρ). Measure is also emphasized on a linguistic level: the sea, after changing to earth and lightning storm and back to sea, “spreads out [or “is measured”] as far as the same measure” (μετρέεται εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον) as it possessed before its changes.

⁷⁵⁰ For the parallels between B31 and B30, see Marcovich 1967: 289; Kirk 1962: 326.

into fire, in the same way that gold measures the value of things when they are put up for sale in the marketplace. Yet the nature of fire is such that it is not itself easy to measure and tends to overrun the kinds of limits and demarcations essential to measure and to order (a point that is particularly relevant given that the word μέτρον means both “measure” and “limit” and has both a quantitative and a [related] ethical meaning). At the very least, this makes the idea that measure is *inherent* in fire deeply paradoxical, since fire only adheres to measure when forced to do so by some external agency. Left wholly unchecked, it will go on increasing indefinitely. Naturally, the kinds of external checks to which fire is ordinarily subject include not only deliberate human control but also the limitations imposed by the environment – in particular, available fuel and air (oxygen).⁷⁵¹ The necessity for these kinds of external limitations also seems to be at odds with the self-measuring or self-ordering fire of B30. These everyday observations about the nature of fire are reinforced by associations from the poetic tradition. The *Iliad* repeatedly describes Homeric heroes in their (often divinely-conferred) moment of glory as fires.⁷⁵² At the same time, it shows heroes in this state as routinely overstepping demarcation lines that govern orderly conduct – in particular, orderly conduct between humans and gods.⁷⁵³ For instance, at *Il.* 5.1-8,

⁷⁵¹ If we understand fire’s measured quality as involving equal measures that are restored consistently over time (as would be the case in the ecpyrosis interpretation of measures supported, e.g., by Finkelberg 2017: 46-48 and Kahn 1979: 145) rather than equal measures that maintained at every moment, this might offer a closer parallel in our pragmatic experience. Yet even the temporal measures of ecpyrosis must either involve the kind of self-measuring and self-governing presented in its most emphatic form by B30 (in which case they continue to clash against our pragmatic experience) or they involve a natural process measured and governed by limits in the external environment (for instance, if the fire of the world conflagration went out simply because it ran out of things to burn). (See Robinson 1987: 98-100, for a description of a cosmos subject to the temporal measures required for ecpyrosis, mediated through quantitative measures. The specific reference is, however, to the transformation of elemental masses, which fire [potentially] (1) constitutes, in the sense that things are, at the most essential level, fire; (2) symbolizes, as an image of patterned order maintained through change; and (3) governs, as a rational and divine force identified with that which is wise [96-98].) Either way, the internal principle of measure is either counter-intuitively present in the fire of B30, or simply absent.

⁷⁵² E.g., *Il.* 11.155-59; 15.605-09; 18.205-14.

⁷⁵³ To run slightly ahead of my argument: This makes fire a particularly suggestive image for pointing towards reality as unity-without-plurality. In apprehending the true nature of reality, the human not only experiences³ a world without distinctions, but oversteps the epistemic line between the human and divine. See also Betegh 2006: 636 on the hubris, in conventional thought, implied by such epistemic overstepping.

when Athena gives Diomedes “might and courage” (μένος καὶ θάρσος) for the battle, she kindles his head and shoulders with “inexhaustible fire” (ἀκάματος πῦρ). His recklessness in subsequent lines earns him a rebuke from Apollo about the need to respect the gulf between god and mortal⁷⁵⁴ and leads him to try to take on Ares in battle.⁷⁵⁵

The audience, then, is likely to recognize the peculiarity of the notion that measure is inherent in fire, given the latter’s tendency to overrun the limits and demarcations necessary for measure (whether measure is understood in its quantitative or ethical meaning). This recognition may, in turn, foreground a related puzzle – the fact that fire’s tendency to annul distinctions sits uneasily with the cosmos-fire identification, given that the notion of a cosmos, or world-as-ordered-whole, implies internal distinctions. In fact, the alignment of fire with measure in the dynamically ordered cosmos, on the one hand, and fire’s failure to adhere to fundamental demarcations, on the other hand, echoes the paradoxical nature of the logos, which, as an epistemic method grounded in conceptual rigour and consistency, is directed towards an epistemic goal that lies beyond all concepts and all distinctions.⁷⁵⁶ The doubleness of fire, as both a representation of an ordered cosmos and an undifferentiated element⁷⁵⁷ that destroys the

⁷⁵⁴ *Il.* 5.440-442.

⁷⁵⁵ See also, e.g., *Il.* 21, where Achilles, at the peak of his battle frenzy, ignores the divinity of the river Xanthus, which he fills with the bodies of the slaughtered.

⁷⁵⁶ The similarities between the paradoxical character of Heraclitus’ fire and Heraclitus’ logos become particularly striking in light of the fact that one of the meanings of logos – and an important one for Heraclitus – is “measure.” This meaning appears to be the primary one in D86/B31, D98/B45, and D99/B115, but a number of commentators, including Kirk 1962: 39, Long 2013: 202, and Freeman 1966: 115-116, claim that this is, in fact, the core meaning of logos throughout the fragments. While I argued in Chapter 2 that Heraclitus is particularly interested in the language-focused meanings of “logos”, the analysis I have given of the logos in terms of consistent conceptual relations is closely allied to the standards of measurement, which also depend upon a common set of rules of relation that operate no matter who applies them, and no matter the context to which they are applied.

⁷⁵⁷ For Heraclitus’ fire as an expression of unity in the absence of differentiations, see, e.g., Nehamas 2002: 51-53; Burnet 1930: 166-167; Freeman 1966: 127. As Kahn 1979: 137 points out, B30 alludes to the kind of monism that we see in the Milesians (at least on the traditional doxography) yet rejects the cosmogonical aspects of that monism – that is, B30 resists the idea of a process by which fire is transformed into other things. This, Kahn notes, has the effect of identifying reality with a single thing in a manner unprecedented in early Greek philosophy.

distinctions that constitute necessary conditions of a cosmos, makes it the ideal vehicle for pointing towards unity-without-plurality via unity-in-plurality. This, moreover, helps make sense of some of the more puzzling aspects of Heraclitean fire. Heraclitus gives fire a quasi-divine status (as marked by its description as “ever-living” [ἀείζωος] in B30),⁷⁵⁸ and emphasizes its function in limiting, measuring, governing, and judging both the things of the cosmos and itself (D84/B66; D85/B30, D87/B90; D82/B64). Yet in at least one case, he describes fire in a manner much closer to our pragmatic experience – and, in doing so, underscores the conflict between that experience and the notion of self-measuring fire-as-order. In D112/B43 fire is presented, not as a thing that limits, but as a thing which threatens to exceed its boundaries and must be limited, emphasizing the tendency of fire to overstep the demarcations that belong to the order of things.

D112/B43 runs: “It is more necessary to extinguish hubris than a conflagration.”⁷⁵⁹ This fragment, through the implicit parallel between hubris and fire, highlights the pragmatic associations that make the fire such a puzzling choice as a representation of the cosmos. Like fire, hubris often involves an initial spark (pride, passion, desire) that moves quickly towards violent loss of control; like fire, hubris involves a failure to adhere to the demarcations upon which order depends.⁷⁶⁰

While this fragment seems to be in conflict with the many fragments in which fire expresses order and measure, it also coincides with pragmatic and literary associations that tell us that, if left to its own devices, fire is more likely to overstep and annul distinctions than to create and enforce them. In doing so, it provides us with the opportunity to reconsider places

⁷⁵⁸ E.g., Vlastos 1955: 366.

⁷⁵⁹ ὕβριν χρεὶ σβεννύναι μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊήν. For the translation of πυρκαϊά as “conflagration” see LSJ, s.v.

⁷⁶⁰ For instance, in the *Odyssey*, the word ὕβρις is repeatedly used to characterize the suitors’ failure to adhere to the demarcations of role and rules of behaviour on which one crucial part of the human order, in the form of the Archaic institution of hospitality and guest friendship, depends. See, e.g., *Od.* 1.368, 4.321, 15.329, 17.565. Within this context, a breakdown of the laws or rules that govern social behaviour constitutes a breakdown in the order of things.

where Heraclitus himself may have played deliberately with this characteristic of fire. For instance, D87/B90 states: “There is an exchange of all things for fire, and fire for all things, as goods for gold and gold for goods.”⁷⁶¹ The standard reading of this fragment is that the value of things is established by the fixed metric of fire, as the value of goods is established by the fixed metric of gold.⁷⁶² At the same time, it seems to offer us a clear picture of the nature of both the cognitive grasp of unity and diversity in “from all, one thing, and from one, all things” (B10)⁷⁶³ and of the statement “all things are one” (B50). All things are one because they share a common measure by which they are ordered, and this common measure makes it possible for us to say that all things are one, and to grasp a plurality of things either as a unity or as a diversity. Yet it is difficult to uphold this interpretation in the face of any close examination of the simile in B90. B10 and B50 both offer a structural and grammatical symmetry between “all things” and “one” appropriate to the cognitive demands of unity-in-plurality, which requires us to simultaneously grasp unity through plurality and plurality through unity. B90 reiterates this symmetry,⁷⁶⁴ yet, in doing so, threatens to dissolve it. It asks us to consider fire as a metric of exchange. In doing so, it highlights one obvious pragmatic feature of fire. When a plurality becomes one thing in this fragment – that is, when all things become fire – it is no longer a plurality of things, nor can it be recovered from the fire by any reverse process.⁷⁶⁵ Once again, this marked asymmetry is brought

⁷⁶¹ πυρός τε ἀνταμοιβή τὰ πάντα καὶ πῦρ πάντων ὅκωσπερ χρυσοῦ χρήματα καὶ χρημάτων χρυσός.

⁷⁶² E.g., Marcovich 1967: 295; Burnet 1963: 161; Kirk 1962: 346-7; Guthrie 1962: 461; Kahn 1979: 151; Mourelatos 1973: 37-38 (among many others).

⁷⁶³ See pp. 234-235.

⁷⁶⁴ See, for instance, the use of alliteration, chiasmus (syntactic in the first part of the fragment, lexical in the second), parallelism (lexical in the first part of the fragment, syntactic in the second) – and, of course, the device of simile itself (Mouraviev 2006c: 126-127).

⁷⁶⁵ Kahn 1979: 146 calls this reverse process “a pure requirement of theory, a consequence of the principle of symmetry.” His view appears to be that Heraclitus simply requires his audience to swallow this highly counterintuitive aspect of the fragment. Yet while Heraclitus asks his audience to accept a great deal that is counterintuitive, he does not usually do so in such a direct, and, as Kahn himself puts it, “dogmatic” manner. His technique seems to be, rather, to place his audience in a situation where no intuitive options exist – that is, he engages the intuitions and draws out counter-intuitive implications. I think that, in this case, Kahn’s commitment to

out by the notion of measure, which functions well enough in the “human” part of the simile, and, in doing so, draws additional attention to the fact that the traits upon which our conception of measure depend seem likely to abandon us when it comes to considering the “one thing” that is cosmic fire.

The upshot, then, is that Heraclitus uses fire as a representation of the cosmos and its order, yet does so in a way that implicitly problematizes the conception of a cosmos and a cosmic order. As a representation of the cosmos and of Heraclitus three central cosmological principles, fire expresses unity-in-plurality, incorporating the kind of distinctions necessary to any plurality and to the very notion of an ordered whole. As a problematization of the notion of a cosmos, it suggests the elimination of distinctions and plurality, and points towards unity-without-plurality.

Here, again, there are some correspondences between the logos and fire.⁷⁶⁶ Heraclitus asks us to conceive of fire as representing and governing both the measure that acts as the limit and demarcation between things, and the order that depends on such measures and demarcations. In other words, fire establishes the kinds of consistent relations, the combination of separation and commonality, upon which both measure and order depends. In this way, fire, like the logos, offers us a way to think about “one thing” which is, at the same time, all things – that is, it acts as an expression of unity-in-plurality. Yet Heraclitus also undermines this conception of fire as unity-in-plurality by reminding us of fire’s pragmatic and literary associations – and, more specifically, of the fact that fire oversteps demarcations and erases differentiations. In this way, Heraclitean fire also points towards unity-without-plurality. Similarly, Heraclitus’ logos asks us

the microcosm/macrocosm reading of Heraclitus has led him to himself become uncharacteristically dogmatic in his assumption that Heraclitus is, in fact, committed to a “principle of symmetry.”

⁷⁶⁶ On correspondences between the logos and fire, see, among others, Guthrie 1962: 469, Kirk 1962: 315-317, Wilcox 1994: 66-73.

to think about the relations between things in their separation and interconnection, in order to grasp the simultaneous conflict and interdependence that make up the order of reality conceived as unity-in-plurality (or the unity of opposites).⁷⁶⁷ If, however, we adhere rigorously to the logos, deliberately allowing our thought to be governed consistently by the distinctions and relations upon which human thought depends, it guides us towards a state of understanding that undermines those distinctions and relations, and undermines the logos itself, by pointing towards reality as unity-without-plurality.⁷⁶⁸

Heraclitus' cosmological story, then, is not merely compatible with (or even simply supportive of) a view of reality as unity-without-plurality. It is also (ultimately) inconsistent with the literal reading that it initially invites – that is, the description of reality as unity-in-plurality. The specific character of this inconsistency suggests that Heraclitus has deliberately built tripwires into his representation of the cosmos. By stressing the incompatibility of the fire that represents the cosmos with the differentiation upon which the cosmos depends, he invites his audience to challenge the surface meaning of his cosmological story, looking beyond the explicit statements of a measured and ordered cosmos towards implications that threaten the basic conditions of any cosmos at all.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to answer the objection that the presence of a cosmological account in Heraclitus rules out the possibility that his ultimate reality could be unity-without-plurality. Given the nature of my project (along with considerations of length), I have not attempted to defend any detailed interpretation of Heraclitus' cosmology, but have, instead, made use of a set

⁷⁶⁷ See Chapter 2, section I.

⁷⁶⁸ See Chapter 3, section IV.

of traditional, and relatively uncontroversial (to the degree that the relatively uncontroversial exists within Heraclitus scholarship) structural principles that play a key role within the cosmos as Heraclitus describes it. I have argued Heraclitus' cosmological story may serve important functions that do not depend upon its status as a factual description of the nature of reality. Moreover, I suggested that the story is deliberately constructed in such a way as to bring its status as factual description into question.

I began by considering a classic model of the structure of Heraclitus' cosmos as flux maintained by the strife between interdependent opposites. This model of the cosmos, I noted, offers a vivid illustration of reality as unity-in-plurality. Since the comprehension of reality as unity-in-plurality is a necessary precondition to the understanding of reality as unity-without-plurality, the development of such a cosmological story might be undertaken for its psychagogic value alone, rather than with the intention of offering a direct expression of the philosopher's views.

Finally, I considered reasons for thinking that Heraclitus' cosmological story not only supports a view of reality as unity-in-plurality, and thus promotes his audience's acceptance of the logos, but that it also frustrates the attempt to take it at face value. On the one hand, fire represents the Heraclitean cosmos as a whole, since it serves as an expression of the three cosmological principles of strife, the unity of opposites, and flux. On the other hand, Heraclitus describes this cosmic fire in such a way as to (ultimately) foreground fire's incompatibility with the differentiations upon which his cosmos depends. As a result, Heraclitus' cosmology is able to support his audience's acceptance of the logos, to provide a vivid illustration of unity-in-plurality that points towards unity-without-plurality, and, at the same time, to discourage the audience

from becoming “stuck” in a belief that the cosmological viewpoint is descriptive of the ultimate nature of reality.

General Conclusion

This doctoral dissertation argued that, for Heraclitus, reality is an undifferentiated unity that can only be understood from a “perspectiveless” state. Such an understanding, I argued, is achieved through the embrace of conflicting perspectives. This leads to a conflict between needs and values that play an essential role in structuring our perceptual, conceptual, and volitional orientation to the world; this, in turn, overwhelms the faculties and generates a temporary collapse and cancellation of perspective.

As stated in the introduction, this dissertation had three main objectives:

- (1) The first objective was to provide an account of Heraclitus’ logos as an orientation towards the discourse-based conceptual relations that are common to all human thought. This orientation both requires and supports an attenuation of idiosyncratic associations and linkages that belong to specific, limited contexts.
- (2) The second objective was to show that, for Heraclitus, reality is an undifferentiated unity, which lacks distinctions of any kind, and which can only be accessed from a perspectiveless “vantage”.
- (3) The third objective was to show that the perspectiveless vantage, and the understanding of the true nature of reality is (temporarily) achievable for humans, via a systematic, logos-mediated undermining of the foundations of perspective.

Objective (1) formed the focus on Chapter 2, which argued for an interpretation of the logos as “relation through discourse” where this relation is, more specifically, that of “bringing-together-in-conflict.” An orientation towards “relation in discourse” involves an inferential mode less closely tethered to concrete thinking than the one to which the audience is accustomed,

allowing them to devote less attention to those modes of contact and connection dictated by specific perceptual-physical contexts. By focusing on conceptual relations that are common to all human thought – and, in particular, to connected discourse – the audience is led towards a view of reality as an overarching whole of interconnected parts. More specifically, the audience conceives of reality as unity-in-plurality – that is, as a dynamic unity of interdependent parts, conceived on the model of the interdependent, mutually striving opposites, or the unity of opposites. As we saw in Chapter 6, this model of reality as unity-in-plurality, and the logos-grounded mode of thought with which it is associated, is reinforced by an accompanying model of the cosmos.

Objectives (2) and (3) were the focus of Chapters 3 and 4. In these chapters, I offered an account of Heraclitus’ “epistemic pessimism” that began by recognizing the full extent of his project of undermining the notion of “human understanding” (or, more precisely, understanding from within the human perspective). His juxtapositions of the human perspective with, on the one hand, animal perspectives, and, on the other hand, the divine “perspective” highlight the depth of human ignorance via three main routes: (A) by establishing an equivalency between human judgements and the judgements of creatures whose ignorance was proverbial in ancient Greek culture; (B) by raising doubts about the human ability to truly grasp the unity of opposites, through examples of cases where human nature might limit us to grasping only one opposite in a pair; (C) by establishing an absolute break between divine understanding and human ignorance.

(B) is achieved through the application, in the perspective juxtapositions, of the early Greek pre-theoretic model of mind laid out in Chapter 3, section II. While Heraclitus does not treat perception and thought (as we define these terms) as identical, he also does not operate with a fully conceptualized distinction between them. As suggested in Chapter 2, their relationship is

perhaps best described, following Laks 1999, as different applications of the same faculties; what corresponds to our “thought” is, for Heraclitus, an active and reflective engagement of those faculties in which language plays a central role. For Heraclitus, as argued in Chapter 3, our capacity for conceptualization is inextricable from capacities more obviously informed by our constitution, including not only perception, but also affective responses and volitions. At their most rudimentary, these are expressed through the volitional duality which arises with respect to objects of pursuit and avoidance (the duality of “this” and “not-this”) and associated with the needs and values inscribed in the constitution of different kinds of creatures. As Chapter 3 established, the human-animal juxtapositions emphasize that this basic volitional duality conditions our responses to the opposites more generally. Given the fundamental role that our constitution, and our constitution-driven needs and values, play in conceptualization, we are unable to fully grasp the opposites in a unity of equal and interdependent terms.

This, as we saw, means that Heraclitus’ logos is structured in such a way that, if followed through faithfully and rigorously, it ultimately undermines itself: in the last analysis, the full comprehension of the unity of opposites – a comprehension bound up with the nature of logos-structured human thought – appears, paradoxically, to be inaccessible to us (Chapter 3). Moreover, the true unity of reality is not the unity of opposites, but the unity-without-plurality apprehended from the perspectiveless vantage that belongs to the divine alone. Initially, the fact that such a vantage is the exclusive province of the divine is used by Heraclitus to further undermine the notion of human understanding, not only through the juxtaposition of the divine “perspective” and the human one, but through intimations of the true nature of reality, as it is present to divine understanding. By suggesting that the true nature of reality is non-dual, and can only be grasped in a perspectiveless state, Heraclitus further emphasizes the fact that it cannot be

understood by human modes of thought and perception, since the latter derive from a fundamentally dual perspectival framework of needs and values (Chapter 4).

Yet Heraclitus' perspective juxtapositions do not merely serve to illustrate the impossibility of grasping the nature of reality from within the confines of human, logos-structured cognition. They also provide a means by which the audience may achieve a collapse of perspective and a (temporary) apprehension of reality as unity-without-plurality. This is achieved by following through on the logos' method – and, more specifically, the logos' insistence on the grasp of equal, interdependent opposites – as applied to the animal-human perspective juxtapositions (Chapter 4) and, later, to the (revisited) human-human perspective juxtapositions (Chapter 5).

This practical and experiential³ outcome of the logos is the most important sense in which the logos, as an expression of the structure of human thought, undermines itself when rigorously and consistently applied. At the same time, Heraclitus' various descriptions of reality according to the logos-grounded, common human vantage are constructed in such a way as to reiterate the dual character of the logos – that is, its capacity to inspire a degree of necessary conviction in the audience, while also subtly undermining itself and pointing towards unity-without-plurality. They achieve this by both reinforcing (from one angle) and pointing away from (from another angle) a model of reality as unity-in-plurality. In the context of Heraclitus' "cosmological story", as I showed in Chapter 6, this is achieved by the identification of the cosmos with, and the illustration of its key principles through, an element (fire) that is described in ways that ultimately undermine those principles, as well as the differentiations upon which the existence of a cosmos depends. In the context of Heraclitus' more general or "abstract" expressions of reality as unity-in-plurality, this is achieved, as we saw in Chapter 5, through a unification of the

opposites “one” and “all” that both affirms the necessary role that such dualities play for the logos, and points towards a one-without--all that lies beyond duality-grounded human cognition.

As I argued in Chapter 1, an interpreter interested in Heraclitus’ meaning must look carefully at his relationship to his historical context, rather than, for instance, reading back into early Greek philosophy the modes of expression and transmission of the late 4th century BCE. In the introduction, I offered a parallel claim about Heraclitus’ statements of epistemic pessimism: Rather than taking it as given that early Greek philosophical thought existed in complete independence from traditional Archaic thought, we might want to take seriously the tradition’s impact on and function in Heraclitus’ philosophy. This means entertaining the possibility that epistemic pessimism constituted a serious problem for Heraclitus and his audience – while also trying to square Heraclitus’ strong affirmations of human epistemic limits with his evident rejection of the counsel of epistemic quietism that traditionally accompanied such affirmations. In this thesis, I have considered a way in which we might reconcile Heraclitus’ apparent endorsement of traditional views of the limits of human cognition and the vehemence with which he condemns those who fail to achieve knowledge. Reality, I argued, *is* unknowable for the human mind – it is only when our minds die (temporarily) to the human and attain (temporarily) the level of the divine that humans can achieve knowledge. In harmonizing Heraclitus’ apparent rejection of the possibility of human knowledge with his apparent disgust with those who remain in ignorance, we can also reconcile two other, apparently contradictory, aspects of his thought. These, as noted in the introduction, are (1) Heraclitus’ conception of the unity of reality, which emphasizes the unity of opposites, yet also points beyond the unity of opposites towards a non-dual unity; and (2) Heraclitus’ repeated, and sometimes emphatic, use of perspective to illustrate

key ideas, despite his rejection of the sort of idiosyncratic cognitive limits associated with perspective. The unity of opposites is crucial, in part, because it expresses the structure of reality as cognized based on common human cognition – that is, cognition that is shared both with other humans, and with ourselves as we move from one context of experience¹ to another. At the same time, the comprehension of the unity of opposites is – at least from an epistemic standpoint – a means rather than an end. The audience’s efforts to fully grasp the unity of opposites, in cases where those opposites are bound up with conflicting perspectives, leads to their experience³ of perspective collapse. By this method, they temporarily escape the limitations of the human perspective and are able to apprehend reality from the divine “vantage”, as an undifferentiated unity. In a sense, then, the three puzzles – the unity puzzle, the perspective puzzle, and the epistemic pessimism puzzle – converge. Our minds can only escape the human perspective, and the limitations expressed by epistemic pessimism, by rigorous efforts to grasp the unity of opposites – even, and especially, where these efforts require us to take on various idiosyncratic perspectives. Perspective and the unity of opposites thus function as basic pillars of Heraclitus’ epistemic method. It is only by following where they lead that we arrive at the place where they both cancel out; in this way, we attain the divine perspectiveless “vantage” that apprehends reality as unity-without-plurality.

On the surface, it may appear that Heraclitus’ epistemic method involves a highly unique solution to Archaic pessimism about human cognitive capacities: he affirms (and even extends) traditional epistemic pessimism and, at the same time, offers the audience a way to achieve complete knowledge by temporarily shedding their humanity and the attendant epistemic limits. While Heraclitus’ philosophy is, of course, unique in many respects, this particular aspect of his philosophy may not be as unique as it first seems – though his combination of an absolute human

ignorance with an equal absolute (or total) knowledge attainable by humans is perhaps atypically extreme. It's true that the religious and poetic tradition affirmed a stringent and highly pessimistic view of human limits, yet Heraclitus was neither the first, nor the last, to recognize that, if these were the limits on humans, then the solution to such limits might be found in becoming divine. Tor has argued that such a solution was to be found from Homer onward – and not merely in the divine inspiration that allowed the poet to sing what he himself could not otherwise have accessed from within the brief limits of his mortal life and perceptual faculties.⁷⁶⁹ Archaic poets often speak of the godlike character of humans who attain excellence beyond that of other mortals.⁷⁷⁰ Many (though not all) of the mystery religions appear to have treated initiation as a route to becoming quasi-divine: a transition from the wretched lot of mortals to the blessed state of immortals.⁷⁷¹ While this is not the place for an extended discussion of divinization in early Greek philosophy,⁷⁷² it is perhaps worth noting that Heraclitus' thought expressed a strong version of the “negative” approach to knowledge-through-divinization that perhaps became less necessary as the Classical period wore on, and epistemic pessimism, at least as formulated by the poets, began to lose its grip on the philosophical imagination. For Heraclitus, pessimism about human epistemic limits is intimately bound up with the movement towards divinization. This means that, if we are to gain knowledge, we must also cease to be “ourselves” (as humans, as individuals). In the process of overcoming our inborn epistemic faults, we must use our own human faculties “against ourselves”, since one of the special features of the philosophical solution employed by Heraclitus is the notion that we could escape

⁷⁶⁹ *Il.* 2.485-486.

⁷⁷⁰ For instance, on the godlike nature of the human offspring of couplings between humans and gods, see *Il.* 14.313-325. For other instances from the poetic tradition of divinization or assimilation to the divine for select mortals, see also *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 279; *Pind. Ol.* 2.70. See Tor 2017: 261-263 for further citations.

⁷⁷¹ See Tor 2017: 267; 271; Betegh 2006: 636.

⁷⁷² See, however, the brief sampling of other proponents of divinization-through-philosophy at p. 220.

our human limits by employing our limited human faculties in ways that take us beyond those faculties with their limits. This, we might argue, was also the approach taken by Parmenides.⁷⁷³ At the other end of the spectrum, the solution adopted by Empedocles (and likely by Pythagoras and the early Pythagoreans⁷⁷⁴) was to see his nature as divided in two, identifying his true (affective as well as rational) self with his daimonic, transmigrating part.⁷⁷⁵ Empedocles' understanding of divinization appears to allow for the survival of the individual, and for the persistence of many of the traits that we would recognize as human. For Empedocles,⁷⁷⁶ as, probably, for the Pythagoreans,⁷⁷⁷ a continuity exists between the capacities of our daimonic selves and the perceptual and cognitive capacities of our embodied human selves: our accumulation of (and capacity to recall) a range of experiences¹ and perspectives through our transmigrations is what brings us closer to the epistemic scope of the gods.

Both the Empedoclean and the Heraclitean-type models of knowledge-through-divinization are rooted in the tropes of Archaic epistemic pessimism. Both can be understood as responses to the knowledge-to-experience¹ ratio model of Archaic folk epistemology – the point of which, as noted in Chapter 4, is to place the vanishingly small scope of human experience¹ against that of the deathless gods, and, in doing so, to account the relative quantity of human knowledge as approaching zero. For Empedocles (as, perhaps, for many of the Pythagoreans),

⁷⁷³ I acknowledge that there are controversies here. However, it seems to follow from the reading that takes what-is as (1) encompassing the whole of reality; and (2) undifferentiated. On this reading, the goddess' constant demand to the *kouros* to adhere to the strictures of logos becomes an appeal for a more rigorous application of strictly human cognitive tools that nonetheless lead beyond the limits of the human.

⁷⁷⁴ Our earliest secure testimony on Pythagoras (Xenophanes D62/B7) makes the belief in metempsychosis one of the few uncontroversial features of first-generation Pythagoreanism. It is true that metempsychosis need not *necessarily* imply immortality; it does, however, suggest it, at least in that it involves survival beyond the ordinary mortal limits. For immortality as the key marker of divinity in ancient Greece, see, e.g., Vlastos 1955: 366; Kahn 1979: 97; Brann 2011:28; Freeman 1966: 116.

⁷⁷⁵ Empedocles sees himself as truly belonging to the daimonic realm from which he was exiled (D10/B115) and to which he will one day return (D40/B147). Evidence from some of the Orphic gold tablets, such as the Petelia Tablet, suggests that this differentiation between one's mortal self and one's true, divine self was also found within some Mystery religions.

⁷⁷⁶ See especially Tor 2017: 318-339.

⁷⁷⁷ Pellò 2018.

the deficit can be made up by enlarging the scope of our experience through the use of our usual faculties.⁷⁷⁸ This allows him to accept the knowledge-to-experience¹ ratio from Archaic epistemology, and, at the same time, to offer a solution to the epistemic pessimism with which it is bound up.⁷⁷⁹ The solution, which includes the recollection of the previous lives, allows an approach to the scope of the gods through a significant advance upon both the temporal scope and the variety of experiences¹ found in a single human lifetime. By contrast, the comparatively radical approach to knowledge-through-divinization taken by Heraclitus (and, perhaps, Parmenides) is necessitated by the fact that he not only accepts the epistemic pessimism (for humans *qua* humans) expressed through the knowledge-to-experience¹ ratio, but deepens it by rejecting the ratio itself – that is, by rejecting even the infinitesimally small quantity of knowledge it allows humans relative to the gods. Since our constitutions as humans imply a form of cognition and mode of experience^{1, 2 or 3} radically different from that of a non-anthropomorphic divinity, the break between human ignorance and divine knowledge is absolute.

⁷⁷⁸ The views involved are, of course, somewhat more nuanced than this. Purely passive accumulation of ordinary experience was probably not seen as sufficient for knowledge either by Empedocles or by most Pythagoreans. Insofar as some of the practices of some of the Pythagoreans may have been ascetic in orientation, those practices may have had an epistemic as well as redemptive function – that is, they may have been conceived as diminishing the distorting effects of natural constitution (though they probably were not, prior to the fourth century, conceived as involving a weaning of the soul from the body as such). Tor 2017: 332 sees Empedocles as seeking a synthesis (mediated, however, by the basic capacities and framework of our human perspective) in a “*second-order* synoptic and critical perspective on all the other perspectives which he occupied in other incarnations” (emphasis his). (This second-order perspective has interesting points of commonality with Kahn’s “larger vision” reading of Heraclitus’ human-animal juxtapositions, against which I argued in Chapter 3, section II.) The chief point, for my purposes, is that for Empedocles, as for the Pythagoreans, knowledge comes through an extension of the proper use of our human faculties. Empedocles, like Heraclitus, recognizes that we can use these faculties in such a way that we fail to benefit from our experience – but for Empedocles, the benefit that we can obtain through them still involves an extension of what our human faculties offer us, specifically through the capacity to recall the experiences accumulated over multiple lifetimes (see, e.g., D38/B129).

⁷⁷⁹ Again, there are nuances here that I cannot engage with in a brief overview. D42/B2 is a textbook expression of epistemic pessimism – though it may well refer exclusively to those humans who simply fail to recall their past lives.

As the comparison with Empedocles suggests, the problem of human perspectival limits, as well as the solution of knowledge-through-divinization,⁷⁸⁰ persisted into the Classical period (and beyond) – yet its contours changed. By the fourth century, Plato could draw on nearly two centuries of predecessors, from Xenophanes to (presumably) Socrates himself, who were unwilling to simply resign themselves to human perspectival limits, who sought to understand and study those limits in a systematic manner and/or to overcome them. Like Aristotle, Plato felt the need to distance himself from the poets’ version of epistemic pessimism.⁷⁸¹ Yet his thought remains shaped in significant ways by the issues it raised. Like Heraclitus, he was preoccupied with the problem of obtaining perspective-independent truth,⁷⁸² and yet, like Heraclitus, his works invite the audience to adopt a multiplicity of perspectives in the search for truth, with different dialogues, or different sections within a single dialogue, often seeming to recommend incompatible points of view on a particular issue. Gonzalez has argued that this is because there is, in the last analysis, no perspective-independent truth on offer in Plato; the single, perspective-independent “truth as such is inaccessible to us.”⁷⁸³ What is accessible to us, and what Plato offers, is “many perspectives on this truth, each true within its limits and its particular context.”⁷⁸⁴ We can (partially) overcome our individual perspectival limits by bringing together as many of these perspectives as possible; while we do not, in this way, come to grasp the “truth as such”, we arrive at a view that becomes progressively truer the more perspectives we adopt. If

⁷⁸⁰ Beginning with Plato, the goal is stated explicitly and is couched as assimilation to the divine – that is, attaining *likeness to the god* (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ [e.g., *Tht.* 176b]) rather than *becoming divine*. However, the boundaries between these two conceptions (in philosophy no less than in poetic and religious traditions) are not always clear. For instance, some scholars have suggested that the Platonic assimilation to the divine, like the Heraclitean process of divinization, ultimately requires the relinquishment of what marks us as human beings (see, e.g., Gerson 2003).

⁷⁸¹ See, e.g., *Pl. Prt.* 339a-347a; *Arist. Metaph.* 983b.

⁷⁸² See, e.g., *Prt.* 356a-357a; *Resp.* 602c-e; *Phlb.* 41e-42c, *Soph.* 235c-237a.

⁷⁸³ Gonzalez 2017: 45.

⁷⁸⁴ Gonzalez 2017: 45. Kahn 2005: 28 makes a parallel point when he recognizes the possibility of “irreducible multiplicity of perspectives” in Plato (though he also gestures towards the possibility of a “negative” use of perspective for “liberating us from the distortions due to our localized (‘embodied’) perspective”).

Gonzalez is right, this would make Plato the inheritor of the Empedoclean/Pythagorean answer to epistemic pessimism, and an adherent of an adapted version of the traditional view of the knowledge-to-experience¹ ratio. Such an inheritance could open new lines of inquiry, not only into the familiar question of Plato's engagements with Pythagorean (or Orphic) traditions, but into Plato's views on the relationship between experience and philosophical insight, and into the relationship between such views and his preoccupation with metempsychosis (whether as metaphor, myth or reality).⁷⁸⁵ Yet, as noted above, there are suggestive parallels between Plato and Heraclitus on the issue of perspective. We might also find suggestive the significant influence that Heraclitus and Parmenides seem to have had on Plato's thought (if we are to judge by Plato's need to re-enact his "parricide"⁷⁸⁶ of his two predecessors across multiple dialogues). It seems worth exploring whether the Heraclitean influence might account for the parallels between the seemingly paradoxical relationship, found in both philosophers, between their (apparent) rejection of the individual, context-dependent viewpoint as a locus of truth, and their constant encouragement to the audience to take on various perspectives in the course of seeking knowledge.⁷⁸⁷ Plato, as a 4th century philosopher for whom the line between (human) ignorance and (divine) knowledge was perhaps not quite as stark as it was in the late 6th century, may not have adopted the radical Heraclitean solution of (temporary) divinization through perspective collapse and the attainment of a perspectiveless "vantage". Yet the Heraclitean parallel might open further avenues for exploring, for instance, the Platonic elenchus (broadly construed). It might even open up new dimensions within the perspectivist reading, suggesting a subtractive

⁷⁸⁵ On the puzzles raised by a pure "punishment" view of Platonic metempsychosis, see Robinson 1997; Gonzalez 2012.

⁷⁸⁶ Πατραλοίας. The word appears at Soph. 241d, in the context of the Eleatic Stranger's putative refutation of Parmenides in his argument that *what is not*, in some sense, is, and that *what is*, in some sense, is not.

⁷⁸⁷ For other areas where the Heraclitean influence is richer and perhaps deeper than on the issue of flux, see Robinson 1991; Rowett 2017.

process that might facilitate the additive process that Gonzalez describes. Before we could bring together multiple perspectives, we might need a way of winnowing out individuating and idiosyncratic attachments, in order that we might overcome our profound resistance, demonstrated by most Platonic interlocutors, to truly taking on perspectives that conflict with our own socially and physiologically conditioned interests and values.

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