

Language and content of Heraclitus' philosophy

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Abstract

Many researchers treat Heraclitus's statements equally with scientific philosophy and evaluate them very low. At the same time, some philosophers and researchers believe that the form of his speech is adequate to the wisdom content. Its task is to arouse mental mobility. In support of this thesis, one can cite the metaphoric aphorisms of Heraclitus, which, with a literal reading, will show only trivial content. Also, the apparent contradictions contained in Heraclitus's sentences do not result from methodological imperfections. They should be treated as traditional puzzles that have a very long tradition in ancient Greece.

Key words: aphorisms, metaphors, religious symbols, riddles, Heraclitus

An Allegorical Reading of Heraclitus' Passages

The literal reading of Heraclitus' passages was initiated by Aristotle because it was in line with the philosophy that he practiced. As a result of such a reading, the Stagirite retains the image of Heraclitus' wisdom as a naive theory of the cosmos, which must have been very primitive, due to the poor state of knowledge at that time. Many later researchers who cannot read certain sentences at all with such an approach do the same. All difficulties with the interpretation of Heraclitus' passages stem from the aphoristic and metaphorical style of his statements. His difficult language made the wise man incomprehensible to the ancients (Diogenes Laertius, 1984: 517-525) cf. (Narecki, 1981: 19-32): "The ancients already called him <the dark>σχοτεινός, and it is not surprising, since the way which he conveys his philosophical thought remains largely incomprehensible and puzzling. Therefore, the modern knowledge of Heraclitus' philosophy is characterized by serious difficulties of interpretation. Both in the ancient and the present world, the Ephesian has challenged the ingenuity of interpreters, among whom there are no two agreeing. / ... /. Efforts have been made to apply the methods of many sciences to the essence of Heraclitus' thoughts, but it seems that the fundamental stage in understanding the Heraclitan theory of deity (logos), the cosmos, and man is the realization of the importance of the form in this regard thought of the Ephesian. The style of Heraclitus is antithetical and aphoristic, and therefore pictorial and poetic"; cf. (Jaeger, 1962: 204); cf. (Snell, 2009: 265 -267). Socrates talked about it, Plato and Aristotle wrote. Even Hegel saw in Heraclitus the precursor of the speculative philosophy he practiced (Hegel, 1994: 390) and hardly noticed the wisdom nature of his teachings.

Fortunately, there is a second reading trend of Heraclitus' passages that takes his statements literally. Friedrich Nietzsche notices that the presence of symbols is not accidental in the aphorisms of the wise man from Ephesus (Nietzsche, 1993: 136-137). He recognizes that since Heraclitus' statements often contain metaphors and have banal meaning in a literal reading, it creates the necessity of an allegorical reading.

There are several important arguments in favor of such a reading of Heraclitus' passages. If the wise man of Ephesus criticized the theoretically advanced theorems of Pythagoras and Xenophanes, he must have known them. Therefore, he could use a much more abstract conceptual apparatus than the one found in his aphorisms. In this situation, they should be read as if their form was not a matter of pure chance but a conscious choice. Cicero believed that Heraclitus deliberately wrote in a cryptic style

so that only the chosen could understand him (Cicero, 1960: I, 26) and (Cicero, 1960: III, 14); (Cicero 1961, II, 5).

This is confirmed by Giovanni Reale, who wrote: "The author deposited this work as a votive offering in the temple of Artemis, and, according to the supposition of some, he wrote it deliberately so vaguely that only those who could understand it might be interested in it, and that it would not lose its value, as it was spread among the mob. For this reason, Heraclitus was called <dark>"(Reale, 1994: 93). Krzysztof Narecki believes that this is a very good research lead. The scholar writes about the style of Heraclitus: "He often speaks with aphorisms, proverbs, and sayings. His style becomes aphoristic when, for example, he formulates his thought in the form of the accurate sentence (e.g. passages 4, 22, etc.)" (cf. Narecki, 1984: 5–20). The second argument for the allegorical reading of Heraclitus' passages is the fact that they are similar to the aphorisms of mythical wise men and religious revelations, which suggests an allegorical wisdom rather than a literal reading. There is no scientific knowledge about the world in them, but a wisdom vision of the cosmos and human life. Werner Jaeger writes that we do not find a scientific study of the world, nor even a shadow of natural theory in Heraclitus' passages (Jaeger, 1962: 202). Commenting on B41, "Wisdom consists of one thing: to understand the thought that guides all through everything," Kirk, Raven, and Schofield write that the goal of an Ephesian is to gain true wisdom (Kirk et al., 1999: 205). We know that not intellectual theory but wisdom was suggested by Plato in Socrates' eulogy in *The Banquet*, in the allegory of the cave in the "State", in "Letter VII" and in the passages of "Phaedrus" describing the spiritual ascent of the soul. In all the passages mentioned, Plato uses symbols and allegories. These passages may be interpreted differently, but their main message is obvious: man is capable of transcendental cognition because he has spiritual senses that enable spiritual cognition inaccessible to the bodily senses. Another message that comes from associating the content and form of these passages of Plato lies in the clear suggestion that there exists a being for whom there are no strict names in the commonly used language. Therefore, symbols are the only way to convey the knowledge of the wise men who come to know these entities. The same message can be found in the passage of "The Seventh List" by Plato, in which the author writes about getting to know ideas. Philosophy thus conceived does not consist in building an intellectual theory, but in spiritual seeing with the help of spiritual light. This means that man is capable of mystical cognition, inaccessible to the senses. Such mystical knowledge was attributed to Pythagoras. We can certainly find evidence of such knowledge in the passages of Empedocles and Parmenides. If through analogies to their statements, we read passages of Heraclitus, we will discover in them the effects of spiritual insight into the cosmic unity of the world and the knowledge of the immortal element of the human soul.

Another argument in favor of such a reading of Heraclitus' statements is the fact that in passages B93 and B92 he suggests a figurative and not literal reading of them. B93 "The Lord whose oracle is at Delphi neither speaks nor conceals, but gives signs." B92 "The Sibyl, revealing with raving mouth words deprived of laughter, decoration, and ornament, for thousands of years has been reaching the power of God with the voice." (Heinrich, 1925). (All translations of Heraclitus' aphorisms in this article come from the book of Władysław Heinrich, 1925, *Zarys historii filozofii*, t. 1).

Another argument for such a not strictly scientific treatment of his statements is the fact that for Heraclitus, there was no problem reconciling knowledge with the achieved cognition, which would be inevitable when the philosopher only presented an intellectual theory. Yet the concept of logos meaning is another argument in Heraclitus' passages in which consciousness permeates everything, about which I will write later in the article. These arguments already show that Heraclitus does not draw a scientific theory, but presents us with the fundamental truths of human existence.

Therefore, in his statements, he expresses not only the acquired knowledge but also shows the existential goal that he sets to his readers.

Heraclitus Aphorisms

In most of Heraclitus's aphorisms, one can sense extraordinary expression and sensitivity to language. There is also a great brevity, as Narecki (1984: 16–17) and Andrei Ticholaz (2005: 19–29) state. That is why Giorgio Colli derives the Heraclitus style from wisdom puzzles (Colli, 1980: 3 Eraclito), while Adam Krokiewicz (1948: 5-6), Werner Jaeger (Jaeger, 1962: 202-208; cf. Guthrie 1992, Dembińska-Siury, 1991) derive it from the Orphic wisdom. William Guthrie notes its prophetic nature (1962, 413-415). Without denying it, Narecki believes that the wise man uses popular proverbs, which he transforms into philosophical maxims. Narecki writes that the language of Heraclitus "resides in the traditional, mythological-poetic schemes of describing the world". "The basic - it seems - the source of linguistic figures and the literary style of the first Greek philosophers (including Heraclitus), as well as the style of the so-called the λεγόμενα and ἱεροί λόγοι of the mysteries, was a living, everyday language and the very creativity that arose based on this language" (Narecki, 1981: 19–32). Heraclitus' aphorisms follow the tradition of Greek epigrams, i.e. short forms written in white verse. The juxtapositions of words, the rhythm of sentences, self-confidence, accuracy, and suggestibility of metaphors affect the recipient not only with an intellectual sense but also with a poetic and emotional charge. Here are examples of Heraclitus aphorisms that confirm this: "Different and different waters continue to flow into the same river" (B12). "The most beautiful world is like a random pile of garbage thrown around" (B124). "Donkeys would prefer hay to gold." (B9).

Each of Heraclitus' statements consists of one or more aphorisms that formulate general truths about human nature and the entire cosmos. Some of them are straightforward, and we understand them without any difficulty. Aphorisms: "Dogs bark at those whom they do not know." (B97), "Donkeys would prefer hay to gold." (B9). It is understandable that they metaphorically point to the truths about human behavior. On the other hand, aphorisms such as: "The sun is new every day" (B6) and "All things are controlled by lightning" (B68) can be understood literally as a statement of physical truth or can be understood as metaphors. The first interpretation shows Heraclitus as a naive natural scientist, and the second - as a wise man.

The aphorism is also the passage B32: "The only wise one both does not want and wants to be called by the name of Zeus" (B32). First, the philosopher declares that ultimate reality does not want to be called by people. At the same time, in the same sentence, there is a claim that the ultimate reality should be called by people. Contradictory statements in one sentence make you think. The wise man seems to warn them against a common-sense image of reality. According to him, the essence of ultimate reality cannot be adequately identified by human reason. Forgetting this leads to the elimination of our perception of transcendence. At the same time, the wise man announces that attempts to grasp it intelligently are necessary, because only in this way can we lead our intuition to its trail. Without these attempts, the perception of transcendence is also impossible. I believe that such an interpretation of the contradiction contained in this aphorism is much better than Aristotle's assertion that due to low methodological awareness, Heraclitus does not recognize the rule of the excluded middle, and in one passage, he utters two sentences, one of which contradicts the other. It must be stated that this opinion of Aristotle was completely undermined by Colli's findings. In the work "The Birth of Philosophy," the researcher writes: "And Heraclitus not only uses contradictory phrases in most of his passages but also maintains that the world around us is nothing else than just one fabric woven from contradictions that delude us" (Colli, 1991: 69). Instead of accusing Heraclitus

of primitive and illogical statements, it is much better to admit that the wise man consciously uses contradictory statements because he needs it to outline a vision of the world and human life (Korczak, 2007). The essence of this vision of the cosmos is the unity of interconnected opposites. The form of the teaching of Heraclitus is, therefore, exceptionally adequate to the content. The wise man's style is part of the Greek tradition of wisdom riddles, which is confirmed by Narecki, who writes: "Many sayings of Heraclitus are similar to folk sentences and riddles (e.g., passage - 56). Thus, passage 48 can be paraphrased as a riddle: "<What is this: his name is life and he carries out death>. A characteristic feature of the puzzle is the allegorical description of an object or phenomenon "(Narecki, 1981: 19–32). Passage B93: "The Lord, whose oracle is at Delphi, neither speaks nor conceals, but gives signs." - this suggests that many Greek oracles are mysterious sentences whose meaning had to be unraveled to understand them. Many of Heraclitus's aphorisms are typical puzzles similar to those we know from the Greek tradition. Here are examples of aphorisms that are common puzzles:

B19 - They are unable to hear or speak.

B86 - What is not believed in withdraws from cognition.

B91 - It disperses and gathers, comes and goes.

B84 - It rests by changing.

B75 - Even sleepers are workers and collaborators in what goes on in the universe.

B62 - Immortals become mortals; mortals become immortals; they live in each other's death and die in each other's life.

The puzzle is the passage B101 which reads: "I have been looking for myself." (B101). Passage B101 is also translated: "I have searched myself." The meaning of this sentence is unclear in the context of common-sense knowledge, for every man undoubtedly knows himself. But it is also puzzling in the context of the Delphi indication Gnothi Seauton (Thomson, 1966: 167–168, 351); (Kassidi, 1972: 179–180) because the answer to the Delphi indication should be rather the sentence: "Know thyself." However, Heraclitus did not confirm this understanding of his words. The solution to this puzzle seems to be the passage B45: "You could not find the limits of the soul, even if you traveled each and every path: it has got such a deep bottom (logos)." (B45). The human soul is infinite, and the wise man who knows its nature makes this clear. The infinite nature of the soul is also clearly expressed in the passage: "To the soul is the mind that multiplies itself" (B115).

The juxtaposition of these passages suggests that for Heraclitus, man is a mystery to himself and that the human soul is infinite. Hence, one cannot say about it: I met or I know. Pointing to the knowledge that differs from common knowledge explains the presence of the puzzle and its extremely important meaning in the wisdom tradition of the Greeks. Colli writes in connection with the passage B56:

"According to Heraclitus, he is someone who does not allow himself to be deceived" (Colli, 1991: 63). "So the riddle, raised to the cosmic dimension, is an expression of what is hidden, god" (Colli, 1991: 69). Colli's reasoning is corroborated by the wording of B56: "People are mistaken when they take the visible for knowledge, just like Homer, the wisest of all the Greeks. He was deceived by boys beating lice when they told him: we have seen and captured, we have destroyed what we have not seen and caught, we are wearing (Heraclitus from Ephesus, 1996: 21).

This passage alludes to the legend according to which Homer asked the fishermen he met what they caught. They responded with the words quoted above. The poet, unable to find the meaning of this puzzle, died of despondency. Commenting on passage B56, Colli puts forward the thesis that the statements of the wise man can be understood only through the prism of traditional wisdom, which uses riddles (Colli, 1991: 23–60). A literal reading of this passage gives a banal and unlikely story intended to ridicule the great poet, who turned out to be stupider than simple fishermen. His allegorical reading includes Heraclitus' suggestion to treat our whole

life as a mystery. This means that we should discover a deeper meaning of our life, our fate, and everything that happens to us. Using a commonly known legend, the wise man makes us realize that not solving the mystery of our lives is spiritual death. Passage B125 speaks directly about spiritual death: "Even the sacred barley drink separates when it is not stirred." (B125).

We can guess that by asking riddles, the wise man wants to arouse our intellectual mobility. This is evidenced by the passage B97, which condemns the habitual reaction to the unknown: "Dogs bark at those whom they do not know." (B97). Heraclitus believes that it will be easier to stimulate our intellectual mobility by using puzzles in his aphorisms, but also metaphors and mythical-religious symbols. The effectiveness of symbols in awakening inner life is confirmed by 20th-century researchers of culture (Eliade, 1994: 211); (Eliade, 2001: 364), (Eliade, 2001: 386–387); (Eliade, 2001: 443); (Eliade, 2001: 503); (Eliade, 2001: 516); (Eliade, 2001: 596–597); (Eliade, 2001: 752); (Eliade, 2001: 771); (Eliade, 2001: 887); (Eliade, 2001: 889); (Durand, 1986: 29); (Tillich, 1987: 103); (Tokarska-Bakir, 2014: 149); (Dupré, 1991: 209).

Mythological and Religious Symbols as Metaphors

Some Heraclitus passages contain symbols in the form of images of deities and other religious images. Aphorism B93 - "The Lord, whose oracle is at Delphi neither speaks nor conceals, but gives signs" (Heinrich, 1925: 32), unambiguously points to Apollo, who is the god of the Delphi oracle. A similar connection with the sphere of proclamation has aphorism B92 - "The Sibyl, revealing with raving mouth words deprived of laughter, decoration, and ornament, for thousands of years has been reaching the power of God with the voice." (B92). B51 - "People do not understand how that which is at variance with itself agrees with itself. There is a harmony in the bending back, as in the cases of the bow and the lyre." (Heinrich, 1925: 35). Passage B51 contains the words "bow" and "lyre" which are inherent attributes of Apollo, the god associated with prophecy. This points to the symbolic and non-literal meaning of the other sayings of Heraclitus. The religious symbol is also contained in the passage B64 - "The Sun will not overstep his measures; if he were to do so, the Erinnyes, fiends of Justice, would seek him out for punishment" (B64). Passage B68 - "All things are controlled by lightning." (B68), points to Zeus because lightning is an attribute of this god.

The passages cited below directly speak of a god or gods.

B5 - They seek purification, staining themselves with blood as if the one who stepped down the mud could cleanse himself with mud. If a man saw him do this, he would be considered mad. They pray to paintings and statues as if someone wanted to talk to buildings because they do not know what gods and heroes are. (Heinrich, 1925: 41).

B15 - If it was not for Dionysus, for whom they make processions and sing phallic hymns, their deeds would be shameful. But Hades and Dionysus, in whose honor they rave and celebrate, are one and the same. (Heinrich, 1925: 40).

B64 - Gods and people value those who fall in battle. (Heinrich, 1925: 39).

B67 - God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, satiety and hunger; he assumes different shapes; just like fire, when combined with incenses, receives the name according to the scent. (Heinrich, 1925: 34).

B78 - Human nature has no wisdom - divine nature has it. (Heinrich, 1925: 39).

B102 - To God, everything is beautiful, good, and right, while men consider one thing right and other things wrong. (Heinrich, 1925, 36).

B127 - If they are gods then why to despair over them - if you do that, you do not consider them gods. (Heinrich, 1925: 41).

B114 - Those who speak reasonably should arm themselves with what is common to all, yes, the law and even more. For all human laws are nourished by one divine law.

It orders as much as it wants, and it is enough for everything, and it prevails over everything. (Heinrich, 1925, 38).

Although in each of the above passages religious images are contained, Heraclitus does not use them in a devotional sense, but thanks to them, he expresses the truths about human existence, thus giving the known mythical-religious symbols the meaning of wisdom. The passages have similar meanings.

B25 - Greater death gets a greater reward. (Heinrich, 1925, 39).

B52 - Time is a boy playing pebbles; the boy owns the kingdom. (Heinrich, 1925: 37).

B66 - Oncoming fire will plant and condemn everything. (Heinrich, 1925: 34).

B79 - Man is stupid compared with the demons, just as the boy is compared with the man. (Heinrich, 1925, 39).

B98 - The souls in Hades smell. (Heinrich, 1925: 35).

B119 - A man's character is his guardian divinity. (Heinrich, 1925: 40).

B125 - The mysteries practiced amongst the people are celebrated in an inappropriate way. (Heinrich, 1925: 40).

It must be admitted that the wise man does not always use religious or mythical symbols. He also uses metaphors based on common sense observations. These are metaphors of barbarians (B107), unconscious (B34), gold diggers (B22), donkeys (B9), the environment proper to humans and fish (B61), animals (B55), war (80), the way up and down (B60), circles (B103), wet soul (A72), river and wave metaphors as a figurative name for a changing reality (B49a, B91), heart metaphors, as sources of human feelings and passions (B85), metaphors of dogs barking at whom they do not know (B97). As for the passages referring to the cosmic elements (B30, B31, B90, B76, B126), we can read them as statements of the physical truth or as metaphors indicating the significant structure of the world. Completely unheard of in Western philosophy are the metaphors of sleeping and unconscious people that Heraclitus uses to name the consciousness of people who know the world and themselves, but not in the light of logos (B75, B73, B89, B34, B21). Either way, all these passages need to be read non-literally. I believe that the number of passages that need to be read allegorically affects the rest of the passages and, thus, the entire teaching of the wise man.

Passage B107 contains a metaphor for the barbarians. "Eyes and ears are bad witnesses to men with barbarian souls." (B107). The philosopher says that without achieving inner harmony, our minds are determined by the desires, fears, ambitions, desires, and moods characteristic of a barbarian soul, that is, a soul devoid of a higher kind of harmony, which the Greeks considered a feature of Hellenic culture. Passages B89, B73, and B75 also speak about the condition of people who do not know the logos, i.e. who know the world in the light of their subjective feelings. Passage B89 reads: "The vigil person has one world in common, each sleeping person turns to his own." It corresponds with passage B73: "One should not act and speak as if he was sleeping." and with passage B75: "Sleeping persons are called workers and collaborators of what is going on in the world."

The use of religious metaphors and images, referring to the prophetic language and the language of a religiously understood puzzle, and a synthetic image of the cosmos suggest that Heraclitus presents wisdom knowledge, completely different from common sense knowledge. Krokiewicz writes about Heraclitus: "He distinguished knowledge acquired from the outside through observation and experience from natural and inner knowledge, and although he did not disregard the former, he placed the latter knowledge higher than it and tried to develop it mainly (passages B22, 40, 55). . 86)" (Krokiewicz, 1995: 146). To achieve the latter, a radical transformation of the human condition is needed, which the wise man likens to death. In this context, the most important is the passage B62, in which Heraclitus speaks of a spiritual change that makes an ordinary eater of bread a wise man. "Immortals become mortals, mortals become immortals; they live in each other's death and die in each other's life."

(B62). If we accept that the first word is a description of the second, then Mortal immortals mean that we are immortal souls, only temporarily limited by a mortal form. Then the phrase - Mortal immortals mean people who are unaware of their immortality, identify with what is mortal in us, for whom immortality is only a hidden potential. The wise man clearly states that there is a relationship of total exclusion between these forms of consciousness (Albert, 2006). Kazimierz Mrówka uses the notion of dialectics between the mortal and immortal parts of the soul (Mrówka, 2004: 321). This is similar to the formula attributed to Hermes Trismegistus: "Men live by the death of the gods; the gods live by the death of men." This means that the sense of identity of the wise man is founded on a spiritual element deep within the soul, and the sense of identity of the ordinary bread-eater is based on identifying consciousness with a body that is inherently mortal. One identity excludes the other. Sextus Empiricus gives B62 the orphic meaning because he writes: "Heraclitus says that in our life, as in our death, life is connected with death; for when we are alive, our souls have died and are buried in us; and when we die our souls will rise again" (Sextus Empiricus 1998, 3, par. 230). Interestingly, similar interprets this sentence by Hegel, referring to Fabricius, who states briefly: "Humans are mortal gods, and gods are immortal men; while living they are the death of those others, and when they die they are their life" (Hegel, 1994: 418).

In each of the above interpretations, we see a contrast between common-sense and immortal consciousness. To achieve immortal consciousness, a radical spiritual change is needed. From Heraclitus' criticism of Pythagoras and Xenophanes, we conclude that he does not consider it easy, even for philosophers.

A Wisdom Image of the World

In many of the quoted passages of Heraclitus, we see the cognition of the final structure of the universe, i.e., a dynamic image of reality. They differ from the available common consciousness, the common-sense image of the world. The wise man does not perceive the world as an accumulation of things and people but sees the world as interconnected and diverse processes (Popper, 1999), which is very much emphasized by Hegel (1994: 395 et seq., 403–404). The cosmic unity of all processes and beings is realized by interconnected opposites; therefore, the way of expressing the wise man, using contradictory sentences, is most appropriate to the image of reality that he wants to present to us. About the cosmic unity of opposites, the wise man says directly in passages:

B58 - The evil and the good are the same.

B60 - The way up and the way down are one and the same.

B103 - The beginning and end are the same in the circumference of the circle.

"/ ... / everything exists only insofar as its concept includes the Other," - writes Hegel on the Heraclitan theory of interconnected opposites (Hegel, 1994: 339). Such a picture of the world is more similar to the picture created by modern physicists than to the traditional picture of the world, understood as the sum of all things. It should be remembered, however, that the words *Pantha Rei*, conceived as a summary of Heraclitus' philosophy, most likely come from Plato, who was a listener of Kratylos in his youth. Passage B 91: "You cannot enter the same river twice, because there are still different and different waters flowing on those entering" it was preserved thanks to Plato (1990, 402A). This feature of the image of reality is strongly emphasized by contemporary researchers of the science of Heraclitus, who write about the unity, identity, unification, and complementarity of opposites (Drozdek, 2011: 72–75); (Wrotkowski, 2008: 347) next; (Przybylski, 2004). This shows the extraordinary potential of the Heraclitan sayings.

In passage B48: "The name of the bow is life, and its work is death," the wise man uses similar Greek wording for "bow" and "life." Most likely, he suggests that

knowledge about the unity of opposites is available to everyone because it is contained in colloquial linguistic associations. So, we should not think that this knowledge is only available to a handful of philosophers. Conjugated opposites make up the entire cosmos. In this spirit, the following words should be read:

B43 - Heraclitus reprimands Homer for his statement: "May the strife between gods and men perish, or else everything will cease to exist."

B53 - War, dispute is the father of all things and all things king. He makes some gods, other people, others slaves, and others free.

B23 - Without it (i.e., the injustice), the name of the justice would be unknown.

B110 - /.../ The sickness adds pleasure to the health; evil – to good, hunger – to satiety, fatigue – to rest.

The vision of the cosmos composed of interconnected opposites does not mean chaos. In the world of nascent and decaying opposites, there is a hidden harmony that is a manifestation of logos (Hegel, 1994: 399).

B54 - The hidden harmony is stronger than overt one.

B124 - The best world is like a random pile of rubbish.

By emphasizing the existence and importance of interconnected opposites, the philosopher seems to convey that seemingly contradictory things and phenomena create the entire cosmos. According to the wise man, this is possible because all reality is the result of the action of one force, which he calls cosmic fire. Fire emerges from itself, the cosmic element of air; the element of air emerges from itself, the cosmic element of water, and the element of water emerges from itself, the cosmic element of earth. Everything that exists is made of these four elements. The metaphors of both cosmic and psychic elements contain passages:

B30 - This universe, which is the same for all, has not been made by any God or man; it has always been, is, and will be an everlasting fire, kindling and quenching according to measure.

B31 - The Earth becomes sea, and we obtain the same amount according to the proportion binding it before it had become earth.

B36 - For the soul, it is death to become water; for water, it is death to become earth; Water goes out of the earth, and the soul out of water.

B90 - Everything exchanges for fire, and fire exchanges for everything, like goods exchange for gold and gold exchanges for goods.

B76 - Fire lives in the death of earth, air lives in the death of fire. The water lives in the death of air, earth lives in the death of water.

A lot of wrong interpretations of Heraclitus' aphorisms come from the fact that his concept of the elements was interpreted physically. Therefore, he was treated as a naive natural scientist. However, we know that at least since the times of Hippocrates (Bednarczyk, 1999) there was a psycho-physical concept of cosmic elements in Greece that was used in medicine. In this context, the names of the physical elements are merely metaphors for the cosmic psycho-physical elements. Examples of such understanding of the cosmic elements can be found in the aphorisms of Anaximenes, Empedocles, and Anaxagoras (Korczak, 2007). Francis Cornford combines the theory of the four elements present in the writings of Presocratics with the concept of the four cosmic epochs of Hesiod (Cornford, 1957), which confirms their non-literal understanding. Therefore, the statements of Heraclitus and other Presocratics cannot be properly understood if we treat the cosmic elements physically. In the passages of Heraclitus, they create the entire phenomenal world and the human soul, which completely precludes their purely physical reading. Knowing the organic brightness of the cosmos based on cosmic elements is also knowing everything in the light of logos (Thomson, 1966: 354); (Gigon, 1996: 139); (Burnet, 1892: 132-134); (von Aster, 1969: 61-62) and (von Aster, 1969: 71); (Robinson, 1968: 55); (Kahn, 1979: 97-115); (Kahn, 1939: 323-341); cf. (Helin, 2010: 17-21); (Guthrie, 1962: 419-424); (Narecki,

1981: 19–32); (Narecki, 1999); (Ticholaz, 2005: 40–41); (Przybysławski, 2004: 96) next; (Mrówka, 2004: 29–30), (Mrówka, 2004: 297–298). Gaining wisdom insight into the structure of the whole world is possible because the same fire forces create the cosmos and the human soul (Kobierzycki, 1996: XXI). The passage B36 proves it most clearly: "For the soul, it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth; and out of the earth comes water, out of the water the soul."

This passage influences the interpretation of logos, which can only be understood by analogy to human rationality (Burnet, 1892: 132–134); cf. (Kahn, 1939: 323–341); (Reale, 1994: 332); (Albert, 2006: 32); (Krokiewicz, 1995: 135); (Wrotkowski, 2008: 22–23), (Wrotkowski, 2008: 25), (footnote 59), (Wrotkowski, 2008: 43), (Wrotkowski, 2008: 191), (Wrotkowski, 2008: 220–221), (Wrotkowski, 2008: 223–226); (Drozdek, 2011: 79–83). Heraclitus uses the concept of cosmic elements that make up the whole of reality and the human soul in passages:

B117 - When a man gets drunk, a young boy leads him, while he stumbles without knowing where he is going, for his soul is moist.

B118 - Dry glow: it is the wisest and best soul.

B72 It is a delight for the soul to become moist.

I believe that the interpretation of this group of sentences is determined by the passage B36: "For the soul, it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth; and out of the earth comes water, out of the water the soul" (Klemens Aleksandryjski, 1994: 6, 16). It indicates that the cosmic elements create the human soul and determine their experiences. Since the cosmic elements make up the psychic organism of the human soul, they cannot be treated only physically.

Conclusion

We can see that Heraclitus very often uses religious and mythical symbols, riddles, and metaphors based on common sense observations. Their presence in his passages is not accidental, as it suggests not a literal but a metaphorical reading of his words, which the philosopher himself clearly emphasizes in two passages. Using mythological and religious symbols and metaphors, the wise man draws the image of the world as the cosmos. It also paints a picture of a human soul that should undergo a radical change to learn the truth about the cosmos and regain awareness of its immortality. It would be very difficult or even impossible to draw such a complicated picture of the cosmos and human life without the use of metaphors and symbols from religion and mythology.

Certainly, some scholars interpret Heraclitus' passages literally, but such a reading is sterile in an existential sense. It tells us to see in the wise man of Ephesus a primitive natural scientist and a pessimistic observer of human life. Only the allegorical reading of them gives us access to a vision of his wisdom, the depth, theoretical advancement, and complexity of which is so great that for its expression in abstract concepts it would be necessary to dedicate thick volumes.

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