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ON THE NATURE OF HERACLITUS’ BOOK
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(Comments Welcome)

THE DISPUTE OVER HERACLITUS’ BOOK
Antiquity credits Heraclitus with a single book (D. L. 9.5-6), but the nature, even the existence, of this ‘book’ remain disputed. The orthodoxy takes it to be a collection of independent aphorisms that at most Heraclitus grouped into loose associations under a few headings. Heraclitus did not lay out his thoughts sequentially or develop them in a continuous fashion, and thus he did not build one statement upon the other and drive steadily towards a conclusion or conclusions. Because Diels despaired of discerning any intrinsic order among Heraclitus’ fragments, he printed them largely in an alphabetical arrangement based on the names of the authors who preserved them. Some orthodox scholars, as well as some of the unorthodox, take up the line that Heraclitus’ book is another contribution to the new intellectual activity of ‘inquiry’, historiē, which arose in Ionia in the sixth century. The authors of historiai provided the earliest books in Greek prose, and they produced a wide array of inquiries: the cosmologies of natural philosophy, mythological genealogies, technical manuals, medical doctrines, maps of the world and records of foreign travel and people, and what more narrowly count as ‘histories’, for example, the historiē of Herodotus. The histores are a new breed of intellectuals who have customarily been portrayed as stepping beyond the boundaries of traditional learning. They have been credited with deserting the Muses and taking up a critical attitude towards the tradition of poetry and mythology, and above all they have been applauded for introducing the new methodology of firsthand research into their topics. The histores abandoned verse for prose, and their prosaic style became the standard medium of the early Greek philosophers, aside from the notable anomalies of the verse of Parmenides and Empedocles, as well as the earlier poetry of Xenophanes. The scholars who place Heraclitus among the histores take him to be a philosopher who ‘points the way to the philosophical mainstream’, and whose choice of prose for the record of his observations is ‘a deliberate acceptance of the medium of Ionian historiē’. Heraclitus’ book as a collection of aphorisms and as an example of the developing prose of Ionian historiē are two interpretations that do not sit well together. An aphoristic style, whether in prose or in verse, does not readily lend itself to argumentation or to the sustained exhibition of a topic, but more to the declaration of belief, and it does not seem to be a step in the direction of the treatises of the typical philosophers of antiquity. Heraclitus writes in prose, to be sure, and his fragments even provide our largest sample of early Greek prose. What survives of his book, however, does not appear to have much in common with the prose of his philosophical successors or with what little we know about the prose of the histores among his predecessors and contemporaries. Heraclitus has another prose model before him, besides the Ionian historiai. His fragments have more in common with the prosaic maxims of the Seven Sages of the Greek tradition than with the prose of his fellow Ionians who pursue inquiry, and his fragments even share important features with the hexametrical oracles of Delphi, the most important of the oracular seats. The maxims and oracles have many affinities, and the similarities the fragments of Heraclitus have with them in subject-matter and style may be no accident. These stylistic similarities may even be due to a calculated decision on Heraclitus’ part to imitate features of these two oral forms to indicate his sympathy with the Sages and Delphi, and, more important, to display his antipathy towards the new intellectual class of the histores.

It is a commonplace observation among students of Heraclitus that he mimics the cryptic style of Delphi because he takes the obscurity of Delphic utterances to match in significant ways the obscurity of the nature of things. Less comment is made, however, over his sympathy with the Seven Sages. His affinity with both Delphi and the Sages has not generally been made much of, and
the similarity between the oracles and the maxims of the Sages is not widely recognized or put to much service in the analysis of his fragments. The features Heraclitus’ fragments share with the oracles and maxims provide important evidence for the orthodox view that his book is a collection of aphorisms and short texts, and at the same time evidence for his book’s not being just another contribution to historiē.

ORACLES, MAXIMS, AND THE FRAGMENTS OF HERACLITUS

Only a few of the Delphic oracles have come down to us, and likely among these there are legendary responses, purely literary inventions, and forgeries. The oracles we have are generally the more celebrated of Apollo’s responses, which in the voice of the Pythia he addressed to kings and other notables and to cities or a group of their citizens. Apollo, however, receives every class of people, including foreigners, and the questions put to him might be on any topic, although mostly on the homely concerns of ordinary people. Since Apollo was largely a dispenser of advice over a wide range of topics, his answers often have as their kernel commands directed at the inquirer.

The priests who attended the Pythian priestess rendered the important responses into verse, most often into the dactylic hexameters of epic verse, although in many cases answers have survived only in paraphrases into prose. Most responses were delivered verbally to the inquirer, and rarely in writing. Responses were also given in prose, and in many cases, perhaps most, the responses were simple negative or positive answers which the inquirer received by lot. The oldest surviving oracles, down to the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, are brief, from one to two or four lines and up to twelve lines of verse. In many cases what has survived may be merely an extract from the original, and it is known that oracles often circulated in truncated form. In some cases the oracle delivered one-line responses that either became proverbial or provided a justification for what was already a popular proverb by giving it a divine provenance. Polycrates of Athens bought the land where a Persian general was rumored to have buried a treasure, and after failing to find it he turns to the oracle for help. He is simply told, ‘Move every stone’ (PW109, Suda s. v.). Delphi’s association with popular proverbs extends to those of the Seven Sages. Plato furnishes us with our earliest reference to the collegium of Seven Sages and with our first full list of Sages. He also provides us with our first version of the legend that the Sages gathered together in Delphi to dedicate their aphoristic wisdom to Apollo (Prt. 343a-b). The Seven were historical figures, whom tradition treats as contemporaries who knew one another. The maxims are largely prudential imperatives and practical advice for a sound life, although they also include judgments upon a wide variety of human characteristics and upon a number of vices and virtues. Three maxims traditionally credited to the Sages were prominently displayed at Delphi, and two of these acquired great reputations: ‘Know yourself’ (10.1) and ‘Nothing too much’ (10.1). Although these maxims were never attributed to Apollo, they provide the epitome of Delphi’s moral wisdom.

Delphi and the maxims of the Sages stress self-knowledge as a means of achieving a measured life of prudent self-interest, which serves as a safeguard against hubris and any other emotion or desire or vice -- pleasure-seeking, anger, drunkenness and the like -- which draws men into their peril away from their proper moral realm and their prudential judgment. This self-interested restraint was associated with the virtue of sophrosyne in the time of Heraclitus, who also praises this excellence in the verbal form of σωφρονεΐν (B112).

Apollo through the Pythia addresses in his own person the inquirer, invariably a specific audience, often a man addressed by his name, or the people of a city, or some of its citizenry, and in most cases the god addresses his audience in the second-person, often using σος or ήμεις. The answers of a moral import, however, were intended to reach beyond the inquirer and to address the wider audience of mankind. The sayings of the Sages are mostly in the form of imperatives, but they also follow at least two other patterns: those that identify the nature of something and the superlative of some quality. The sayings often vary in expression from testimony to testimony, although in many cases the same stylistic features are found across the collections. Unlike the oracles, the maxims are
not delivered in the first-person; they are addressed to a general audience, and, much like the oracles, their imperatives are put in the second-person singular with occasionally some declension of σα and σεαυτον. Most of the maxims are not above two or three lines of prose, and in a very large number of cases they are limited to two, or three, or four words. The maxims of the Sages and the pronouncements of Delphi resemble one another in their relative brevity. The maxims are bland in tone, with little imagery, which is rarely picturesque; almost all the maxims are possessed of perfect clarity, and aside from one or two possible exceptions, they show no signs of personality, leaving the impression that they were composed by a committee. The anonymity of the maxims is reflected in antiquity’s practice of switching the maxims from one Sage to another and of changing even the membership of the collegium (D. L. 1.41). Demetrius of Phalerum in his collection of maxims assigns them to specific Sages, as does Diogenes Laertius, but Clearchus of Soli makes no such effort in his collection. A sampling of the maxims ranges over such curiosities as, ‘Do cheap weddings’, platitudes like ‘Bless the dead’, ‘Honor elders’, ‘Do not associate with those who are bad’, and more shrewd or insightful admonitions as, ‘Be yourself gentle when being harsh, in order that they may be ashamed before you rather than afraid’, ‘Be subject to the ancient laws, but with a fresh view’15. Yet some of the maxims are beautiful in their austere simplicity, in Bias’ profound observation, ἄρχω καὶ δείξει, ‘Power shall reveal the man’ (EN 5.1.1130a1f.), and in Solon’s mildly melodic, τὰ ἄφαντα τοῖς φανεροῖς τεκμαίρου, ‘Invisibles by visible conjecture’ (10.20).

By speaking in the first-person Apollo’s personality colors the tone of the oracles. Foremost among the god’s traits is his superiority, which is centered in his divine omniscience, and what displays itself as a haughtiness that is never too far from disdainful condescension. When Battus of Thera and his fellow settlers ask some unknown question about their colonial affairs, they receive this openly sneering reply, ‘If you know the sheep-nourishing pastures of Libya better than I / though I have been there and you have not, then I admire greatly your wisdom’ (PW41, Hdt. 4.157). The god delivers a withering rebuke to the men of Aegium who after a minor military success had the audacity to ask who is better than they, and after ticking off those who are their superiors in rich soil, in horses, in women, in men, and after naming the Argives as yet better than all the rest, the god concludes his priamel with this contemptuous dismissal of the Aegians, ‘You Aegians, neither third nor fourth nor twelfth, / neither in word nor in reckoning’ (PW1, Ion Hist. (FHG 2.51) fr. 17.). Apollo displays vividly his proud self-assertion when he informs King Croesus about the unlimited scope of his knowledge and its superhuman quality: Ί know the number of the sand and the measures of the sea, / both the dumb I listen to and the speechless I hear’ (PW52, Hdt. 1.47). The god’s humor also runs through many of these oracles, and it is largely of a disdainful sort that bleeds into sarcasm. This the god displays when he dismisses the presumption of the Aegians by saying that they are not even in ‘twelfth place’ among those who deserve praise for their good qualities. Delphi is also capable of open humor of a broad sort. Erginus, king of Orchomenos, comes in his old age to Delphi to inquire after his prospects for progeny, and he is told: ‘Late do you come seeking offspring; but yet even now / put on your old plough-pole a new tip’ (PW111, Paus. 9.37.4). The humor in its rustic crudity is even grotesque, if one conjures up an image of the old man’s erect penis as ‘the old plough-pole’ and the young woman as ‘the new tip’ impaled upon the plough-pole. Apollo is certainly informal in his speech and demeanor, and in his haughtiness he can be surprisingly rude, as when he addresses King Croesus, the most powerful man of his day and a generous patron of Delphi, as, ‘big fool Croesus’, μεγά ληπε Κροΐσε, (PW55, Hdt. 1.85) perhaps mockingly putting him on the same footing as Hesiod’s quarrelsome brother Perses (Op. 286).

Heraclitus’ personality, like Apollo’s, is much in evidence in his fragments, and he too speaks on occasion in the first-person (B1, 108, 101, 50). He targets for severe criticism a specific person or group of persons and even the citizenry of his hometown of Ephesus. This trait of targeting a specific victim he shares only with Xenophanes among the early Greek philosophers (B11). In his harshness
Heraclitus resembles Delphi, and he is no less clear in his judgments, which in some cases are even harsher in tone. ‘Homer deserves to be expelled from the competition and beaten with a staff -- and Archilochus too!’ (B42). Pythagoras is the ‘prince of praters’ (B81), whose ‘wisdom’ amounts to ‘much learning, artful knavery’ (B129). And the adult Ephesians deserve to be hanged and should turn their city over to their boys because they exiled the best man among them (B121). Again, in character with Delphi’s denunciations of the ruling men of powerful cities (PW6, Hdt. 5.92), Heraclitus does not refrain from censuring the citizenry of his own city and from criticisms of such pillars of Greek culture as Homer and Hesiod. Nor does Heraclitus flatter, and he has good things to say about only two men, Bias, one of the Seven Sages, and Hermodorus, the best of the Ephesians, about whom we know nothing more than what Heraclitus tells us. Yet Heraclitus’ major target is the whole of humanity, which he is chiding for its shortcomings, and thus he shares an important feature with both Delphi and the Sages inasmuch as he too is instructing mankind about their defects and showing them how they may live a better life. Consequently, he too levels imperatives at his audience; for example, B47 takes clearly the form of an exhortation in the pattern of a first-person plural subjunctive, and expresses a sentiment any Sage would be proud to claim for himself: ‘Let us not counsel heedlessly about the greatest matters’.

Heraclitus displays proud self-assertion, when, like Apollo, he claims for himself a superiority in knowledge and understanding over his fellows. He shows this in the charges of foolishness and ignorance he levels against the majority of men, including respected authorities of the past and present. As in the oracles, a mocking or disdainful humor is discernible among the fragments. A comic sarcasm sounds when Heraclitus speaks of the ‘most reputable man’ as someone who ‘knows, keeps guard over, things as they seem’ (B28a). This is another insult of the men of esteem, the great authorities, who, Heraclitus mockingly says, ‘know’ and carefully protect only what is worthless, the looks of things. A more brutal humor is evident when Heraclitus censures those who purify themselves of their blood-guilt in the traditional way with bloody sacrifices ‘as if someone having stepped into mud were to cleanse himself with mud (B5). The image of ‘the beardless boy’ who guides the stumbling drunk gives a comic picture of the stupefaction of those besotted with drink and of their equivalence to an immature child (B117). Homer and Archilochus are the butts of Heraclitus’ cruel humor when he says in B42 that they should be expelled from the poetic competitions and ‘beaten with a stick’, since with his choice of verb, ῥοπτρίζεσθαι, Heraclitus can with a pun upon the verb suggest that the stick they are beaten with is the ῥοπτρός, the staff of the ῥομπτροῦς who sings their songs, and what provides the symbol of poetry. Apollo and Heraclitus, who judge from an unsympathetic position of superiority, are hard critics of human frailties, and hence it is not surprising that their personalities would match much in tone. If Heraclitus is in fact drawing a parallel between his own cryptic style and that of Apollo when he draws attention to the indirection of ‘the god whose oracle is at Delphi’ (B93), he would then be drawing a parallel between himself and Apollo as dispensers of puzzling truths requiring ponder.

The obscurity of Delphi was infamous throughout antiquity. The Greeks commonly called Apollo’s responses ἀνίγματα, and Herodotus has no qualms about describing a response of Apollo as simply deceptive, χρησμός κίβδηλος (Hdt. 1.66). Even the popular etymology in antiquity for Apollo’s epithet of Λοξίης derives it from λοξός, a word for ambiguity. Ambiguity, however, does not shape every oracle. It would unlikely be called for in most consultations about the most ordinary matters, marriages, wills, voyages, and the like, and in those many cases in which the oracle simply serves as a judge between two courses of action the inquirers had decided to choose between. The oracle could be perfectly lucid in giving instructions about religious ritual and in designating the site of a colony, and strikingly unambiguous in delivering a moral judgment or rebuke. Clear, concise, and cruel is the response given to Calondas the Crow, of Naxos, who killed in fair military combat the lyric poet, Archilochus: ‘The Muses’ servant you have killed; leave the temple’ (PW4, Gal. Protr. 23).
With obscurity, however, comes reflection, and thus the god often demands of his inquirer, ‘Ponder!’ or ‘Ponder well!’ (PW46, D. S. 8.21.3, and PW7, Hdt. 5.92). The Greeks were well aware of the careful scrutiny required of oracles, and Socrates shows his wariness over taking oracles literally when, on his learning from Chaerephon that Delphi has declared him to be the wisest of men, he expresses puzzlement and wonders, ‘what ever does the god mean and what ever does he riddle?’ (Pl. Ap. 21b). Heraclitus might find attractive the obscure style of the god for at least two related reasons. First, the indirection of the god parallels for him the indirection of the nature of things (B93, 123), and the god’s puzzling oracles would provide Heraclitus with a suitable model for his own mode of expression for the elusive nature of things. Second, the god demands careful reflection from his auditors so that they may understand his answers, and this parallels Heraclitus’ belief that the obscurity of the nature of things requires the hard work of much reflection (B22, 47), which doubtless he thinks extends to his own ‘words and works’, ἐπη καὶ ἔργα, upon their nature (Bl). There is, however, much more in the oracles that Heraclitus might have found congenial with his own character and also attractive to him in shaping his own technique of expression.

Obscurity can take a variety of forms, and Delphi avails itself of many of them in its deliverances. A large number of the obscurities of Delphi lie in lexical ambiguities. Homonymic ambiguity is common and made easier by the duplication of Greek personal and place names. Hesiod is warned by Delphi to avoid, ‘the pleasant grove of Nemean Zeus’, where he will find his death, and he takes this ‘grove’ to be the famous temple of Zeus at Nemea in the Peloponnesus, the whole of which he then cautiously shuns. But unknown to Hesiod when he travels to Locris he is traveling to a region the whole of which is called ‘the sacred place of Nemean Zeus’, and there he walks into the hands of his murderers. There are also many of the plainer forms of lexical ambiguity where a word or a phrase merely bears a double-meaning. The Thebans seek vengeance on the Athenians for defeating them in battle, and they are told ‘to entreat their nearest’, for help. Their helpmates turn out to be not their nearest neighbors but their nearest in blood (PW54, Hdt. 1.55).

A pun too yields multiple meanings. When the ruling lords of the Corinthians compared their own puzzling oracle about a threat to their sovereignty with the oracle their compatriot Eetion had received about his progeny, they finally unravelled their puzzling oracle by realizing in the punning word-play between the two oracles that Eetion of the township of Petra, Ἐετίων ἐκ Πέτρης, is the ‘eagle in the rocks’, άετὸς ἐν πέτρησι, who will father their menace (PW6 and PW7, Hdt. 5.92). The priests often craft artfully paradoxical language for Apollo’s puzzling imagery. Apollo brags to King Croesus about the incomprehensibility of his divine knowledge by using contradictory imagery, ‘the dumb I listen to and the speechless I hear’ (PW52, Hdt. 1.47). And when he warns Glauclus of Sparta about the peril of perjury, he combines impossibilities colorfully by evoking ‘the son’ of a broken oath, an avenger upon the family of the perjurer, who is ‘nameless, without hands and without feet, but swiftly he pursues, until seizing everyone of them he also destroys utterly all the house’ (PW35, Hdt. 6.86).

More complicated puzzles are formed when ambiguity follows upon the heels of ambiguity, and oracles simply become undisguised riddles when the metaphors are numerous and obviously ambiguous. The Spartans are worsted in their encounters with the Tegeans, and in their effort to identify the god they must placate, they turn for help to the oracle, who tells them to repatriate the body of Orestes. When they fail to find his body, the oracle gives them a clue to its whereabouts in an openly riddling form, ‘There is a certain Tegea in the level plain of Arcadia, where two winds blow by the force of necessity, and stroke is laid on counter-stroke and ill upon ill’, whose solution turns upon the realization that a smithy is described with its two bellows and the blows of its hammer on the anvil (PW33, Hdt. 1.67). The compiler of the Palatine Anthology underscores the riddling
dimension of oracles when he places riddles and oracles together in his fourteenth book.

The obscurities of Delphi turn on various forms of lexical ambiguity and, above all, in obscure imagery. Parke and Wormell do allow for the possibility that the god additionally made use of syntactical ambiguity, but they can find only one example, which survives in Latin and whose authenticity even Cicero denies.\(^2\) Ambiguity and obscurity play no role in the maxims of the Sages, but they play a major role in Heraclitus' mode of expression. We find many of the forms of ambiguity used by the god, but also syntactical ambiguity. As Aristotle pointed out long ago, Heraclitus is hard to read because of his 'difficult punctuation', and Aristotle illustrates the difficulty with the opening sentence, or one very near the beginning, of Heraclitus' book, which is the first sentence of B1: τού δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος ἄει ἄξυνετοι γίγνοναι ἄνθρωποι. The adverb ἄει occurs only once; but, as Aristotle points out, it may be read with the first or the second clause of the sentence (Rhet. 3.5.1407b11ff.). When the adverb ἄει is read only with the second clause, the first clause reads simply τοῦ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος, where λόγος may be taken to be Heraclitus' 'book', what on the veridical reading of ἐόντος 'is true', and what, according to the second clause, men 'always' misunderstand. When, however, ἄει is taken with the first clause, λόγος is cast as something that 'is forever', ἐόντος ἄει. ‘Those existing forever’, as Kahn points out, is a standard Homeric phrase for the 'everlasting' gods,\(^2\) and λόγος under such a description would likely mean something much more significant than Heraclitus' 'book', since a 'book' could hardly be described as what 'is forever' and be the subject of language appropriate for the divine\(^2\). Aristotle gives no opinion on how the ambiguous sentence should be read. Kahn, however, argues that both readings of the sentence should be retained, which issues in a play on λόγος between Heraclitus' book that is about the nature of things and the λόγος expressed in his book as the nature of things.\(^2\)

Obscurities abound in Heraclitus' fragments: 'Nature loves to hide' (B123); \(^2\)‘The unseen connection is superior to the seen’ (B54). The nature of things hides itself away, and what lies hidden is contrary to common sense and the teachings of the respected authorities of old and also of those new experts who would like to displace them. Hidden beneath the placid surface of things, there lies within the essence of each thing a 'strife' between opposing powers, without which the cosmos and everything in it would not be able to maintain itself, and what further outrages ordinary ways of thinking this strife at the heart of things is beneficent and just. The opposing powers within the essence of things work together in their striving with one another so as to yield a unified object: ‘They do not comprehend how each thing quarrelling with itself agrees; it is a connection turning back on itself, like that of the bow and the lyre’. No bow or lyre would exist without the tension between their wood and string which comes from their powers of pulling in opposite directions. The great powers of the cosmos, the hot and cold, the dry and moist, are tightly bound together, even as they strive for dominion over one another, since the destruction of one power is the generation of another: ‘death for water is the birth of earth, from earth water is bom’ (B36). The central message of the logos, ‘all things are one’ (B50), is illustrated in the unity of opposites from the commonplace objects of the bow and the lyre up to the great cosmic forces. An ‘ambiguity’ lies, then, within reality, because in the nature of each object contrary powers coexist, and these powers allow each object to display in a variety of ways incompatible properties, just as an ambiguous word may bear incompatible meanings. In Heraclitus’ day words were written without any sign for their accent, and this eases the way for a punning play upon word-formations like ΒΙΟΣ, which accented on its first syllable means ‘life’ and upon its second means ‘bow’. This ambiguity yields the paradox that what wields death is named ‘life’, which Heraclitus marshals as another illustration of the unity of opposites. Death is life, since, for example, the destruction of earth is the birth of water. Just as ΒΙΟΣ in its ambiguity yields meanings, those of ‘bow’ and ‘life’, which stand in opposition, so too does a single event yield the opposition of life and death.

The paradox of the unity of opposites cannot dissipate before an explanation as a Delphic
paradox evaporates before a full reckoning. The paradox in the nature of things is simply to be appreciated, and its appreciation runs counter to the ordinary ways of thinking which try to split opposite from opposite. When men count some things as just and others as unjust, they divide justice from injustice, but for god all things are 'fair and good and just' (B102), and Heraclitus says explicitly that 'justice is strife' (B80). He puts much effort into advertizing to his audience the unity of opposites, and he drives home his message through commonplace illustrations, which anyone should be able to understand. The examples Heraclitus collects show how the unity of opposites may manifest itself in different ways, and three of these ways stand out among his examples. First, opposing qualities may be displayed by the same object from different points of view, just as sea water is unhealthy for men but good for fish (B61). Second, opposing qualities are united through their succeeding one another, as day and night follow one another (B57, 88). Third, opposites are united through their dependence upon one another for their meaning or for their appreciation, as justice could not be known apart from injustice (B23), or as health could not be appreciated without illness (B111). In each of these sorts of cases Heraclitus draws his evidence from the trivialities of daily life, whether they be located in facts or in language, and men need only reflect on these simple cases to come to an understanding of the logos.

The obscurities in the fragments vary widely in nature, and they are similar to many of those in the oracles. A couple of examples may suffice, since much has been written on the obscurity and ambiguity of Heraclitus. In B34 Heraclitus playfully makes a paradox of the incomprehension of mankind, who 'hear like the deaf', and thus as the φησις goes, are 'absent while present'. Another contradiction may be hinted at in the first two words, ἀξύνετοι ἀκούσαντες, of the first clause of B34, 'Uncomprehending they hear like the deaf'. The adjective ἀξύνετος, as the alpha-privative of συνετός, is based on συνίημι, which among its meanings for 'apprehension' can mean 'perceive', or, more precisely, 'hear'.27 If Heraclitus is also calling up this sense of ἀξύνετος, then he has a neat contradiction in the opening words, 'unhearing they hear', which compounds the paradox of mankind's hearing 'like the deaf'. In B56, which is one of the longest fragments, Heraclitus uses an explicit riddle to illustrate the paradoxicality of the cosmos. The riddle is the puzzle that the Homeric tradition tells us killed Homer in his frustration over not being able to unravel it.28 The 'boys' who express the riddle that deceived the 'wisest of Greeks' bring together opposites when they playfully describe their delousing of themselves in words that may be taken in more than one way, 'what we see and catch we leave behind; what we neither see nor catch we carry away'. Homer's blindness before the 'obvious', τὰ φανερά, which 'shines' before him, stresses the openness of the truth, which paradoxically even children can express, before the incomprehension of most men.

The fragments are rich with imagery, mostly with similes, but many metaphors too. Both Heraclitus and Apollo share a fondness for animal imagery. The god uses 'mule', 'eagle', 'lion', 'bull' (PW70, Hdt. 4.163) to designate specific men, and in a prophecy given to the Argives he speaks of 'a terrible snake of triple coil' (PW84, Hdt. 6.18). In answer to a query about founding a colony the god warns the inquirer that the local inhabitants will turn hostile by charmingly drawing upon images of 'bees' and 'wasps': 'Swarms, of bees shall also quickly become for you wasps' (PW48, Plu. 1.96b). Unlike Apollo, Heraclitus calls upon animal imagery as a way of insulting mankind in their folly and ignorance. The best choose only one thing, 'overflowing fame among mortals', but most men are like 'cattle' in the way they 'glut themselves' by choosing one thing after another (B29). Man is like an 'ape' when compared with a god (B82f). 'Dogs just bark at those they do not know' (B97) is perhaps a comment on the hostile reception new and difficult ideas receive from most men. As in the case of his animal imagery, much of the rest of Heraclitus' imagery is not difficult to make out, as in the delightfully malicious image of Pythagoras as 'the prince of praters' (B81), an antique version of Polonius who prattles on and on. Some images are neatly contradictory and yet make a simple point, when, for example, the value of 'the best' is weighed paradoxically as 'one is ten
thousand’, εἴς μύριοι, ‘the best’ is both one and many (B49). Although much of the imagery’s application is clear enough, its full import is mostly not altogether clear, as when ‘thunderbolt’, Heraclitus says, ‘steers all things’ (B67), or in his declaration that ‘War is father of all and king of all’, a description that appropriates the epithets of Zeus (B53). Heraclitus indulges in imagery that rivals anything out of Delphi for its obscurity. What is the τὸ μή δύνον that one cannot hide from (B16)? Most mysterious of all are the images of B52. Heraclitus identifies ‘lifetime’ with ‘a child at play’, moving the pieces in a game of draughts, and then he sums up with, ‘kingship belongs to the child’. We might recall the paradoxicality of the ‘mule’, whose kingship marks the limit of Croesus’ rule. Much like an oracle is the admonition, ‘If one should not expect the unexpected, one shall not find the inscrutable, since it is also pathless’ (B18), which in its contradiction and obscure imagery leaves Heraclitus’ reader in a state of perplexity, just as the oracle renders the Corinthian lords dumbfounded when telling them their menace is the biological impossibility of a ‘lion’ an ‘eagle’ begets (PW7, Hdt. 5.92).

Ambiguity and obscure forms of expression suit Heraclitus just as they suit Apollo, although for different reasons, and they each exploit obscurities of a similar sort for their own ends. They make use of puzzling images and lexical ambiguities, including puns and other ambiguous words, phrases, and whole sentences, or even whole passages, shot through with ambiguities, as well as some riddles. Heraclitus may differ importantly from Delphi only in his use of syntactical ambiguities, since there is little evidence of Delphi’s doing so. Hence, as most scholars believe, Heraclitus looked favorably upon the obscurity of Apollo, and since he shares some views with Apollo and even traits of personality, it is highly likely that he developed his own mode of obscure expression with an eye upon the oracles. The fragments of Heraclitus, however, also share with the maxims of the Sages important features that are not found among the oracles. Pre-eminent among these features is the use of simple forms of argumentation.

When Heraclitus exhibits the unity of opposites, he does not merely marshal examples of the paradox. Sometimes he only cites an example of the paradox, as he does when he says, ‘The way up and down is one and the same’ (B60). But Heraclitus will also give a reason for thinking that the object possesses opposing qualities or that opposing qualities are united, and he then offers his audience an argument. When he says, ‘Sea water is the purest and foulest of water’, he does not leave it at that, but he continues with the reason for thinking sea water possesses these opposing properties, ‘for fish it is drinkable and life-sustaining, for men it is undrinkable and deadly’ (B61). As unconvincing as this argument may be, it is still an argument, with its conclusion stated first and its single premise stated afterwards. In the difficult fragment B88, the contrary pairs, the living and the dead, the waking and the sleeping, and the young and the old, are each said to be the ‘same’ and all for the same reason, that the contraries of each pair mutually replace one another. Again, the conclusion is stated first and the premise follows, although in this case the premise is clearly indicated by the inferential particle γάρ, which is used often to connect a premise and its conclusion. The exquisite but mysterious B62 may also be an argument with its conclusion making up the first two clauses, ‘Immortals mortals, mortals immortals’, and its single premise the third and fourth clauses, ‘living the death of these, the life of these dying’. Mortals and immortals may be thought to be the same, and thus interchangeable, because when something comes to life it does so through a transformation and thereby an incorporation of what has died. The dead live on in the living, and so what dies lives forever through its transformation into different forms forever. Most scholars take B110 and B111 to fit together, which gives them the form of an argument in which B110 is the conclusion, ‘It is not better for men to get as much as they desire’, and B111 provides its reason, ‘It is disease that makes health pleasant and good, hunger satiety, weariness rest’. In this argument, however, the unity of opposites is not what is argued for; rather the link between each of the pairs of contraries in B111 is what gives the reason it would be bad for men to get all they wish: if they
received only what they wished for, what is only one contrary of a pair, then they would fail to enjoy what they desired because of the lack of contrast. These three arguments found in B61, 88, and 110 with 111 are not the only examples of explicit arguments that have come down to us from Heraclitus. B40, 56, 57, 85, and B94 also may be construed as arguments, and, aside from B57, they do not argue for or make any use of the unity of opposites. All these arguments too lead with the conclusion followed by a single premise, and in B40, 56 and B57 the premise is also introduced by γάρ. Only in B114 do we have a more complex example of an argument, which opens with its conclusion supported by three premises, two of which are introduced with the inferential particle γάρ.

Most of Heraclitus’ explicit arguments are simple one-premise arguments with the conclusion stated first. The Sages too make considerable use of simple arguments of the same frame, where the conclusion is stated first and the premise follows marked by γάρ. Of the one hundred fifty maxims Demetrius highlights in his collection, there are twelve arguments of this sort. Cleobulus argues that, ‘Marry from your equals; for if you should marry from your betters, despots, not kinfolks you shall get’ (10.18). The argument, ‘While drinking do not talk much; for you shall err’, is credited to Chilon (10.2), as well as, ‘Take a loss rather than a bad profit; for the one you shall suffer once, the other always’ (10.10). Fragment B85 of Heraclitus is a good example of an argument of this form, θυμφ μάχεσθαι χαλεπόν· Ö γάρ άν θέλη, ψυχής ώνεΐται, ‘It is hard to fight with anger; for whatever it should want it buys with the soul’, and it also expresses a sentiment in keeping with those of the maxims (e.g. Chilon 10.15). Additional maxims can be made out as arguments, three of which in Demetrius’ collection take a form different from the arguments surveyed, although they too lead with the conclusion. Ascribed to Cleobulus is the argument: οἰκέτας παρ’ οἴνοι κολάζειν· εἴ δὲ μὴ, δόξεις παροινεῖν, ‘Do not punish a household slave when you are drinking; otherwise, you shall be thought to be violent in your drink’ (10.17). What links the conclusion to the rest of the passage is the clause, εἴ δὲ μὴ, which is usually translated by ‘otherwise’. More literally it may be rendered as, ‘but if not that’, and, then, the argument can more easily be seen to be a reductio or something very close to it. After the admonition to be proved is stated, its contradictory is assumed, but its assumption yields a consequence that is unacceptable, which is some result any ordinary Greek should find objectionable: ‘you shall be thought to be violent in your drink’ (Cleobulus 10.17) or ‘you should be hateful to those apprehended’ (Solon 10.2). The pattern these arguments take looks like this: p, but if not-p, then q (where the negation of q and the deduction of p are left unexpressed). This sort of argument shows up in one fragment of Heraclitus, B94: ‘The sun will not step over his measures, but if that is not the case [εἴ δέ μὴ], the Furies, assistants of Justice, shall find him out’.

A number of Heraclitus’ fragments compete with the maxims in their compression of sentiment into a small number of words. The maxims in Demetrius’ collection can be as few as two words, and of these there are forty; maxims with three words number forty-eight, and eighteen have four. In Clearchus’ collection no maxim numbers above four words, and over seventy-five percent of them consists of only two words. From the fragments of Heraclitus, which could be said to express a moral or practical sentiment, B101 has two words, B119, 95, and B96 three words, B11 and B86 four, and B49 has 5. From the fragments that have to do with physics three have the ring of maxims in their economy of expression: B84a has two words, B123 has three, and B54 four words. Heraclitus’ practical recommendation, ‘It is better to hide ignorance’, ὀμοθην κρύπτειν μην εἴμαιν (B95), fits neatly with such maxims as Chilon’s, ‘Let not your tongue run before your mind’, ἡ γλώσσα σου μὴ προτρεχέτω τοῦ νοῦ (10.14). The profound B119, ‘Man’s character is his fate’, ἡθὸς ένθρόπωρ δομίνον, surpasses the maxims in its elegant condensation of an important insight, which is rivaled perhaps only by Bias’ observation, ‘Power shall show the man’, ἀρχά γινόμεν δέξει (EN 5.1.1130al).

The poetry of imagery, in the form of similes and metaphors, and of word-play is amply demonstrated in the fragments of Heraclitus and the oracles of Delphi, and the forms they take are largely common to both fragments and oracles. These poetic features, however, are mostly missing in
the maxims of the Sages. There is, however, much more to poetry than imagery and metered verse. There is another significant dimension within both the oracles and the maxims which is poetic without the meter of poetry. This dimension comprises various sentence-structures, alignments of words based on their syntax, meaning, morphology and sound. These include rhyme, alliteration and other similarities in sound, chiasmus, and various parallel constructions within a sentence, often antithetical in meaning but identical in grammar. These formations are frequently said to be features of the primitive poetry of an illiterate or largely illiterate people, and they are accounted for as an aid to the memory of the illiterate.29 No doubt there is truth in this, but it should not be exaggerated. These sorts of structures of primitive poetry, whether unmetered or metered, are hardly limited to primitive poets, and their beauty provides them with all the motive they need for their employment. Heraclitus’ prosaic fragments share all the unmetered poetic structures that are found among the oracles and maxims, although for the most part the structures are rendered by his hand more elaborate and graceful. The poetic similarities these three ‘literatures’ have in common reinforces the argument for Heraclitus’ affiliation with Delphi and the Seven Sages.

The rhymes of these ‘literatures’ are simple and often depend upon nothing more than the repetition of the terminal letters of plural nominatives; for example, in Apollo’s chastisement of the Aegians, he uses five phrases of two words each (elision yields a single unit), the first word οὗτε and the second word ending in οι or φ, which are close in sound: ὄμεις δ’ Ἀττήσες, οὗτε τρίτοι οὗτε Τέτεροι, οὗτε ἄρτι, οὗτे ἐν λόγῳ, οὗτ’ ἐν ἀριθμῷ (PW1, Ion Hist. (FHG 2.51) fr. 17.). Bias’ rhyming maxim, οἵ πλεῖστοι άνθρωποι κακοί (10.1) is matched by Heraclitus’ longer version of his maxim at the conclusion of B104, οἵ πολλοί κακοί, άλλοι οΐς ἄγαθοί. This sentence from Heraclitus also forms an antithetical parallel, a form strikingly evident in the maxims. The two phrases making up the sentence match one another in a negative fashion, forming a structure of A/a::B/b, wherein the a is the negative of the A and the b of the B, just as πολλοὶ and άλλοι oppose one another and κακοὶ and ἄγαθοί. In a parallel without antithesis, the terms may merely form a proportional parallel, a:b::c:d, of the sort the priests contrive for Apollo for his description of his extraordinary knowledge, κατ’ άκοῆς καὶ ψυχῆς, κατ’ οὐσίαν κατ’ Μορφήν, ‘the dumb I listen to and the speechless I hear’ (PW52, Hdt. 1.47). Fragment B62 opens powerfully with its four words repeating the same ending and each word sounding much the same, άθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ άθάνατοι. These four words are linked as well by a chiasmus, a word-order of abba, where the two a-terms match in some fashion and the two b-terms match one another as well. In the sentence, άθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ άθάνατοι, the a-terms are merely the same word and the b-terms too are the same, and this yields phrases that are mirror-images of one another. The second sentence of fragment B62, ζώντες τὸν έκείνων θάνατον, τὸν δὲ έκείνων βίον τεθνεότοι, forms another chiasmus at the level of syntax: the participle ‘living’ corresponds to the participle ‘dying’, just as the noun-phrase, ‘the death of these’, matches grammatically the noun-phrase, ‘the life of these’: participle, noun-phrase, noun-phrase, participle. Kahn says of B62 that it is ‘in point of form Heraclitus’ masterpiece’.30

Both the maxims and the oracles have their share of chiasm. Aristotle ascribes to Bias a maxim on the nature of old men, φιλόσοφοι ὃς μισήσοντες καὶ μισοῦσιν ὃς φιλήσοντες, ‘They love as if they might hate and they hate as if they might love’ (Rhet. 2.13.1389b23f). This maxim forms a chiasmus because ‘they love’ corresponds to ‘might love’ and ‘might hate’ matches ‘they hate’; its two phrases also parallel antithetically: ‘they love as if they might hate’; ‘they hate as if they might love’. The first sentence of a maxim credited to Pittacus, τὸν θάνατον κακακός μὴ λέες μηδ’ εἴ τὸν ἔχθρον, ‘Of a friend do not speak evil and never well of an enemy’ (10.8), forms a chiasmus both in meaning and in grammar, its two branches flanking evenly the verb λέες in the center of the sentence.31 An oracle Croesus receives has embedded in its first line the chiasmus, ψάμμου τ’ ἄριθμον καὶ μετρο θαλάσσης, (PW52, Hdt. 1.47), ‘of the sands the number and the measures of the
sea’, which is also a chiasmus syntactically. The opening of the oracle the Corinthian lords receive about their danger could be read as a chiasmus, αίετός έν πέτρησι κύει, τέξει δέ λέοντα / καρτερόν σοφίτην (PW7, Hdt. 5.92) in which the a-terms are ‘eagle’ and ‘lion’ with their modifiers, animals of nobility and power which are further tied together as progenitor and offspring; the b-terms signify the two extreme points in the course of generation, ‘conceive’ and ‘bear’.

In Apollo’s response to Battus of Thera, he uses alliterations and plays upon similarities in sound between three pairs of words placed next to one another, μή έλθών έλθόντος, &γαν &γαμαι σοφίτην σευ (PW41, Hdt. 4.157). In the opening of his response to Sparta’s request for Arcadia, Apollo develops alliterations, similarities in sound, and repetitions of the same words: ‘Αρκαδίην μ’ αίτείς; μέγα μ’ Αιτείς (PW31, Hdt. 1.66). Heraclitus combines in four words in B25 alliteration, doubling of a word, and similarity in sound to produce a homogeneous sound for the ear and even a homogeneous sight for the eye: μόροι μέζονες μέζονας μοίρας λαγχάνουσι, ‘Greater deaths draw greater portions’. The homogeneity perhaps is meant to reflect the near-identity of μόρος and μοίρα, ‘death’ as a ‘share’ or ‘lot’. The unity of the four words is tightened by their forming a chiasmus at the level of meaning, deaths (shares), greater, greater, portions, and at the level of grammar, noun, adjective, adjective, noun. Since the same adjective, ‘greater’, is repeated so that it may modify each noun in its own case, two pairs of two words of the same case and number are formed, which yields yet another unifying structure, aabb.32 One of the two maxims of Bias, which Aristotle records, is alliterative: ἀρχώ έπιστέα, in which there is an alpha at either end of the first two words. In the other maxim preserved by Aristotle the opening syllables of the words of the first half of the sentence are repeated in the second half, but in reverse order: φιλόσοφιν ὡς μισήσοντες καὶ μισοῦσιν ὡς φιλήσοντες. The Sages’ exploitations of similarity of sounds, through repetition and rhyme, can produce a pleasing effect, as in Bias’ μή τ’ ευθήνης Ἰοθι μήτ’ κακόηθην παρακάτωμεν (10.5). The Sages have a predilection for parallels, above all the antithetic variety, of which Pittacus 10.10 provides a superbly simple example, ‘Trustworthy land, untrustworthy sea’. Antithetical parallels are also found among the oracles, and the first line of an oracle delivered to the Argives provides an example, έχθρέ περικτούσαν, φθ’ αθανάτουσι Θεοσία, ‘hateful to those dwelling about, beloved to the deathless gods’ (PW92, Hdt. 7.148).

The words of Heraclitus, Delphi, and the Sages share a wide variety of poetic forms that are equally at home in prose and in metered verse, and these poetic forms are common features of archaic poetry. Heraclitus and the Sages also make use of similar forms of argumentation and concise forms of expression. Heraclitus shares with Apollo a taste for similar kinds of imagery and for complicated word-play involving ambiguities of various kinds. The two of them have strong personalities; they are self-assertive, and from their superior epistemic positions they take delight in irony and savage sarcasm. Heraclitus, Delphi, and the tradition of the Sages come together yet again on prudential or moral ground.33 All three stress the value of a measured life and how it requires self-knowledge for its successful practice. Delphi displays its own strong endorsement of self-knowledge and measure, as well as the essential connection between the two, through its prominent exhibition of the maxims of Chilon, γνώθι σαυτόν (10.1) and Solon, μηδέν άγαν (10.1), in the Alcmaeonid temple. The other Sages chime in with their own maxims on one or the other imperative,34 and many of their maxims are recommendations that fall within the purview of either self-knowledge or measure: ‘Lucky be measured, unlucky be wise’ (Periander 10.8). Apollo himself recommends in one of his responses to Croesus the pursuit of self-knowledge as the way to achieve happiness (PW250). Heraclitus provides our first surviving literary allusion to the maxim of Chilon when he declares in B116 that ‘self-knowledge’ is the birthright of every man, and he confesses his own efforts at self-examination, when he says, ‘I went in search of myself’ (B101).

Some scholars have tried to explain the similarities in poetic forms between the fragments and traditional poetry as Heraclitus’ effort to make his views appear ‘more plausible’ by adopting
traditional modes of oral expression. More cogently, others have said that ‘the best explanation’ of Heraclitus’ style and its similarity to archaic literature is merely their oral nature, and since their orality requires their memorability, they are expressed in poetic form as an aid to the memory. Even though Heraclitus wrote a book, he expected his teaching to be transmitted orally among his largely illiterate contemporaries. Kahn dismisses this appeal to a common oral nature, and he argues that these common forms are due to nothing more than the natural assimilation of oral phraseology by written communication. Kahn argues that Heraclitus is the author of a book he expected to be read, and surely Kahn is correct in this judgment, since the complexity of Heraclitus’ style and of his message calls for careful reflection, which would be difficult to carry out by calling upon one’s memory alone and without the text before one. Even though Heraclitus composed a book intended to be read, it is unlikely that the book’s poetic structures that are common to oral literature are due merely to the natural incorporation of these structures into written literature. These structures certainly do show up in the plain prose of other authors, but they are uncommonly conspicuous in the fragments of Heraclitus. Assuredly, Heraclitus chose these structures, and he chose them because he found them beautiful. But very possibly he chose them also to show his alignment with Delphi and the Seven. Even if one puts aside the similarities in moral doctrine and in poetic and other stylistic features, Heraclitus still gives substantial indications of his sympathy with Delphi and the Seven. In his surviving texts he shows his high regard only for his fellow Ephesian Hermodorus and for the Sage Bias, and he gives his clear endorsement of one of Bias’ sayings through rendering it into his own words when making use of it for his own purposes (B104). He gives an insightful description of Delphi’s method of indirect expression (B93), which he appears to approve of, since his own indirection of expression shares important features with it. Yet Heraclitus may imitate Delphi and the Sages, not so much because he approves of their values, but more as a way of expressing his strong antipathy towards the values and beliefs of the histores. He may reject the newly emerging unpoetic prose of historiē because of its enthusiastic adoption by the histores.

**HERACLITUS AND THE HISTORES**

When we take up the fragments of those philosophers who wrote in prose in the period between Heraclitus and Democritus, we find nothing comparable to Heraclitus’ style and tone in their simple unadorned prose, aside from their more highly developed use of argumentation. These authors tend towards a simple vocabulary, largely free of imagery, and free of complicated sentences that come in a variety of poetic structures. Melissus systematically develops argument upon argument to establish his views, much like Parmenides, and these arguments are easy enough to follow, in most cases with conclusions and premises clearly marked with the help of a multitude of inferential connectives, above all γάρ, as well as τούτων, ὅτι, and the like. The prose of Anaxagoras gives much the same impression, although he declares more frequently and argues less. Diogenes of Apollonia states at the opening of his book the conditions he judges to be proper for an author to meet in the exposition of his investigations, ‘At the beginning of every book it seems to me that one is called upon to provide an indisputable first-principle and a simple and serious explanation’ (B1), and the fragments of Diogenes indicate that his own style fully satisfies his requirements of simplicity and sobriety.

Democritus, a younger contemporary of Socrates, was a prolific writer, but little remains of his natural philosophy in his own hand. A large number of his aphorisms on the good life, however, have been handed down to us, and he may have written aphorisms in imitation of Heraclitus. Democritus’ aphorism B64, ‘Many polymaths do not possess understanding’, and his closely related B65 recall fragment B40 of Heraclitus. The aphoristic style of Democritus’ moral teachings is an anomaly among the physiologoi, but aphorisms may have been more common among the medical writers. In addition to the Hippocratic Aphorisms, which provides the physician with maxims on medical lore, the Hippocratic corpus includes a few minor works in which aphorisms play a role, one of which, On Regimen, reflects something of Heraclitus’ opinions. The aphorism, however, is not highly evident
among the writers of prose in the fifth century, and, as Barnes points out, we cannot justifiably believe
that these fifth-century authors of aphorisms are under the influence of Heraclitus’ aphoristic style
unless we already know that he wrote in an aphoristic manner.40

When we take in hand the few surviving scraps of prose composed before or during
Heraclitus’ time, we find a lack of any clear fit between them and Heraclitus’ fragments. Although
Thales likely left no book, Anaximander composed a work Diogenes describes as a ‘summary
exposition’ of his beliefs (2.2). In a passage Simplicius excerpted from the Doxai of Theophrastus, he
preserves the one surviving text of Anaximander’s book, which is only a fragment of a sentence on the
interaction between the elements: ‘according to what must needs be; for they make amends and give
reparation to one another for their offence, according to the ordinance of time’.41 Theophrastus or
Simplicius, just after the quotation of this passage, concludes with a comment on Anaximander’s style,
‘he says these things thus in rather poetical words’. The words that appear to the author of the
comment to be picturesque images drawn from the lawcourts are perhaps not poetic images at all, but
what Anaximander took to be the most natural way of explaining his subject-matter. Little can be
concluded about Anaximander’s prosaic style from this quotation alone. Diogenes Laertius says of
Anaximenes that ‘he used Ionic speech both simple and plain’ (2.3), and we have no uncontested
sample of his writing. Hecataeus of Miletus is a prominent author among the histores, who is
sometimes characterized as the first ‘historian’, and he has the distinction of being placed by
Heraclitus among the polymaths who have no ‘understanding’ (B40).42 Hecataeus wrote a
mythography, which in some of the testimonies goes under the title of Ἱστορίαι. It is an inquiry
into the genealogies of the descendants of Heracles and Deucalion and of other families who claimed a
divine origin, including his own. He is also the first of the Greek geographers with the publication of
his Journey Around the World, Περιήγησις, and some of the research he puts into his book is
founded on his own travels to Asia and Egypt. Porphyry charges Herodotus with plagiarizing almost
verbatim Hecataeus’ reports on the phoenix, the hippopotamus, and the Egyptian technique for
capturing crocodiles,43 and these passages are business-like reports full of careful detail. The ancient
critics found Hecataeus’ style to be clear and unpretentious, but plain and inferior in art to that of the
prose of Herodotus.44

Heraclitus stands out among the other authors of prose and from the histores in his love of
imagery and complicated poetic structures. There is no one among the prosaic authors close to his
lifetime and those within the line of the physiologoi up to Democritus, who writes like him. The only
prose similar to his in its use of poetic structures is the kind of prose without books we find attributed
to the Seven Sages, and his prose shares even more poetic features with the hexametric verse of the
Delphic oracles. Heraclitus does not write like the histores because he is hostile to them and their
historiae. His quarrel with the histores arguably has to do with the assessment he gives of polymathy
for ‘understanding’. His complaints about polymathy concern the value to be put upon hearsay and
book-learning and upon the vast accumulation of information that lies beyond the reach of most
people.

Aside from Heraclitus’ references to his book as a logos (B1) and presumably the books of
others as logoi (B108), he makes explicit mention of ‘books’, συγγραφή, only in B129, and their
reader is none other than that ‘prince of praters’, Pythagoras (B81). He is there described as someone
who ‘pursued inquiry’, historiē, farther than all others, and in his pursuit he selected from these
‘compositions’, these historiae, what he liked, and ‘made a wisdom of his own [ἐαυτοῦ σοφίην]’.
Pythagoras has his own private wisdom, and thus he falls in with the rest of mankind who are like
sleepers turning away from the public world of the wakeful into their ‘private’ world of dreams (cf.
B89, 2, 17). Pythagoras’ ‘pursuit’ of ‘inquiry’ appears from B129 to amount merely to his pursuit of
books of ‘inquiry’, and hardly in his engaging in the ‘independent research’ many classical scholars
suppose the word *historié* ought to connote. When Heraclitus charges Pythagoras with making a ‘wisdom of his own’ in his pursuit of ‘inquiry’, he dilates upon this so-called ‘wisdom’ by describing it as ‘much learning’ and ‘artful knavery’, πολυμαθή and κακοτεχνίη. The stress Heraclitus puts on Pythagoras’ patching together for his own private wisdom what he has gleaned from his reading of *historiae* looks much like a charge of plagiarism, and, in fact, Pythagoras is probably among those whom Herodotus charges with borrowing their ideas about the soul from the Egyptians (2.123).

Heraclitus singles out Pythagoras once again, along with three others, to illustrate the failure of ‘polymathy’ to bestow ‘understanding’: ‘Polymathy does not teach understanding; for it would have taught Hesiod and Pythagoras, and also Xenophanes and Hecataeus’ (B40). Some scholars have thought that Heraclitus does not condemn polymathy outright in this fragment, and his complaint is merely that it *alone* will not yield understanding. The error of Pythagoras and those sorted with him is mistaking a necessary condition for wisdom for a sufficient one. Heraclitus, as Kahn thinks, still believes that wisdom depends upon ‘much learning’, and for evidence of the value Heraclitus puts on polymathy Kahn points to B22, where the search for truth is as arduous as the search for gold, and to B35, where ‘lovers of wisdom’ must be ‘inquirers’ into ‘many things’. Yet polymathy is presented in B129 as if it were disreputable in itself when in Heraclitus’ description of Pythagoras’ ‘private wisdom’ he describes it as both πολυμαθή and κακοτεχνίη. By his putting both of these terms on a par in their application to ‘wisdom’, Heraclitus treats ‘much learning’ as just as much a pejorative as ‘artful knavery’. The reading of books Heraclitus possibly associated with polymaths, those who likely get much of their learning from book-learning, from the books of poets and the more recent *historiae*, and who do not draw for the most part upon their direct observation of the nature of things, as Heraclitus claims for himself in B55: ‘Whatever comes from sight, hearing, learning from experience, these I honor above all’. In B108 Heraclitus indicates his low regard for the books of others when he says that of the *logoi* he has heard none reaches the truth, that ‘the wise’ is ‘set apart from all’. The ‘knowledge’ based on book-learning amounts to hearsay, which Heraclitus likely compares unfavorably in B101a with the epistemic superiority of the eyewitness: ‘Eyes are more exact witnesses than ears’.

If the disreputable Pythagoras is singled out as the one who pursued ‘inquiry’ farther than anyone else, then this could hardly count as an endorsement of ‘inquiry’, and some scholars have thought that the censure of Pythagoras in B129 is meant to sweep up *historié* as well. This conclusion might be thought to be barred by B35, ‘Men who love wisdom [*φιλόσοφοι* ἔνδαρας] must be good inquirers [*ἰστοράς*] into right well many things’, which also furnishes us with the earliest surviving use of φιλόσοφος. Comford suggests that B35 is an ‘ironical sneer’ at the polymaths and possibly at Pythagoras in particular, as the primary representative of inquiry.45 Verdenius, however, takes the irony to go the other way, and thus he finds the ‘ironic sneer’ in B129, in the association of Pythagoras with *historié*.46 There is undoubtedly a problem about harmonizing these two fragments. The severe criticism of Pythagoras in B129 should encompass *historié*, since Pythagoras is there singled out just for his being the one who ‘pursued inquiry farther than all other men’, and for what his pursuit of inquiry really amounts to and the bad consequences that ensue therefrom. But if *historié* is discredited, it would discredit as well those ‘philosophers’ who are obliged to be ‘inquirers’ into many things. Yet this is exactly what we should expect, since it is Pythagoras whom the ancient world credits with the coinage of ‘philosopher’ and with being the first to call himself after this title (D. L. 1.12). Heraclitus is ridiculing the neologism, and he leaves the word to those parvenus like Pythagoras who pursue what they think to be ‘inquiry’. If this analysis is correct, then the earliest surviving use of ‘philosopher’ is one of mockery. Heraclitus prefers the word σοφός. He does allow Pythagoras to make a ‘wisdom of his own’ in his pursuit of ‘inquiry’, and he says that Homer is the ‘wisest of all the Greeks’ (τῶν Ἑλλήνων σοφότερος πάντων), despite the blind Homer’s inability to
recognize the 'obvious' (B56). In spite of these derisive applications of 'wisdom' and 'wise', Heraclitus continues to cherish the word σοφός, which he uses without irony in B50 and B108, and he uses it to describe what is probably the divine in B41 and B32. Heraclitus prefers to stay with the word that the tradition used to designate the ἐπτώ σοφός (Pl. Prt. 343b).

It is not difficult to see why Heraclitus is hostile to any form of secondhand learning, to both hearsay and book-learning. Reliance on hearsay is at odds with the kind of firsthand experience Heraclitus considers to be important or essential for 'understanding', and it also tends to foster credulity. Hecataeus will exercise some critical judgment in his research by trying to find rational explanations for some of the fantastic stories within his material, when, for example, he explains away Heracles’ destruction of Cerberus as the killing of an especially nocuous snake that those in its neighborhood had dubbed 'the dog of hades' (F27). Hecataeus opens his 'history' with a statement of his commitment to the truth as it appears to him and an expression of a critical attitude towards the 'stories' or 'reports' (logoi) of his fellow Greeks, which are 'many and absurd' (Fla). Yet his 'critical attitude' does not amount to an objective examination of his material with a thoroughgoing rationalism, since he is still capable of believing outrages stories. He allows that a ram could talk (F17), and his explanation of the etymology of a proper name brings in the story of a bitch that gives birth to a log from which when buried a vine grows that yields many clusters of grapes (F15). He records in his Journey, not only the fabulous story of the phoenix (F324, Hdt. 2.73), but also that of the floating island of Chembis (F305), and of the Ethiopian tribe of the shade-footed people, Σκιάποδες, who would shade themselves from the sun by lying on their back and raising their feet above them (F327). Dionysius of Halicarnassus reports that the early histores would record undisturbed what they came upon in their investigations, including even 'myths' believed in for much time and 'theatrical curiosities' (θεατρικαί περιπέτειαι), which for the men of his generation were 'very silly' (Th. 5.331f., T17a). For the construction of his own map of the world, Hecataeus draws upon Anaximander’s, and these maps bring a smile to Herodotus’ face because of the artificial symmetry in which they depict the great land masses and waterways of the world (4.36). Yet the pater historiae suffers from the same foibles as Hecataeus, including a highly symmetrical sense of geography (2.33f.). In his Ἰστορία upon the Persian War and its antecedents Herodotus will sometimes stress that he has 'seen' what he reports upon (2.99, 5.59), and since he could hardly be a witness to everything he reports, he confesses that he also heeds the 'reports' (logoi) of others in his research, often speaking of his having 'heard' or been 'told' some piece of information (2.3, 147, 6.82, 7.35). He will also admit when he has been unable to learn the truth about some topic (2.19, 103, 6.14). Despite the critical attitude Herodotus takes from time to time towards these reports (2.23, 3.115, 4.77, 96), his critical discernment fails him from time to time, when, for example, he reports what he 'learned', πυθανόμενος, in his travel to Arabia about 'flying snakes' with wings like bats (2.75-6), or when he records the Persian story about giant ants found in India which are bigger than foxes (3.102). Herodotus through his plagiarism of Hecataeus preserves the latter's fantastic story of the phoenix (2.73). Hecataeus relies upon the reports of others for this story, and Herodotus passes it along through his plagiarism, with only the comment that he does not find it credible. Herodotus mentions Hecataeus a few times, in one case even referring to him as one of his sources (6.137). But Herodotus does not acknowledge his debt to Hecataeus for his information on the animals of Egypt, and it is likely that he owes him much more. Book-learning is just a further kind of dependence upon hearsay and the authority of others, and it invites the 'inquirers', who depend upon it, to fall into plagiarism just as Pythagoras does and years later also Herodotus. The independent 'inquiry' of the new critical researchers declines into dependence upon unverified hearsay.

Hecataeus and the histores of his breed do not live up to the demands of 'inquiry', if this be taken strictly to mean independent research without reliance upon hearsay in any of its forms, the unverified reports of story-tellers and those recorded in the books of other researchers. The
dependence of the poets upon the Muses too amounts to another variety of secondhand learning. The poets and in many cases the histores depend upon untrustworthy ‘witnesses’ for their learning, and Heraclitus sweeps up both poets and histores in his criticisms of their ‘polymathy’ (B40). Heraclitus might also think the Milesian cosmologists are too dependent upon traditional stories in the formulation of their cosmologies. Aristotle ranks the earliest physiologoi with Hesiod as those who believe that every thing comes to be (De Caelo 3.1.298b25-33), and, like Hesiod, Anaximander and Anaximenes take the cosmos to come into being. Since there is no obvious or empirical reason for supposing the cosmos comes to be, Anaximander and Anaximenes might reasonably be charged with being unduly under the influence of traditional stories about the world-order as these may be displayed in the poetic theogony of Hesiod. Heraclitus might, then, have come to think that the physiologoi refashion poetic stories about the world-order into their own cosmogonic framework. Heraclitus, however, may justly claim to be truly independent in his cosmological speculations when he rejects cosmogony and cosmophthory for an eternal cosmos (B30), and his independence of mind is underscored by his being the only philosopher of significance for whom the later compilers of ‘successions’ could find no teacher or predecessor (D. L. 9.5).53

Heraclitus refrains from setting himself up as an expert when he turns his audience away from himself and urges them to listen to the logos: ‘not to me but to the logos harken’ (B50). His audience should rely for their ‘understanding’, just he does, on their own senses, which if properly understood serve them as trustworthy ‘witnesses’, or they may rely upon the testimony of their own language, through word-play, etymologies, and the interdependence of opposing terms for their meaning, or his audience may simply rely upon an investigation into themselves. Many of the early histores were travelers to foreign parts in their pursuit of inquiry. Hecataeus is said to be an ἰδιὰ καὶ πολλὰ πάντα ἐγκατάκειται (T12a), and the tradition depicts Pythagoras as a great traveler as well, studying with the Egyptians (Isocr. Bus. 28), and even journeying among the Chaldaeans and Magi (D. L. 8.2f.). Xenophanes, whom Heraclitus places among the polymaths (B40), was likely also much-traveled, since he describes himself as ‘tossing about’ Hellas for many years (B8, cf. B45), and, like Hecataeus and the histores in general, Xenophanes has a predilection for curiosities in his travels and in his polymathy. He inclines more towards natural curiosities, fossils (A33), St. Elmo’s fire (A39), and the like (A41, 48), but he also takes an interest in cultural novelties, such as the religious beliefs of the Ethiopians and Thracians (B16). Heraclitus, however, has no use for travel, of seeking out the great marvels of the world, as a path to ‘understanding’. He makes no reference to foreign people, either approvingly or disapprovingly, and the only people of a city whom he mentions are his own fellow citizens of Ephesus. The only ‘journey’ Heraclitus mentions as worth making is into one’s soul, in search of oneself (B101). This is a great journey that has no end, as Heraclitus explains by making use of the imagery of travel: ‘You would not find out the limits of the soul by going, even traveling over every road, so deep is its logos’ (B45). In this inward journey one discovers the value of a measured existence for one’s own well-being, which depends upon knowledge of the proper limits of the great destructive forces of emotion and desire. The world-order too ‘lives’ a measured existence: the cosmos is ‘fire ever living, kindled in measures and in measures going out’ (B30). A logos, or proportion, holds between the change from one element to another and back again: sea ‘measures up to the same logos it was before becoming earth’ (B31b). The cosmos is a self-regulatory system that keeps in bounds both spatially and temporally the great destructive forces of nature by regulating the changes they undergo and the interactions between them. Fire, water, and earth are restrained from impinging upon one another beyond due measure. ‘The sun will not step over his measures, otherwise, the Furies, assistants of Justice, shall find him out’ (B94). The heat and light of summer have their limits diurnally and seasonally, as do the dark and cold of winter. Since the logos is common to all things, self-knowledge provides a path to cosmic knowledge, and one may rely on
oneself to come to ‘understanding’. The stress on the connection between self-knowledge and measure furnishes the binding link between Heraclitus and both Delphi and the tradition of the Seven.

Polyphony is full of dangers. Much learning of the secondhand variety fosters credulity and tempts the polymath into plagiarism. Secondhand learning distracts the seeker of truth from trusting in the immediacy of his own reliable firsthand experiences and circumstances for the truth. Polyphony, whether firsthand or secondhand, endows the polymath with a false sense of achieving a privileged epistemic position. The well-read man claims a wisdom for himself based upon the exceptional breadth of his reading, the much-traveled man upon the many far-flung sights he has seen, and the inspired poet upon the Muses’ revelation of a multitude of hidden truths about the gods and the heroes of yesteryear. There is no privileged position, and the truth is equally open to all. ‘The logos is common’ (B2), and men are merely ‘deceived in the recognition of what is obvious’ (B56); they ‘do not think things in the way they encounter them’ (B17). Therefore, there is no need for humans to scurry about, collecting odd pieces of information, since the fundamental truth about reality lies no farther away than in the homely truths of every man’s daily life. Men need observe no farther than such everyday objects as the bow or the lyre, and they need consider nothing more profound than such familiar truths of nature as, ‘sea water is drinkable for fish but not for men’. The superciliousness of Heraclitus is tempered by his concession that any man may be able to achieve the truth about reality (B116) and by his even urging mankind to take up this difficult task (B50). There is nothing essential in the nature of humanity that blocks humans from reaching the truth. The conservative Heraclitus is an egalitarian when it comes to the consideration of the human capacity for the attainment of the truth.

HERACLITUS’ BOOK

Barnes questions the orthodoxy, and he argues that its champions have not provided it with sufficient evidence. Instead of a book of aphorisms, Heraclitus’ book could have been a treatise with its contents unfolding in a continuous fashion. The aphoristic-like fragments could simply be passages of a particularly quotable character excised by those citing them from the larger text in which they resided originally. Aside from discrediting the evidence of the orthodox, Barnes’ argument for his position depends upon his observation that philosophy demands arguments and that aphorisms do not accommodate them. Aphorisms are brief, and argumentation strings together propositions that are usually clearly connected with one another through the aid of sentential connectives and inferential particles. Demetrius of Phalerum, reports Barnes, lays the blame for Heraclitus’ obscurity upon his not using connectives, which would have indicated how the sentences are laid out with respect to one another (Eloc. 192). The paucity of these connectives in Heraclitus’ fragments argues for his writing in an aphoristic style. Barnes acknowledges that Heraclitus does not make much use of connectives in contrast with someone like Melissus. Heraclitus does, however, make some use of connectives, insists Barnes, and he points to ten fragments in which inferential particles are used, mostly the particle γάρ. B2 is among Barnes’ examples, but it offers him questionable support because the portion of the text that contains the inferential particle διό is disputed by scholars. In the second sentence of B1 the γάρ appears to function epexegetically rather than inferentially. In the other eight examples the particle is γάρ, but in only one of them, B78, does the particle show that the text was definitely linked to a lost piece of text. In the remaining seven cases, γάρ links two sentences within the text of the fragment, and the inference they express is complete as it stands in the text. In these seven texts, with the exception of B114, the patterns of the texts match closely, of which B85 provides the simplest illustration, θυμφ μάχεσθαι χαλεπόν· ὁ γάρ ἵν τὸν ψυχής ώνεῖται, in which the conclusion is stated first, followed by the premise with γάρ as the linking particle. Between them Demetrius and Diogenes record eighteen maxims of the Seven Sages which match this pattern exactly: for example, πίνων μή πολλά λάλει· ὅμως ἡ ἐμφάνισε γάρ (Chilon 10.2). Therefore, merely on the basis of these six texts of Heraclitus we would have no reason to expect any more argumentation in his book than what we find in the maxims, since the Sages’ maxims furnish several arguments that match in form the
arguments found in these six fragments. In addition, there are other fragments that likely preserve simple arguments that use no more than two propositions but make do without any inferential particle, such as B61, B62, and B110 with B111. B114 is among Barnes' examples; it does provide a more complex argument, which uses γάρ twice, but it is also an argument complete in itself. The single example of B114 indicates only that Heraclitus is capable of arguing beyond a single premise, not that he wrote texts of argumentation, or any other texts, beyond the length of the longest of the surviving texts. If anything, then, the fragments that Barnes cites for his case largely provide evidence for Heraclitus' style as sharing an important feature with that of the Sages and therefore provide evidence that could be used on behalf of the aphoristic interpretation. Barnes concludes by admitting that in a significant number of cases Heraclitus does not make use of connecting terms and that consequently Demetrius' estimation of Heraclitus' style 'receives some support from the surviving texts'.

Barnes is probably correct in his judgment that the orthodox view has not been proved. It remains, however, more probable than his own suggestion. The great number of similarities between the fragments, maxims, and oracles in their tone, doctrine, and poetic features raises the probability even higher. During the sixth and fifth centuries the oracles tend to be brief from what we know about them. And often they circulated in an abbreviated form, and sometimes their verses provided one-line proverbs. Since also the teaching of the Sages comes in maxims, Heraclitus in his emulation of Delphi and the Sages, and in his antipathy towards the histores, might very well be attracted to a style of expression like Delphi's and the Sages' and thus to an aphoristic medium, which, after all, is prima facie just what the fragments largely indicate. Although the long text of B1 is no aphorism, it yet provides a closed text that neatly sets out in its three sentences the coalition of the logos and the solitary Heraclitus against the incomprehension of the rest of humanity, and thereby it introduces economically the three main participants in his book and their relationships to one another. Furthermore, Heraclitus may have a doctrinal reason for writing a book of short texts and aphoristic-like passages, and this reason would provide another motive for his particular sympathy with the Delphic oracles. Aphorisms would furnish him with another dimension for exercising his obscurity and ambiguity. A set of aphorisms with no intrinsic connection between them does not provide the reader with a clear progression of thought laid out in tightly connected passages. Heraclitus intends his reader to put together distinct pieces and make sense of the whole on his own just like a puzzle. There is no definitive arrangement of the pieces of the puzzle, and they may be put together in a number of plausible ways or the same passages may combine easily with more than one passage, so that the passages must be read by passing back and forth among them in different combinations. But this does not mean that there is no unity in the book. Rather, the unity lies in the wide variety of significant combinations the texts may bear, in which one passage recalls another and that one still another or a number of passages, each casting light upon one another, and yet each passage in its own right may stand very well on its own. Like the appearances of things in nature, the passages in Heraclitus' book may appear to lack any connection with one another, but on examination both nature and his book can each be appreciated as constituting a unity. The evidence continues to mount in favor of the orthodoxy.

Heraclitus is critical of book-learning, yet, unlike Pythagoras, he wrote a book, which presumably he intended to be read. Heraclitus may think himself justified in composing his book because in his composition he remains true to the nature of things, which 'loves to hide' (B123). He writes a book that is just as taxing as the nature of things and demands the reader's careful attention and thorough engagement. Like the Lord in Delphi, and the nature of things, Heraclitus 'neither speaks out nor conceals, but gives a sign' (B93). What is more important, he informs his readership about subjects that are not beyond their ability to verify, unlike the stories of the poets and the histores about the strange people and their curious customs and the fabulous animals that inhabit the faraway corners of the world or the stories about the gods and heroes and their amazing adventures of long ago.
or the reports of the rare and distant marvels of nature. Heraclitus imparts to his readership what they can in principle confirm for themselves. No exceptional or privileged position is called for, of the sort the histores and poets claim for themselves. Men need only engage in self-reflection and linguistic analysis, and use their own senses intelligently. Each man is his own witness, and he requires no further authority than himself: 'It belongs to all men to know themselves and to reason soundly' (B116).5

NOTES


4. Kahn also hails Heraclitus as the first major prose author of Greece ([n. 2], 118). Of the authors of the time of Heraclitus Kahn finds Hecataeus, who is Heraclitus' older contemporary among the histores, to be the author closest to him ([n. 2], 114); cf. Kahn (n. 1), 97.

5. As Barnes urges, and therefore he argues against the aphoristic interpretation ([n. 2], 91).

6. The obscurity of Heraclitus' style has been commented upon since antiquity; for the ancient references, see W. C. K. Guthrie, A History of Greek Philosophy, Vol. 1 (Cambridge), 411. Hölscher argues that Heraclitus' obscurity is in imitation of the oracular style of Delphi and that his obscurity is required in order to remain true to the obscure nature of reality, 'Paradox, Simile, and Gnomic Utterance in Heraclitus', in A. P. D. Mourelatos (ed.), The Pre-Socratics: A Collection of Critical Essays (Princeton, 1968), 229-38.
7. Kahn remarks on Heraclitus' sympathy with the tradition of the Seven in its moral views and traces Heraclitus' selection of prose for his medium as in part an expression of this sympathy (n. 1), 22, 97.
8. The survey of the Delphic oracles depends upon Parke and Wormell (n. 1); the numerical reference to the oracles is their numbering, which the abbreviation PW precedes; the reference to the original citation is given as well. The collection of Parke and Wormell includes legendary and literary oracles as well as those that may be historical.
11. Diogenes Laertius provides the most information about the legends of the Sages, and Stobaeus preserves collections of maxims put together by the Peripatetic philosophers Demetrius of Phalerum and Clearchus of Soli, who likely had access to material on the Sages as old as what was available to Aristotle. Diels prints only Stobaeus' rendition of Demetrius' record of the Sages' maxims, and the references to Demetrius' collection are Diels'. Stobaeus records at 3.1.173 under the name of 'Sosiades' what epigraphical evidence indicates is the collection of Clearchus, a student of Aristotle; for the epigraphical evidence, see L. Robert, 'De Delphes à l'Oxus: Inscriptions grecques nouvelles de la Bactriane', Comptes Rendus d'Academie des inscriptions et belles-lettres ? (1968), 416-457.
12. Parke and Wormell (n. 1), vol. 1, 386f., 389f.
13. For the meaning of sophrosyne at this period, see e.g. H. North, Sophrosyne: Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek Literature (Cornell, 1966), especially chapt. 1.
14. These three patterns are clearly displayed in Diogenes' first book, and his record of Thales provides many examples of the τί μάλιστα pattern (1.35f.)
15. Respectively, Chilon 10.6, 10.7, 10.8, Solon 10.14, Chilon 10.12, Periander 10.16.
16. In B5 I follow Marcovich and Kahn in adopting οκόθον over the olov of Diels.
17. This understanding of B42 depends upon Kahn (n. 1), 111.
18. Parke and Wormell (n.1), vol. 2, xxviii.
19. Parke and Wormell (n. 1), vol. 1, 40.
20. Parke and Wormell (n.1), vol. 2, xxvi.
22. PW441, Cic. Div. 2.56.116; Parke and Wormell (n. 1), vol. 1, 247.
23. Kahn (n. 1), 93.
24. Kahn (n. 1), 98.
25. Kahn (n. 1), 97, an interpretation shared with many others, which Kirk calls the 'inclusive sense' of logos (n. 2), 37f.)
26. See Kirk for this interpretation of φοσίς (n. 2), 227-231.
27. LSJ s. v. συνήθες 2.1.
29. Robb (n. 1), 160.
31. Additional chiasmi might include Solon 10.5 and Periander 10.9.
32. The observation of Kahn (n. 1), 231.
33. North argues that the ideal of sophrosyne ‘inspires’ the maxims of the Seven, and she stresses the moral link between the Seven and Delphi ([n. 13], 10f.).
36. Robb (n. 1), 178.
37. Kahn (n. 2), 115f.
38. Barnes argues against any significant influence, and he suggests that the ‘Presocratic model’ of Democritus’ maxims is the acousmata of the early Pythagoreans ([n. 2], 94).
39. Diels prints chapters 5-24 of the first book of On Regimen and fifteen of the maxims of On Nutriment as ‘imitations’ of Heraclitus. Kirk cites chapters 1.3-24, 1.25, and 1.35 of On Regimen as containing ‘reminiscences’ of Heraclitus ([n. 2], 21); Barnes argues that the content of 1.6-24 is not especially Heraclitean, aside from a few allusions, just as there are allusions to Anaxagoras ([n. 2], 99f.).
40. Barnes (n. 2), 99.
41. This translation of B1 of Anaximander is Kahn’s, Anaximander and the Origins of Greek Cosmology (New York, 1960), 166.
42. References for Hecataeus are those of Jacoby (n. 1), and in his numeration he indicates a testimony with the prefix of ‘T’ and a fragment with that of ‘F’.
43. Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica, 10.3.466B (F324a); Hdt. 2.73, 71, 70.
44. Demetrius of Phalerum, Eloc. 12; Hermogenes of Tarsus, Id. 2.12.411; T18; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Th. 5.331-332; T17a; see Pearson (n. 1, 30).
47. Agathemerus, Ge. Inf. 1.1 (T12a); Pearson (n. 1), 28; Fränkel (n. 3), 343.
49. For Herodotus’ debt to Hecataeus, see Pearson (n. 1), 57f., 62ff.
50. Aristotle, however, mentions only Heraclitus as his example of an early natural philosopher whom he ranks with Hesiod.
51. F. M. Cornford, Principium Sapientiae (Cambridge, 1952), and West (n. 2) provide the two most notable efforts at discerning a heavy debt the Milesian cosmologists owe to mythological theogonies. Others who argue for Hesiod’s influence on the Milesians include M. C. Stokes, ‘Hesiodic and Milesian Cosmogonies’, Phronesis 7 and 8 (1962/63), 1-37, 1-35; G. Vlastos, ‘Cornford’s Principium Sapientiae’, Gnomon 27 (1955), 65-76; F. Solmsen, Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica 24 (1950), 235-48.
52. Aristotle (De Caelo 1.10.279b12-17) and the doxography (D. L. 9.8) ascribe beliefs to Heraclitus that conflict with the rejection of cosmogony and cosmophthory.

53. Comford stresses this singularity of Heraclitus ([n. 53, 1952], 112).

54. For scepticism concerning the voyages of Pythagoras, see J. A. Philip, Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreanism (Toronto, 1966), 189-91.

55. Lesher argues that Xenophanes would count himself among the histores because of the importance he puts upon observation and upon information about nature and people gathered from distant lands ([n. 3], 154f.).

56. Barnes ([n. 2], n. 39) brings up the issue of the contested text of B2. For comments on this text, see Kirk (n. 2), 57f., West (n. 2), 118f., and T. M. Robinson, Heraclitus: Fragments (Toronto, 1987), 76f.

57. Barnes (n. 2), 103.

58. Parke and Wormell (n. 1), vol. 2, xxviii.

59. I should like to express my gratitude to the College of Liberal Arts and the Graduate School of Wayne State University for the award in 2001 of a Grant for Research and Inquiry and a University Research Award, which provided me with support during a stage in the composition of this paper.