

Heraclitus and the Community of Inquiry

Walter Koran

Those who look at the title of this paper could ask themselves: again Heraclitus? Again a Greek? Again a philosopher from early history? Why are we looking again at the history of philosophy, and, in this case, at the very beginning of that history? What can Heraclitus give us? What can we obtain from a source so distant in time, space and reality?

I choose to ask my own questions. This paper proposes to deal with our relationship to the history of philosophy. What are we trying to find there? Maybe some nourishment for our thoughts: we, as philosophers, are thinkers, and ideas and concepts are material for our thought. In Philosophy for Children we express this insight very clearly: we consider philosophy as a discipline and the whole curriculum of novels and manuals is an **attempt to reconstruct the problems** and ideas that philosophers have been discussing in the history of the discipline for about 26 centuries.

In this paper we will try to find some nourishment for our thoughts in the very beginning of Western thought. At least in one of the first testimonies left to us that can be considered without doubt as philosophical. We can read few and isolated testimonies before Heraclitus' time and even though his book has only indirectly and partially been transmitted to us, we can discover there the first piece of a certain philosophical body.

HERACLITUS, ARISTOTLE AND TRUTH

This is an invitation to look more closely at Heraclitus. Heraclitus is most well-known in the history of philosophy because of two ideas that have been generally attributed to him: a) fire is the principle (*arche*) of all things; b) everything flows, changes or moves (*panta rhei*).

This interpretation is at least as old as the first history of philosophy that was written in the Western world: the one that Aristotle gave us about 24 centuries ago in the first book of the *Metaphysics* (especially chapters 3-6). There, he asserts that the wisdom he is trying to acknowledge is that of the first principles and causes.¹ And he proceeds to summarize his own theory that in the second book of the *physics* was developed more explicitly: there are four causes of every event: the matter or substrate (*hylon* or *hypokeimenon*), the essence or form (*ousia* or *to ti en er'hai*), the productive or beginning of movement (*hathen he archi tis kineseos*) and the finality or the good (*to hou heneka* or *tagathon*). In chapters 3 and 4 of this same first book of the *Metaphysics* he proceeds to show how the presocratics anticipated one or eventually two of these principles (*archai*) There, Heraclitus is put together with Hipasus of Metapontus as posing the fire as main *archie*.² Aristotle also attributes the thesis of the *panta rhei* to Heraclitus in different passages of the *Metaphysics*, *De Anima* and *Topics*.³

To be historically honest, we need to say that before Aristotle, Plato, in many dialogues - especially in the *Cratylus*, *Theatetus* and *Sophists*⁴ - gave us a similar picture of Heraclitus. But it was only with Aristotle that this point of view was systematized in the form of a more detailed and general account of the previous thoughts and thinkers. Aristotle referred to some other aspects of Heraclitus' philosophy, like his logic and language which sound extremely strange for the philosopher of Stagira,⁵ but it was his account of the cosmology of Heraclitus that was historically more successful.

For Aristotle, each of the philosophers who preceded him had discovered one - or eventually two - of these four principles or cases - *archai* or *aitiai* - and it was only with him that philosophy found its final development

with his theory of the four principles or causes. Even more, up to Socrates and the Sophists, philosophers had been engaged only with natural inquiry - that's why many times he refers to them as natural philosophers or just physicists - and one differed from the other only in the number or the nature of the material principle chosen to give account of the course of events. If someone only reads Aristotle, the main difference, for example, between Tales and Heraclitus is that the former chose water and the second fire as material principle, or between Heraclitus and Empedocles that the first was a monist and the second a pluralist because he chose four elements instead of one. And so on. The presocratics were all concerned with the same problem - which is the material principle of all things? - and they mainly differed in the nature of their answer to this question.

It is about half a century ago that this Aristotelian approach to his predecessors was revitalized by important Hellenists like K. Reinhardt, G. S Kirk, H. Cherniss, M. Marcovich and others. They showed that Aristotle, and all the Greeks in general, didn't believe in truth as something historic or contextual. For Aristotle, as for Plato and all the ancient Greeks, truth was something historical and eternal. And as Aristotle thought that the problems he was dealing with and the truth he had discovered were eternal, he tried to find meaning in the writings of the previous philosophers in terms of the problems he had raised and the truth he had reached, which, of course, he did not think were only "his." He didn't think that the presocratics might have been concerned with other ways of approaching the truth or that they might have been worried about other problems.

Language can help us to see more clearly this idea. It is well known that the word "history" means something very different in Greek than in modern languages: it means "inquiry." Some of Aristotle's works have as a title "history of..." and they are inquiries on the topic chosen: these inquiries were perfectly formed with no historical reference. Similarly, when Aristotle is doing a "history" on the previous philosophical thought - as in the first book of the *Metaphysics* - he is not doing history in modern terms but trying to find antecedents or dialectical opponents to the inquiry he is developing himself.

MEANING, TRUTH AND THE GREEKS

Surely, this fact does not mean that Aristotle did not make a very meaningful interpretation of Heraclitus and the other presocratics. Indeed, it was so meaningful that it has been alive for many centuries. But it does not mean also that we have to find it meaningful in terms of our problems and interests. Rather, we may need to look for an alternative.

In talking about meaning and truth, it might be useful to look at a paragraph of an article written in 1926 by John Dewey where he stresses the importance of meaning rather than truth in philosophy and in our reading of the history of philosophy:

Meaning is wider in scope as well as more precious in value than is truth, and philosophy is occupied with meaning rather than truth. Making such a statement is dangerous; it is easily misconceived to signify that truth is of no great importance under any circumstances; while the fact is that truth is so infinitely important when it is important at all, namely in records of events and descriptions of existences, that we extend its claims to regions where it has no jurisdiction. But even as respects truths, meaning is the wider category; truths are but one class of meanings, namely those in which a claim to verifiability by the consequences is an intrinsic part of their meaning. Beyond this island of meaning which in their own nature are true or false lies the ocean of meanings to which truth and falsity are irrelevant. We do not inquire whether reek civilization was true or false but we are immensely concerned to penetrate its meaning.⁶

To say that meaning is much more important than truth in our readings of the philosophers of history is far from disregarding the importance of truth. But as Dewey points out at the end of this quote we are looking for something wider than truth when we approach another civilization such as the Greeks. Perhaps historians and especially philologists are more concerned than philosophers with truth in their readings of the Greeks. If the study of Greek philosophy looks like a tripod whose three legs are philosophy, history and philology, at least the philosophical leg is much more concerned with meaning than with truth. We are far from pretending to give a "true" interpretation of the Greeks. Rather, we are trying to find meaningful interpretations, based on "true" testimonies and "true" historical references.

This is exactly what Plato and Aristotle did when they read the previous thinkers. They were trying to give meaning to them. Even though they didn't speak in these terms and they approached the presocratics with an absolute and a historical notion of truth, they could not escape from history and their debt to the problems and reality of their time is shown - willingly or not - in their pretentiously "a historical" account.

In our case, we are trying to give a meaningful interpretation of Heraclitus in terms of a better and deeper understanding of the community of inquiry as a paradigm of getting involved in philosophical inquiry. We are not doing anything very different from what Plato, Aristotle, or any philosopher has been doing when they approach Heraclitus. We rather differ in our assumptions and purposes. At this post-modern time, when truth has been disparaged and teleological accounts discontinued, it would be difficult and naive - even though we are not free from those kind of approaches - to endorse a "true interpretation" of Heraclitus.

At this point we find a connection with our first questions. On one side, we are interested in giving Heraclitus a more meaningful reading in terms of our problems and interests. We are concerned about doing philosophy in a community of inquiry. And we may ask ourselves: is there anything Heraclitus can tell us about our developing communities of inquiry? So, we are giving meaning to Heraclitus and we are taking meaning from him. In this double movement we will be involved in this paper: Heraclitus is speaking to the community of inquiry and the community of inquiry is speaking to Heraclitus. We just want to be interpreters of that conversation. Let's see what we can learn of this dialogue.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF LOOKING AT HERACLITUS FRAGMENTS

We are going to look at and read the extant fragments of Heraclitus. We would like to develop some alternative ideas in our reading of them. As we have pointed out, the predominant reading shows Heraclitus as a theorist of nature and the philosopher of change and movement *par excellence*. We would like to challenge this interpretation. In fact, it is difficult to admit with Aristotle⁷ that it was only with Socrates that philosophers became concerned with ethics when we can read at fr. 119 of Heraclitus that "Man's character (*ethos!*) is his domain." A quick look at the fragments shows that ethic, politics and anthropology were of main interest to Heraclitus.

But if we stay at cosmology and ontology, we'll find out that there is no genuine support for the thesis of the universal flow or change.⁸ Rather than a universe in continuous change, Heraclitus seems to have postulated a universe of opposition, and unity in the opposition. Of course, this is a changing universe but this is not its main characteristic, and as even one testimony from Aristotle shows us,⁹ not everything is changing there. Rather, for Heraclitus the *kosmos* and the things in it are a tensed unity of multiple and contradictory forces.

In the following paragraphs we'll try to support these ideas with the texts of the philosopher of Ephesus and will extend these cosmologic and ontology ideas to other fields also treated in the fragments.

For Heraclitus, it is not easy to discover the nature of reality. The real constitution of things, nature or reality (*physis*) loves to hide (fr. 123), the harmony we see with our eyes is not as powerful as the harmony that we are not able to see (fr. 54). In other words, reality or the reality of things is not as it appears to be. Some powerful forces give things the harmony and reality that we are not able to see in their appearance.

But there is also another reason why it is difficult to discover the nature of reality. In effect, there are two main reasons for this difficult approach or understanding of reality: on the one side, as we have already said, reality loves to show itself in a different way than it really is. But, on the other hand, reality is also difficult to catch because the majority of human beings live like sleepers, each of whom is a particular world, not being able to recognize the common and unique one (fr. 89).

Then, the difficulties in understanding reality are of two orders. On the one side, of reality itself, in its intrinsic hidden nature; on the other side, on the human beings who need a special attitude in order to understand it. The majority of human beings don't have this attitude whose special mark is the openness to commonness and unity.

In many fragments, Heraclitus uses a language of admonition so that human beings should have the attitude that is needed to overcome these difficulties. He speaks like a prayer asking for an open attitude to what in several fragments he calls *logos*.¹⁰ The *logos*, always existent, shows the nature of things, because everything

happens according to this logos (fr. 1). “Everything” or “all the things” is the way Heraclitus refers to reality.¹¹ So the logos is an explanation of reality’s way of being. And Heraclitus explicitly tells us what this explanation is, what the logos shows: in effect, we only have to look to fr. 50 to realize that the logos is the identity of the one and the whole. In other words, the content of the logos is the identity of the unity and totality of reality: what this identity means is that each thing in this universe and the universe itself as one thing is a totality of things and at the same time that the totality of things are only one thing. How can this strange statement be understood?

One of the first things we should do to understand the meaning of these ideas is to put aside, at least for a time, the logical principles of identity, third excluded and non-contradiction, as old as Aristotle. Heraclitus thinks and speaks in a non-aristotelian logic. His language is not a language of predication, it is not a language of subject and predicate. Heraclitus preaches rather than assists. Like the lord in Delphi, he “neither speaks out nor conceals, but give signs.” (fr. 93). The language of his aphorisms is a juxtapositive language rather than a predicative one - it shows rather than demonstrates. Heraclitus loves to use analogies and metaphors rather than demonstrations.

A few words concerning the relationship between language and reality, logic and ontology, can be said here. Heraclitus seems to be coherent in his conception of reality and the way he expresses it. If reality is conceived as a unity of a plurality of oppositions, he expresses it as a syntax that confronts a unit (a word) with a plurality of words of opposite meaning with which that unity identifies itself. A language that juxtaposes rather than predicates. Therefore, if his ontology is not a substance and accident one, his syntax does not need to be a predicative one, and his logic a non-contradictory one. An isomorphism between language, logic and ontology is present in Heraclitus’ fragments.

That Heraclitus’ language is not a predicative one is shown by several fragments where Heraclitus uses no verbs and no articles but just several nouns, one after the other. He opposes one noun to several pairs of nouns or adjectives of opposite meaning. One example of this kind of fragment is the first part of fr. 67 where he says:

“The God: day night, winter summer, war peace, satiety hunger...”

There he identifies the unity of the God with pairs of nouns of opposed meaning, which seem to be only examples that are testimony to the identity of a unit (*hen*, here “the God”) and a whole (*panta*, all the pairs of opposite meaning). God is a unity but at the same time it is a whole, a totality of all the pairs of opposites that are exemplified by day-night, winter-summer, war-peace and satiety-hunger. Heraclitus uses a language of unity and opposition to express a concomitant reality.

The same identity of a unity and a whole is expressed in other fragments. For example, in frs. 59 and 60 where letters and paths are examples of unities that at the same time are holes that contain pairs of opposites inside. In these fragments it is explicit that the fact that a whole is also a pair of opposites does not affect its unity and sameness.

But where this idea finds its more general expression is in fr. 10 where Heraclitus underlines the connection of all the pairs of opposites in the form of a general statement that stresses the unity of all of them and, at the same time, the diversity of opposition that constitutes that unity. All the things and reality itself are unities which are constructs of diversity and opposition. There is no simple unity, there is no dispersed plurality: there is the reunion of plurality in unity or, to say it differently, the display of the unity in the plurality of opposites. It is wise to recognize this identity of the unity and the whole, Heraclitus reminds us in fr. 50.

It will be interesting to study Heraclitus’ most cosmologic fragment. The cosmos - the same for all?¹² - has no origin (fr. 30) and is analogized to fire in the sense that it has a certain measure that rules its movement and will always. This measure is called *polemos* (war) in fr. 53 and 80. Fr. 80 is parallel to fr. 1 and 2: first it says that *Memos* is common, like the logos is said to be common in fr. 2 and like “everything happens according to the logos” in fr. 1, “everything happens according to strife (iris)” in fr. 80. Like the personal homeric divinity Zeus and the impersonal divinity Zeus and the impersonal divinity to *apeiron* of Anaximander, *polemos* (war) or *iris* (strife) govern all things and rule all things. Heraclitus conceived reality as something governed by an essential struggle, a necessary strife between opposites and at the same time as the reunion of those opposites in a unity.

In other words, Heraclitus seemed to propose a cosmo-ontology where the opposition of contraries that confronted one another in a permanent and necessary strife lived together with the reunion of the totality of

these contraries in a unity that embraces all of them. This same idea is expressed, in aesthetic terms, in fr. 51: what is different or at variance *necessarily* (cf. fr. 80) agrees with itself because every difference or opposition needs to be reunited by a unity, in this case, the bow and the lyre. Harmony and connection is not a simple and atomic one but the result of a complex and conflictive union.

That Heraclitus was also interested in politics is clear, for example, by fr. 114. There is a double analogy there between “those who speak with sense (or intelligence)” and “the city” and between “what is common to all” and “the law.” In this fragment what is common to all - logos in fr. 2 and iris (strife) in fr. 80 - is analogued to the law of the city and is, in the end, the one divine law; “the ones who speak with sense (or intelligence)” are no others but the waking who share the common and one world and don’t turn away to their particular one (fr. 89). It is also interesting to notice that in the assessment that all the human laws are nourished by the divine one. A tension between two spheres, the human and the natural or divine, also underlies the fragment. And this is the first step of a path that will concentrate the main intellectual expressions of the V century B.C.: the comedy (Aristophanes) and the tragedy (Sophocles, Euripides), the sophists and their discussions with Socrates. In effect, fr. 114 contains the first appearance in philosophical testimonies of the concept of law and is, at the same time, the first testimony of a questioning of the legitimacy of the instituted laws that will cross the intellectual and political field of the athenian polis towards its fall in the IV century.

It is clear that Heraclitus is answering in fr. 114 some questionings of the laws of the polis. Heraclitus attempts to support the law of the city are based on a divine law, that according to other testimonies - like fr. 32, 67 and 102 - was not the sphere of the traditional Olympic gods nor a transcendent personal or impersonal god but an immanent law that regulates the dynamic of reality in terms of opposition and unity.

Concerning the ethics of Heraclitus, we should start from fr. 119: “Human being’s character is her/his domain.” (*ethos anthropoi domain*). If *ethos* is the way of being of each person in her/his habits, in her/his constant disposition, then Heraclitus is saying that there is nothing outside human beings that determines its life but its own disposition and attitude towards it. This can be understood in the context of his criticism of Homer¹⁴; in this case, in the homeric assigning of human responsibility to external factors like *Ate* or *Moirai* or another divinity. In this sense, this fragment poses one of the bases of ethics: no external factor can avoid the responsibility of a person’s life.

Much more can be said regarding Heraclitus’ ideas on ethics, especially as they concern his dichotomy awakers/sleepers, but also about other fields. But perhaps it’s time to think about what Heraclitus has to say to the Community of Inquiry (COI).

THE COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY AS THE TENSE UNITY OF MULTIPLE FORCES

Perhaps Heraclitus’ sayings can shed some light on the understanding of the ontology and legality of a COI, especially to some aspects of this educational paradigm that are usually undervalued.

There is one key concept to begin the dialogue between Heraclitus and the COI. This concept is behind the words *koinon* and community. In effect, *Koinon* is one of the two adjectives in neutral gender that Heraclitus substantiates by the article to express the idea of “the common.”¹⁵ The adjective *koinos* is ethimologically related to the verb *koinoneo* and the substantive *koinonia* that means, precisely, community.

The adjective “common” and the expression “the common” are extremely important in Heraclitus’ fragments. As we saw, “the logos is common” (fr. 2) and “there is need to follow the common” (also fr. 2); the war that is father and king of all is also common (fr. 53 and 80) and the only world that really exists is common for the ones who are awake (fr. 89). “To think is common to everyone.” (fr. 113) Even more, the common, the only divine law, should be the final object of reliance for those who speak with sense or intelligence (fr. 114). Then, the common - and with it community - is, for Heraclitus, the universal support and guide for the world of appearance, both descriptively and prescriptively.

These fragments contain the idea that a shared order and a universal law regulates and should regulate the events. It seems that for Heraclitus, every human, in a sense, is under this commonness and that, in another sense, *ought to be* under it. What are the different senses of this universality, descriptively and prescriptively? That the commonness is universal means that there is no way to create a private world apart from the legality of the shared law, cosmos, or logos. (How could we hide from what never see?, fr. 16) That the commonness *should*

be universal means that even though this legality is universal and applies to every single being, not all of them recognize it but ought to recognize it. In this recognition, it seems that Heraclitus possesses the highest way of being human: in effect, the way in which humans are nearest to the divine is by recognizing their part in this commonness, by communing one with another and with the whole.¹⁶ The fact that they do not recognize this commonness does not mean that it will not affect them or that they will not take part on it: “Even sleepers are workers and co-operators in what goes on in the world” (fr. 75), but being present they are really absent (fr. 34) and they will ultimately lose their chance to divinize their lives.

One general implication that can be taken from the importance that Heraclitus gives to the commonness is the relevance of developing communities in our present time - especially in these times of exacerbated individualism and superficial ways of living, where the idea of “sharing” is so devalued. As simply as it looks, if human beings are social beings, the developing of communities can be a way of “humanizing” this poor world of stimulation of a thin individual success. In Heraclitus’ terms, it would be a way of awakening people from their unreal dreams of avoidance of community.

But more concretely, the way I would like to begin the dialogue between these Heraclitean ideas and the community of inquiry is by posing a set of questions to our COI: Is there a common world in a COI? What is it like? How can we access it? What does it imply to belong to it? Is there space for private worlds within the common world of a COI? How are they possible? What is the relationship between the private and the common in a COI? Is there a common legality in a COI? Which one? How can a COI be an object of our reliance? What are we supposed to rely on in a COI? Where and to what extent should the members of a COI follow it? What’s the importance of the recognition of the sense of belonging to a whole in a COI? Is there need to recognize something else belonging to a COI? Which is the best way of belonging to a COI? What’s the role of the prescriptive sphere in a COI? Is there a divine sphere in a COI? If there is, is it imminent or transcendent?

Let us look now, for a moment, to the epistemological assumptions of Heraclitus and aCOI. For both, there is no individual knowledge or knowledge in isolation. This social character of knowledge is valid, in both cases, for the process of knowing and for the products of that process. There are many ways by which Heraclitus emphasizes the social aspect of the process of knowing: by his condemnation of those who “live as if they had a private understanding” (fr. 2), as if such a thing could be desirable or even possible, yet in the case of his own person (“Listening not to me...,” fr. 50); by his condemnation of the sleepers, each of whom turns away to their private world (fr. 89); and probably, by his assertion that “The wise is one thing, to be acquainted with true judgment, how all is steered through all” (fr. 41) which could mean that wisdom is the recognition of the interrelation of everything and, if that is true, then it should be also true of the process of knowing.

This fr. 41 has many rich implications for a COI. Let’s consider the phrase “all is steered through all.” A wise person recognizes this legality. What does this statement imply? First, that there is no pure “self-government” or “autocracy” for any being in this world. No one can govern all the forces that play in their own field. Second, there is a horizontal and interrelated structure of power in the world; there is no hierarchical power; there is no personal or restricted focus of power. Power crosses us and radiates in between all of us and in none of us. My power depends on you as well as your power depends on me. And both powers depend on our interrelation and our relationship to the whole. Does this make sense to a COI?

Both processes of knowing imply an active attitude. For Heraclitus, as in the process of philosophical inquiry in a COI, it is very important to listen and watch carefully (fr. 55), not only to hear or open our eyes: perceptual senses and experience may be useless without good sense or conduct (fr. 107), another way of calling for open mindedness. But even more, a special attitude is needed to know, a certain faith, hope, confidence or reliability: it is because there is a lack of hope, faith or confidence that knowing escapes (fr. 86); it is also necessary to expect the unexpected (fr. 18), to be in a philosophical attitude towards reality in order to distinguish each thing according to its real -hidden- nature and show how they really are (fr. 1), in order to look for the extraordinary in the ordinary, to go through what appears, towards what is hidden (fr. 12 3), to look for the invisible, powerful (fr. 54) and complex (51) harmony behind what appears. In this sense, Heraclitus speaks to the members of a COI: it is necessary to be open minded and prepared to go where we are conducted by the process taking place at the community. And it is right that we have confidence in it, hoping to expect the unexpected: to follow the inquiry where it leads with all our senses and humanity alert, and not to drive the inquiry where we would like it to go: there, we would just find ourselves in an aporos, with no exit.

The process of knowing in a COI looks like the circumference of a circle where the beginning and the end are the commonness of the world, the recognition of the unity that goes across the plurality of differences or, to see it from the other side, the recognition of the plurality of oppositions in which that unity displays. In spite of the fact that this recognition is available to everyone ("To think is common to everyone," fr. 113), the majority (fr. 1, 2) lives in the shadows, they neither think nor know (fr. 17), they don't know how to listen and speak (fr. 19). It is not enough to speak with intelligence or sense: it is necessary to follow the common (fr. 1145). Again, the ones who are not capable of the recognition of the commonness and unity of the whole appear deaf: being present they are really absent (fr. 34). Does this make sense to the members of a COI?

Anthropological consequences of these thesis can be offered: it seems that, for Heraclitus, to be a real person, a person with dignity and humanity, means to take part in the whole: it is clear that the metaphor of the awakers and the sleepers speaks in this sense: only the awakers, but not the sleepers, are really conscious and aware of what is going on. It seems that, for Heraclitus, to be a person in its integrity and its virtue is to be a part of a whole: it looks as if Heraclitus assumes a social and communal concept of person: there are no persons in isolation, out of a social environment where they can develop and grow as part of a whole, a community.

Again, these theses can lead us to some questions that could help us understand the dynamic of a COI. What do we understand by knowledge in a COI? Are COIs looking for knowledge, thought, inquiry, wisdom or what? What special attitude is needed to take part in a COI? What should be expected in taking part in a COI? What does it mean to be really present in a COI? What's the role of perception in philosophical inquiry taking place at a COI? In the social process of constructing knowledge in a COI, can we have private and public knowledge? What about the people who have an individualist attitude in a COI? Are they still persons in that COI? Are they still subjects of knowledge? Are they still subjects of philosophical inquiry? Do we have "sleepers" and "awakers" in a COI? What do we mean by that? If there are awakers and sleepers, are the latter workers and cooperators of what is going on on a COI? What does that mean? What is needed to "be awake" in a COI? Is there a final wisdom we are trying to acquire at a COI? What does it mean to be a person in a COI?

Can Heraclitus' cosmology throw some light on the better understanding of a COI? What about the role of unity and plurality in a COI? Heraclitus points out that reality is a world of differences and the unity of this opposite difference. For him, it is important both to recognize the unity of the world and the opposition that inhabits that unity. Reality is a striven unity and, at the same time, strife is fair and necessary (fr. 80). The strife of opposites is fair, good and beautiful (fr. 102). The world hides a powerful harmony (fr. 54) that is also a complex and tensed harmony of opposite forces (fr. 51). And it is not a static harmony: opposites change round and nourish one to the other (fr. 62 and 88).

A whole set of questions arises for our COI. Have we given enough space for difference, tension and opposition in our COI? What instances do we have of difference and opposition in a COI? Are difference, tension and opposition considered a value, a liability, or none in a COI? Is a COI considered a striven or non striven unity? Is opposition and conflict tragic or desirable in a COI? Are the opposites changing round in a COI? In what sense? Are all the different COIs taking part of a one single and global COI? In that case, is that global community a unifying community or a unity that inhibits difference and opposition? Are COIs moving towards difference or toward unity?

As in the beginning, we have more questions than answers. It is worth noting that our questions have changed. We began asking questions about the sense and value of connecting Heraclitus with the community of inquiry. And now we are asking Heraclitean questions of the community of inquiry. It seems that we have just opened a dialogue. But if at least one of these questions help us to think better about our practice, perhaps the attempt has deserved the effort and patience we have shared.

SELECTION OF HERACLITUS' FRAGMENTS

1) DK 1

Of this logos which as I describe it men always prove to be uncomprehending, both before they have heard it and then once they have heard it. For although all things happen according to this logos men are like people

of no experience, even when they experience such words and deeds as I explain, when I distinguish each thing according to its constitution and declare how it is; but the rest of men fail to notice what they do after they wake up just as they forget what they do when asleep.

2) DK 2

Therefore, it is necessary to follow the common; but although the logos is common, many live as though they had a private understanding.

3) DK 10

Things taken together are whole and not whole, something which is being brought together and brought apart, which is tune and out of tune; out of all things there come a unity, and out of a unity all things.

4)DK12

Upon those who step into the same rivers different and different waters flow.

5)DK18

If one does not expect the unexpected one will not find it out, since it is not to be searched out, and difficult to compass.

6) DK 23

They would not know the name of Dike, if those things did not exist.

7) DK 26

A man in the night kindles a light for himself when his vision is extinguished; living he is in contact with the dead, when asleep, and with the sleeper when awake.

8) DK 30

This world-order [the same of all] did none of gods or men make, but it always was and is and shall be: an everliving fire, kindling in measures and going out in measures.

9) DK 32

One thing, the only truly wise does not and does consent to be called by the name of Zeus.

10) DK 36

For souls it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth; from earth water comes to be, and from water, soul.

11) DK 41

The wise is one thing, to be acquainted with tune judgment, how all things are steered through all.

12) DK 45

You would not find out the boundaries of soul, even by travelling along every path: so deep a measure does it have.

13) DK 48

For the bow, the name is life, but the work is death.

14) DK 50

Listening not to me but to the logos it is wise to agree that all things are one.

15) DK 51

They do not apprehend how being at variance it agrees with itself: there is back-stretched connection, as in the bow and the lyre.

16) DK 52

Time-life is a child playing, playing draughts: the kingdom is a child's.

17) DK 53

War is the father of all and the king of all, and some he shows as gods, others as men; some he makes slaves, others free.

18) DK 54

An unapparent connection is stronger than an apparent one.

19) DK 55

The things of which there is seeing and hearing and perception, these do I prefer.

20) DK 59

Of letters, the way is straight and crooked: it is one and the same.

21) DK 60

The path up and down is one and the same.

22) DK 61

Sea is the most pure and the most polluted water, for fishes it is drinkable and salutary, but for man it is undrinkable and deleterious.

23) DK 62

Immortals mortals, mortals, immortals, living their death and dying their life.

24) DK 64

Thunderbolt steers all things.

25) DK 67

God is day night, winter summer, war peace, satiety hunger; he undergoes alteration in the way that fire, when it is mixed with spices, is named according to the scent of each of them.

26) DK 75

Even sleepers are workers and cooperators in what goes on in the world.

27) DK 80

It is necessary to know that war is common and right is strife and that all things happen by strife and necessity.

28) DK 88

And as the same thing there exists in us living and dead and the waking and the sleeping and young and old, for these things having changed round are those, and those having changed round are these.

29) DK 89

The waking share one common world, but when asleep each man turns away to a private one.

30) DK 90

All things are an equal exchange for fire and fire for all things; as goods are for gold and gold for goods.

31) DK 93

The lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither speaks out nor conceals, but gives a sign.

32) DK 94

Sun will not overstep his measures; otherwise the Erinyes, ministers of justice, will find him out.

33) DK 107

Evil witnesses are eyes and ears for men, if they have souls that do not understand their language.

34) DK 114

Those who speak with sense must rely on what is common to all, as a city must rely on its law, and with much great reliance. For all the laws of men are nourished by one law, the divine law. For it has as much power as it wishes and is sufficient for all and is still left over.

35) DK 117

A man when he is drunk is led by an unfledged boy, stumbling and not knowing where he goes, having his soul moist.

36) DK 118

A dry soul is wisest and best.

37) DK 119

Man's character is domain.

38) DK 123

The real constitution of things is accustomed to hide itself.

NOTES:

1. Cf. *Metaphysics*, A 3, 983a24 ss.
2. *Ibid*, 984a7-8.
3. Cf. *Metaph.* A 6,987a, G 5, 1010a and M4, 1078b; *De An* A 2, 405a and *Top* A 2, 104b.
4. *CE*, for example, *Crat.* 401d-402c, 413 b-c (?), 439c-440a; *Theat.* 152c-153d, 160d. 177c-183c; *Soph.* 242c ss.
5. Cf., for example, *Rethor.* 111 5, 1407b, *Metaph.* G 3, 1005b, D 7, 1012a, K 5, 1062a y K 6, 1063b.
6. *Philosophy and Civilization.*, first published in *Philosophical Review* 36 (1927), the underlined is ours.

7. Cf. *Metaph A* 6, 987b1 ss.
8. *I have discussed in detail this idea at Herdclito y un Ho que no cesa de moverse., Cuadernos de Filosofia XXN*, No. 39 (diciembre 1993), p. 81-92.
9. *De Caelo*, I 298b where Aristotle asserts that for Heraclitus all the other things change or move except one from which are generated all the others.
10. *Walking Marcovich edition of the fragments (EM)*, the term *logos* has 9 appearances in the fragments. (DK fr. 1 (2 times), 2, 31, 39, 45, 45, 50, 87, and 108. In fr. 1, 2, 50 and 108 it is seemed to be used technically in the sense that if something related to the realm of discourse (the *logos* is something that is hear-the verb *akouein* appears in fr. 1, 50 and 108. In fr. 2 the majority of people disregard the *logos* that is common (again common, *koinds* or *xunds*, like in fr. 89 where the world, *kosmos*, is common and one). The translation of the word *logos* is a controversial and endless problem. Rather, we think that more important than the translation of *logos* is its content, expressed in fr. 50.
11. In the greek of Heraclitus *panta-all things, everything-is* worthily read as *panta to dnta* in fr. 1 and 10. The greek expressions for reality or being, like *to on*. or *to einai*. don't appear in the fragments. In fr. 123, *ph* "ysis also expresses the real or true nature of everything.
12. The authenticity of this phrase is doubted by the editors. Cf., for example, Conche, *Hiraclite. Fragments*, Paris: Puf, 1991 (1986), p. 279-286.
13. Again, both appearances of *panta* in Fr. 53 could be worthily understood by *panta to dnta*.
14. Cr. fr. 42, 56.
15. The other expression he uses is *to xundn* Heraclitus uses more to *xyndn* (fr. 2, 80, 103, 113, 114) than to *koinds* (fr. 89). But both expressions have the same meaning. In fr. 114 there is a word game between the expression *xiin nooi* (with sense or intelligence) *xynoi* (common). By that game, Heraclitus suggests that it is not enough to speak with intelligence but there is need to follow, the common, the universal, the law.
16. This same idea expressed by Heraclitus is a constant in the way the greeks felt their relationships to the communities they belong to and the recognition of the natural law that prevailed over it, whatever it was. In this sense, fr. 114 is just one of the first links in a large chain. And this belonging and recognition usually meant that the predominance or supremacy of the community or the natural law could end in a tragic way for the individuals. Let's think for a minute, just in a couple of examples: remember the arguments by which Socrates neglects from escaping of prison in the *Crito* and his dialogue there with the personified laws of the polls that concludes in the morality of accepting his condemnation or in one of Sophocles' drama, the tragedy of *Oedipus*, whose ignorance of the common law provokes the plague in his polls and his recognition of that law the salvation of his polis but his expulsion of it.

Address correspondence to:

Walter O. Kohan
 University of Buenos Aires
 Munecas 834 PB "C"
 (1414) Buenos Aires
 Argentina