

# Book of Abstracts

8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the International Association for Presocratic Studies

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# Abstracts

## Pherecydes' winged oak and the vegetal cosmology of the Ancient Greeks

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1 Jul  
10h15  
Session 1  


In his study of Pherecydes' image of the winged oak (ὑπόπτερος δρυῖς), Martin L. West stated that the "Cosmic Tree" was "another conception that is unfamiliar in Greece but well established in various other places" (West 1971, 55). Pherecydes must have borrowed such an idea from the Orient. Without denying Eastern influences, we would like to reassess the resonance of such an image in the Greek context. A key argument for West is the neutralisation of the use of vegetal imagery in Hesiod's *Theogony*: the 'roots' of the Earth and Sea used "by Hesiod and others" must be declared "to be a dead metaphor" (West 1971, 58). However, it has been argued that both Hesiod and Anaximander used tree imagery in the context of cosmology and cosmogony not to refer to the existence of an actual cosmic tree, but in order to suggest that cosmogonic processes could be thought of by analogy with plant growth (Macé 2020; 2023).

We would therefore like to test the following hypothesis: could the comparison with Hesiod's and Anaximander's processual use of vegetal analogies allow us to shed new light on Pherecydes' oak as the representation of a stage of Pherecydes' cosmogony within a processual scheme of vegetal growth applied to the universe? This hypothesis will be discussed in the light of recent reappraisals of Pherecydes in the ancient cosmogonic tradition going back to Hesiod (Santamaría 2021; Gheerbrant 2021). Lucia Saudelli's closer look at the testimonies suggests that a preliminary task in this direction should be new comparisons between the structure and parts of Pherecydes' oak and those of the cosmic bodies whose roots are described in Hesiod's Tartarus (Saudelli 2011).


GHEERBRANT, Xavier. 2021. "Phérécyde de Syros D6/R23 (LM) réexaminé." *Philosophie antique. Problèmes, Renaissances, Usages*, no. 21 (December): 31–62.

MACÉ, Arnaud. 2020. "Hésiode et les racines du Monde: la cosmogonie et le schème de la croissance végétale." In *Crescere/Svilupparsi. Teorie Biologiche e Mediche, Storia Sociale et Rappresentazioni Letterarie e Culturali Nel Mondo Antico e Contemporaneo*, edited by Franco Giorgianni, Pietro Li Causi, Rosa Rita Marchese, and Maria Cristina Maggio, 59–76. Generazioni. Letteratura e Altre Saperi. Palermo: Palermo University Press.

\_\_\_\_\_. 2023. "De l'univers à l'embryon: le végétal comme source d'analogies opératoires chez Anaximandre et dans le traité Hippocratique *De la génération / De la nature de*

*l'enfant.*" In *Analogies Végétales Dans La Connaissance de La Vie de l'Antiquité à l'Âge Classique*, edited by Sarah Carvallo and Arnaud Macé. Sciences: Concepts et Problèmes. Besançon: Presses Univ. Franche-Comté.

- SANTAMARÍA, Marco Antonio. 2021. "The Emergence of the World in Early Greek Theogonies from Hesiod to Acusilaus." In A. Bernabé-R. Martín Hernández (Eds.), *Narrating the Beginnings*, Wiesbaden, Springer, 117–37. Wiesbaden: Springer.
- Saudelli, Lucia. 2011. "Le chêne et le voile de Phérécyde. Note sur un témoignage du gnostique Isidore (7 B 2 DK, F 76 S)." *Revue des Études Grecques* 124 (1): 79–92.
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1 Jul  
10h15  
Session 1  


## Meteorology and basic substances in Anaximander

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This paper deals with the meteorology of Anaximander and argues that, in his theory, the drying up of the sea cannot be accounted for in terms of the kind of conflict envisaged in his main fragment between the four basic substances: the hot, the cold, the wet and the dry (DK 12A9 and B1). In so doing, the paper takes issue with a classic interpretation of Anaximander's cosmology advocated by Jaap Mansfeld ('Anaximander's fragment: another attempt', *Phronesis* 56 [2011]: 1-32). This issue also reveals a wider philosophical problem: are meteorological phenomena in general amenable to this conflict according to Anaximander? In the conclusion, a few conjectural remarks are made regarding what may have been the real explanandum of this theory. Mansfeld's interpretation is based on two disputable assumptions: (i) Anaximander advocates a four-elements theory in which natural substances, including the Sun and the sea, are constituted by fire, air, water and earth, and (ii) there is for Anaximander a one-to-one correspondence between each of these elements and one of the four basic substances, so that fire is hot, air is cold, water is wet and earth is dry. One could question Mansfeld's overall interpretation by discussing just these two assumptions. But my target in this paper is much more specific. Assuming for the sake of argument that both (i) and (ii) are correct, and conceding that the desiccation of the sea is indeed an action of the hot on the wet (where the Sun represents the hot identified with fire, and the sea represents the wet identified with water), it still does not follow that we can explain the desiccation of the sea in terms of the conflict that Anaximander describes in his main fragment.

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## Thought Experiments and Counterintuitive Thinking Patterns in Western Greece

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1 Jul  
14h00  
Session 2

In this paper I will address some instances of an issue that has received some attention in recent years, in connection with research on what counts as a real proof and on argumentative patterns employed by serious thinkers and jesting amateurs alike. I mean the early appearance of what can be termed a thought experiment, that is, a reasoning device whereby a situation is outlined which rarely (if at all) may be encountered in real life or utterly challenges common sense expectations. To this type of argumentative strategies belong such counterintuitive thinking patterns like the paradoxes and similar counterfactual conundrums that became widely diffused among 5th century intellectuals.

I will argue that this trend of thought, which may already be found in 6th century Presocratics, like Xenophanes and Parmenides, found early on its way to Sicily. There, it is conspicuously instanced in Epicharmus' *αὐξανόμενος λόγος* or "growing argument" (23B2DK), which builds up on the idea of a potentially infinite series of material states and became most likely both a source and a target for some of Zeno's extant arguments against plurality and motion. Such a pair of thought experiments is then shown to be a "chain reaction", as the strategies employed by both thinkers —like the shocking analysis of growth and motion alike as taking place by sharply marked-off steps, i.e. as an infinite series of instantaneous transitions over what is viewed as a discontinuous stretch of track in the 'Stadium', and the dramatical lay-out of the paradoxical situation portrayed in the 'Achilles'— will be shown to rely on remarkably similar mechanisms, both of them sensationally analyzing continuous processes as a 'cinematographic' succession of 'frozen' frames.

All these, in its turn, may arguably be seen as instances of counterintuitive thinking patterns that proceeded not only from philosophy to theater, but that also reached such unclassifiable thinkers like Gorgias.


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## Circular Motions and Cosmogonic Vortices

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1 Jul  
14h00  
Session 2  


Several pre-Platonic cosmogonies involve a vortex that separates and distributes matter in the cosmos according to its density. We'd like to examine a few key moments in the history of this idea, based on three very different conceptions. We'll be looking at the mechanical functioning of vortices, and more generally of circular motions, within these conceptions, defining them by some of their basic features (the origin of this motion, the forms it takes over time, its link to the

separation of elements, the empirical models on which it is based, its location and the types of matter it acts upon, and the physical criteria explaining the different reactions of matter to it).


Anaximenes' cosmogony likely involves, at the moment of star formation, the *periphorá* of the sky: however, this plays no separating role but instead allows celestial fire and earthy particles carried by exhalations to mingle, thus it is not a vortex. We suggest that it is the upward motion of the exhalations separating from the Earth that, encountering the extreme limit of the sky, is transformed into rotational motion.

In Anaxagoras, the *perikhôresis* initiated by the intellect is explicitly assigned a separating role and is extended to the whole cosmos. However, his cosmology reveals certain anomalies in the distribution of matter, the main one being the presence of dense stars at the periphery of the cosmos, a situation we shall seek to account for.

The atomistic cosmogony of Democritus, for its part, attributes a mechanical cause to the *dînos*, prompting us to describe the latter as an eddy (i.e. a turbulence-caused swirl). It also proposes a more detailed conception of its action (based on the notions of *antéreisis*, and *ekthlipsis*), that definitively avoids the difficulties encountered in Anaxagoras.

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## Beholding the Beauty of the New Philosophical Horizon: An Overview of the Acheloios-Thales Connection and its Significance for a 21st Century Philosophical Hermeneutic

1 Jul  
14h35  
Session 3  


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This talk presents the most essential archaeological and literary evidence for connecting the cult of Acheloios to Thales' philosophy, provides the basic philosophical rationale for positing influence, and explains why this new view of Thales and the origin of philosophy proper is important for the discipline as a whole. The evidence reviewed will consist of several 7th to 6th century archaic artifacts from Miletos, the Milesian colonies, and Milesian trade partners, and also various ancient accounts concerning Acheloios, especially his identification with water, his position as source of the sea (contra Okeanos), and his One-Many juxtaposition with rivers, in which the rivers of the world were seen as the 'sinews of Acheloios.' The philosophical rationale will consist of two components: First, I will present a modified interpretation of Aristotle's three-fold *archai*, and demonstrate that the cult of Acheloios tacitly expressed each of these characteristics in a variety of compelling ways. Second, I will further elaborate on the One-Many dynamic inherent in Acheloian cultic belief, and explain how this dynamic is conducive to articulating a single ultimate principle of nature. Based on this assessment, I will insist that Thales must have developed his philosophical cosmology analogously from the Acheloian cultic context, and in sacrificing Acheloios (a central component to his

*mythos*), Thales was able to articulate the demythologized” position that (divine) water was the ultimate principle. Finally, the talk will end with a consideration of the notion of philosophy itself, and maintain that by adopting Thales’ philosophical hermeneutic, which involves a beholding of a multiplicity of hermeneutical frameworks prompted by beatific vision, we can reorient ourselves toward the true *archai*.

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## **The word and the world: language and reality in Heraclitus of Ephesus**

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1 Jul  
14h35  
Session 3

In modern specialized literature, Heraclitus’ *logos* is a prolific and complex topic. Many different readings and arguments have been evocated, but three main directions can be outlined: some tends to interpret it as an “intellective” notion, others prefer an “ontological” reading, and other yet a “discursive” one. In this scenario, following some points of the incisive critique provided by Gianvittorio (2010), as well as remarks already presented by various authors such as West (1971) and Robinson (2006), this paper aims to present an eminently discursive reading. However, this should not mean that Heraclitus’ *lógos* could be described as a “merely discursive” notion. Although the discursive meaning may be prominent and primary, others are skillfully explored by Heraclitus. By those successive semantic shifts, the notion gains complexity. In the opening lines of DK 22 B 1, for example, is already remarkable the problematization of this “discourse” as a message that may or may not be understood, as well as some metonymical suggestions. Similarly, in fragments such as DK 22 B 50, 87, and 45, as was already pointed out by Hülsz (2011), Heraclitus explores multiple meanings of *logos*, expanding its discursive meaning by placing it in the core of a reflection about reality. Highlighting such textual effects, I intend to emphasize Heraclitus’ view of language as a fundamental concept for understanding the universe, precisely because it functions as a mirror of reality, without, however, juxtaposing itself with it. Therefore, despite language for Heraclitus is not the divine law that governs the universe, it remains its expression and the medium by which human beings can eventually comprehend reality.

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1 Jul  
16h30  
Session 4

## Was Pythagoras Italic? Pythagoreanism and the ethnic superiority of "Italic philosophy"

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Several Italian scholars have been interested in Pythagoreanism and, in particular, in its political dimension: without going to the chauvinist extremes of Capparelli (1941), various authors, starting with Rostagni (1922) and Mondolfo's revision of Zeller's work (1938), have attempted to articulate the mystical and philosophical dimensions in a complex historiographical whole in which the political dimension occupies a central role. The Italian appropriation of Pythagoreanism has its origins in Roman times and reveals the depth of Pythagoreanism's ethnic and political identification with Italic culture. Based on the ambiguity inherent in the term 'Italic philosophy', and making use of a variant of the legend about Pythagoras according to which he was the son of a Tyrrhenian, i.e. an Etruscan, Pythagoras is regarded as one of the ancestors of the political, philosophical and religious culture of Rome. In several Ciceronian passages, the Pythagoreans, defined as "almost our fellow-citizens, they who were then called Italic philosophers" (Cato Maior XXI: 78), become a central chapter in glorious Roman history (Tusc. Disput. IV). The 15th century in Italy marks a revival of the Italic tradition of Pythagoras, in the wake of the recovery of Platonism. Two leading Italian intellectual figures of this period devoted themselves to Pythagoreanism: Marcilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. The former with his project of translating the Platonic corpus strongly influenced by neo-Pythagorean exegesis, the latter with the one of articulating Pythagorean philosophy with the Kabbalah, the Chaldean Oracles and Arabic wisdom. This paper is intended to be a brief review of the ancient, medieval and Renaissance tradition on Pythagoras being italic, interpreted as a paradigmatic example of the ways in which ancient Greek philosophy was appropriated to justify a desired ethnic and cultural superiority.

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1 Jul  
16h30  
Session 4



## The contribution of Philolaus' concept of substance to Aristotle's theory of substance

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Philolaus of Croton, a Presocratic philosopher glorified by ancient philosophers as well as by later scientists such as Copernicus, presents an original philosophy of nature. In the recent scholarship which was stimulated by W. Burkert (1962) he is appreciated not only as a Pythagorean but as an independent philosopher in his own right. Philolaus' theory is diverse. It relates to cosmology, astronomy, ontology and epistemology. Scholars such as J. Barnes (1982), M. Schofield (1983), C. Huffman (1993) and D. W. Graham (2014) have concentrated on his principles

of world-order: the unlimiteds (*apeira*), the limiters (*perainonta*) and the harmony (*harmonia*) which unites both. However, Philolaus' theory is based on a developed concept of substance (*estô*) as well.

Philolaus uses the substance concept as "the substance of the things" (*ha estô tôn pragmatôn*). His concept has both the epistemological role of enabling knowledge and the ontological role of enabling existence (Philolaus DK B6). In Aristotle's theory of substance (*ousia*), we find similar characteristics. Aristotle used Philolaus' book, the first book to be written by a Pythagorean, as the primary source for his account of Pythagoreanism. Aristotle makes use of "substance of each thing" (*ousia hekastou*) (Met., Z, 3, 1028b35; 8, 8) and "substance of the things" (*ousia tôn pragmatôn*) (Z, 16, 1040b18-19). He regards the essence as substance (Z, 7, 1032b1-2) and gives it an epistemological role (Z, 6, 1031b20-21). His substance theory implies an ontological substantiality as well (Cat., 5, 2b3-5).

Following the similar characteristics and Aristotle's use of Philolaus' book, I argue that Philolaus' substance concept significantly contributed to Aristotle's theory of substance. In my paper I seek to analyze Philolaus' concept of substance and to explain how it contributed to Aristotle's theory of substance.

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## Pythagorean Vestiges in Plato's *Timaeus*

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1 Jul  
16h30  
Session 4



The research verified two different declarations in Diogenes Laertius' book. The first one is from Satyrus, in D.L, 3.9, that asserts that Plato wrote a letter to Dion requesting him to buy the three books of the Pythagorean philosopher Philolaus of Croton. In D.L, 8.85, it is affirmed that Plato, in one of his trips to Sicily, bought from Philolaus' parents the book of such Pythagorean and based on this work Plato would have written the *Timaeus*. Then, in that conception, Plato would be a plagiarist of the Pythagorean philosophy. The research aims to verify if Plato could be considered as a plagiarist of the Pythagorean school, specifically, Philolaus of Croton. In total, seven vestiges were found in Plato's *Timaeus* that contain a Pythagorean theme, and a good number of them have references to Philolaus' philosophy. Nonetheless, the conclusion of the research is that *Timaeus* is authentically platonic because several typically platonic themes are presented, such as the theory of forms, demiurgical *poiesis*, the distinction between Intellect and Necessity, etc. Therefore, the fact that the platonic work refers to a few themes of the Pythagorean philosophy does not make the *Timaeus* a copy of Philolaus' *Pery Physeos*, but rather that Plato is in contact with the Greek tradition that precedes him, such as the poetry, Orphics mysteries, other philosophers, and philosophies.

## “Immortals Mortals – Mortals Immortals”. A Short History and Some New Testimonies of Heraclitus’ Fragment B62 DK

1 Jul  
16h30  
Session 5



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Among the Heraclitean sayings that have come down to us, fragment B62 DK is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating and elusive ones. If one were to give a tentative rendition of this short dictum, one could propose something along the following lines:

“Immortals mortals – mortals immortals: living the others’ death, dying the others’ life.”

ἀθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι, ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον,  
τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεῶτες.

Many interpretations have, as one would expect, been put forward in the attempt to shed light on this puzzling fragment, whose difficulty consists not only in the correspondence between mortals and immortals declared in its former half but also in the (intentional?) ambiguity of the cross-references (ἐκείνων... ἐκείνων) contained in its latter half, which in addition also turns on a semantically highly innovative and striking use of the expressions “to live one’s death” and “to die one’s life”. In this paper, my aim will be that of providing a short history or reconstruction of the interpretation(s) of B62 developed in Antiquity, also on the basis of some new testimonies that I shall present in detail. Remarkable readings of the fragments have, indeed, been developed not only in the work in which the saying is quoted in the most faithful way, i.e. the *Refutatio* traditionally attributed to the Christian apologist Hippolytus of Rome, but also in the writings of a whole series of other authors. Broadly speaking, we can mainly distinguish sources harking back to a Stoic interpretation and testimonies pertaining to the Middle and Neoplatonic tradition. By focussing in more detail on the latter set of texts, I shall set out the way in which fragment B62 was used for the purpose of stressing the double nature of the human soul and thus the possibility, for men, to free themselves of the limitations of the sensible realm in order to raise to the higher sphere of Intellectual life.

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## Two different propositions by Heraclitus about death: fragment 21 D and fragment 27 D

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1 Jul  
16h30  
Session 5

This paper will attempt to investigate two propositions by Heraclitus of Ephesus, formulated in differentiated and autonomous maxims (*gnômai*), about death (*thánatos*): the “fragments” 21 and 27 in Hermann Diehl’s edition numbering. “Fragment” 21 – which we could literally translate like this: “Death is how much things we see while awake; and how much (we see) sleeping (is) sleep.” – seems to paradoxically define death as what we would more commonly call “awakened (perceptual) life”, as if returning to a Heraclitic model of unity (or reciprocal complementarity) between the elementary opposites which are “life” and “death”. “Fragment” 27 – whose literal translation could be something like: “Humans who die await many things they neither expect nor imagine.” –, in turn, seems to define the very phenomenon of death as an ultimate “event”, as such (supposedly) not yet experienced by any living human being, and therefore as something entirely unknown and not subject to any prior form of knowledge. The investigation will be less focused on a careful analysis of the two different contexts of the same great work (*Stromateis* III, 3, 21, 1 and IV, 22, 144, 3) by Clement of Alexandria in which the fragments are cited, than on an attempt to think about each of the two propositions in relation to other thematically connected propositions in the whole of Heraclitus’ “fragments”, and then also try to think about the possible relationships between one and the other. In addition to important specific articles such as those by Gregory Vlastos, a relatively well-known common bibliographic base will be made up of the Greek text, translations and commentaries on editions by Marcovich, Bollack and Wissmann, Kahn, and Laks and Most, as well as the books by Clémence Ramnoux (*Héraclite ou l’homme entre les choses et les mots*) and Roman Dilcher (*Studies in Heraclitus*).

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## The persistence of human-scale items in Heraclitus

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1 Jul  
16h30  
Session 5  


I will examine how Heraclitus’ human-scale items, such as rivers, barely-drinks, and bows remain in change. I use B84a ‘changing, it remains’ to map the possible relations between permanence and change. The participle can be read as:

- Concessive: despite changing, it remains
- Temporal: while it is changing, it remains, and
- Causal: Because it is changing, it remains.

The fragment is too laconic to provide an answer. So I go to the most accepted version of the river fragment, where the scholarly debate usually takes place. I divide the types of answers into two groups. The formalists offer higher-order aspects to ground the permanence of the river, e.g., the structure remains, but the water flows. Materialists prefer to ground persistence in physical aspects. e.g. The banks remain even though the waters change. I argue that all answers that ground persistence in a fixed element offer a concessive reading. It remains in spite of change. However, most interpreters agree that a causal reading is preferable. In search of a possible answer, I emphasize a usually neglected aspect. The people should enter the river. To understand this peculiar requirement, I go to B125, where one must stir the barley drink to understand the need of motion to constitute an integrated whole. I will suggest seeing the barely-drink as a manipulative, an object that works as a proof of concept, but only if one interacts with it. The necessity of interaction will shed some light on why people need to enter the river to grasp its persistence. Those who enter the river experience something that a mere observer misses, the power of the current. I will suggest that this underlying causal process may ground the river's persistence. To test the hypothesis, I apply it to the bow and lyre in B51.

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2 Jul  
9h30  
Session 6

## ***Phusis and Logos in Heraclitus***

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This paper considers the relationship between *phusis* and *logos* in the extant texts of Heraclitus, focusing especially on the explicit contrast between a *logos* that is 'common' (Laks-Most D2/Diels-Kranz B2) and a *phusis* that tends to conceal itself (LM D35/DK B123) even as both Heraclitus' textual exposition (D1/B1) as well as right speech and action (D114b/B112) take place 'in accordance with nature, *kata phusin*. Importantly, I think, in each case what takes place *kata phusin* is human expression and action: the 'words and works' (ἐπέων καὶ ἔργῳ) Heraclitus claims to be setting forth in D1/B1 and the 'speaking and acting' (λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν) of the wise and virtuous in D114b/B112. For Heraclitus, then, attention to *phusis* may have special relevance for the limited epistemic position of human beings.

A great deal of attention has been paid to both *logos* and *phusis* in Heraclitus' texts. So far, however, studies tend to treat each idea in isolation (e.g., Johnstone 2014 makes no mention of *phusis* and Most 2016 none of *logos*) or they ultimately conflate the two principles.(1)

I argue that *logos* expresses the totality of things in their interrelation, while *phusis*, in denoting the individual character of each thing, may "conceal itself" insofar as an entity's being is determined by the individual's ever-changing relations to others and to the unity of the world in its entirety. In this way, *logos* and *phusis* may express the dialectical relations between whole and part in a self-ordering *kosmos* that maintains its unity in a constantly shifting pattern of diversity. This interpretation lets us make sense of the conjunction of expression and



action where we see *kata phusin* in Heraclitus, as well as understanding how it is that the character of *phusis* itself is, for Heraclitus, concealment.

- (1) Naddaf (2005, 129-132) acknowledges the complexity of the relationship here but ultimately identifies both *logos* and *phusis* with fire as the material principle and process of the *kosmos*: “in the physical universe, *logos* manifests itself as fire 1 Heraclitus chose fire as the *phusis* as *archê*.” NighAngale (2007, 189) reaches a similar conclusion: “For Heraclitus, *phusis* is *Logos* (and vice-versa).” Tor (2018) draws on Heraclitus’ *logos* and emphasis on the way in which language signifies to interpret the sense of *philei* in D35/B123 but argues that we must ultimately understand this statement and *phusis* in Heraclitus more generally in terms of his theology, framing the ‘inquiry into nature as an inquiry into the inclinations and will of a divine person.’

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## “Everything flows like a river”: a Heraclitean or Platonic creation?

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2 Jul  
9h30  
Session 6

There is much discussion in the scholarship about whether Plato’s and Aristotle’s presentations of Heraclitus’ thought correspond perfectly to the positions found in the Ephesian’s work, or whether they correspond rather to a caricatured vision that serves the objectives of the works in which he is referred to (e.g. *Cratylus*, *Theaetetus*, *Metaphysics*): see *inter alia* Mondolfo 1953, Vlastos 1955, Ramnoux 1968, Kahn 1979, Conche 1991, Colli 1993, Tarán 1999, Fronterotta 2015. Platonic and Aristotelian doxography attributed to Heraclitus his most famous position, the “universal flux” or “everything flows” (*pánta rhei*), which seems to be attested by three fragments, the well-known “river” fragments (DK 22 B12, B49a, and B91). Nonetheless, the recognition that the image of the “river” and its fragments are authentically Heraclitean has been contested by several scholars, on the basis of the conception of the so-called “union of opposites”, attested by more than 20 fragments of the philosopher (B8, B23, B48, B50, B51, B53, B54, B59, B60, B61, B62, B65, B67, B76, B80, B82, B83, B84a, B88, B103, B111, and B126). For some (Reinhardt 1916, Kirk 1978, Marcovich 1967), the “river” analogy as representing the whole reality is a Platonic creation. These scholars point to the fact that only one of the three “river” fragments, namely B91, affirms the thesis of “universal flux”, being Plato its first doxographic source. Concerning the other two fragments, the quotation context of B12 in Eusebius’ text makes it clear that Heraclitus made not a “*potamoí-ónta*” but rather a “*potamoí-psychai*” analogy. And in B49a, apparently Heraclitus, instead of affirming the “universal flux”, affirms the “union of opposites” (Marcovich 1967, O’Brien, 1990). On the basis of the analysis of the scholars’ arguments, this paper will assess whether the famous “river” image is a creation of Heraclitus or Plato.

2 Jul  
9h30  
Session 6

## **Heraclitus' [Anti]logos and the Limits of Human Speech**

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This paper offers a new angle on the debate between “deflationist” vs. “ontological” translations of Heraclitus’ *logos*, especially as the term appears in the programmatic fragments B1 and B50. “Deflationist” interpreters such as West or Sedley hold that *logos* in these fragments simply refers to Heraclitus’ own speech or discourse; they claim that the “ontological” interpretations of *logos* (e.g., the Stoic “cosmos” , Kirk’s “measure-formula”) are anachronistic. The deflationary interpretation, however, can only be maintained by glossing over the paradoxicality that results from a literal, speech-oriented translation.

I take as my starting-point the middle way popularized by Kahn 1979: *logos* is both Heraclitus’ account and the cosmic structure that his account “intends or points at”. My interpretation differs from that of other “moderates”, however, in that I do not posit a dual translation for *logos* (speech-based vs. ontological). On my reading, the doubleness of “*logos*” arises from the gap between what the term *means* and what it *demonstrates*. The emphatic ambiguities and paradoxicality that mark Heraclitus’ use of this term do not generate a symbolic meaning above and beyond existing, speech-oriented ones. Their significance lies in transforming a term that is, by its very definition, meaningful, into one that ultimately resists and undermines meaning. On the one hand, Heraclitus’ *logos* draws out the scope and interrelation of the term’s ordinary usages, highlighting basic structures in human speech and thought. On the other hand, his *logos* puts pressure on those usages without offering any stable alternative. His paradoxical use of the term *logos* calls his audience’s attention to his discourse – and to discourse in general – even while pointing away from it. The cumulative effect is to challenge the sufficiency of human speech for communicating, and human thought for comprehending, the oneness of all things (B50) and the nature of each (B1

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## **On the interdependence between contents and literary forms in Parmenides’ Poem**

2 Jul  
9h30  
Session 7

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Starting from the identification and characterization of three literary forms that co-exist throughout Parmenides’ Poem, all of them plainly different from each other, it is proposed and demonstrated that such a variety of forms mirrors the delimitation of the different ways of thought and language elaborated by Parmenidic philosophy, in which at least two types of nature of knowledge must be recognized: the logical and the cosmological. The first, marked by a formally logical-argumentative speech which is given the name of truth (*alétheia*) and whose way

of thinking is exclusively noetic; the second, of a theoretical-descriptive nature, dedicated to the consideration of the movement (*phronēin*).

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## **Parmenidean Interfaces. The interaction between meter, rhythm and textual criticism in Parmenides' Poem.**

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2 Jul  
9h30  
Session 7

The abstract discusses the insecure and problematic nature of Parmenides' Poem and the extensive amount of discussion, amendments, corrections, and conjectures that have been made on its verses. The presentation proposes to analyze seven uncertain passages in the poem (B1.13, B8.1, B8.7-B8.12, B8.36, B12.1, and B12.5) and how the metrical structure can shed light on the corruption in transmission and the suitability of different conjectures.


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## **διάκοσμος ἔοικώς πάντα? A new interpretation of Parm. 28 B 1, 7, 8 DK**

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2 Jul  
9h30  
Session 7  


The current arrangement of Parmenides' extant fragments has been established in the fifth edition of *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, the first to be curated by Walther Kranz (1934). This order considerably differs from the one that previous editors used, from Brandis (1813) to Diels. Nevertheless, to the present day, Kranz's text has (almost) never been questioned. In this paper, I explore the main differences in the text before and after Kranz, specifically concerning the composition of pivotal fragments 28 B 1 and 7/8 DK. Indeed, Kranz implemented the following interventions: 1. Dividing the proem, testified by Sextus Empiricus, into two parts; 2. Enumerating the second part, i.e. its last six verses, as fr. 7; 3. Attaching these last verses to fr. 8 to create only one fr. 7/8 DK. Therefore, this paper addresses three main tasks: 1. Explaining the justification behind Kranz's editorial changes to the text; 2. Demonstrating both the philosophical and philological reasons in favor of a return to the text of the proem quoted by Sextus Empiricus; 3. Arguing for a new philological intervention in the restored Greek text of the proem, by suggesting that a very simple *saut du même à même* could be the reason why the proem, as quoted by Sextus, lacks an important verse that is testified by Plato. In this last point, I also advocate for an interpretation of the poem's division in two parts, starting from the new (or old) Greek text and examining the meaning of the much-debated adverb *δοκίμως* (28 B 1, 32) within it.

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## Necessity and the Two Ways of Inquiry in Parmenides' Cosmological Thinking

2 Jul  
14h00  
Session 8



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The question of whether Parmenides' poem presents two or three ways of inquiry remains unsettled. While acceptance of Diels' conjecture in B6,2 (<*eirgô*>) would suggest support for three paths, my proposal firmly advocates for the dichotomous framework. I seek to elucidate the role of the Two Ways of Inquiry, but diverging from the commonly held interpretation that sees B2,5 as a mere statement of a false thesis. I aim to demonstrate how this path serves as an exposition of the ontological commitments of mortals. Contrary to the prevailing view, the Second Way is a crucial element in shaping a philosophically significant critical perspective on human experience.

To substantiate this interpretation, special attention will be given to the modal supplements of vv. 3 and 5 in fragment 2 (*ouk esti mê einai, kreôn esti mê einai*) through a predicative reading of the verb "to be." This analysis will highlight its correlation with the presence of Necessity in the transmitted text, particularly throughout the argument on being (B8,16; B8,30), and its potential identification with the cosmic divinity in fragment 12.(1) There is (real, cosmological) necessity that prompts the talk of "non-being", leading mortals to violate the principle of the identity of being and fall into self-contradiction when naming objects of opinion without knowledge of their true principles (B6,9; B8,53-59, cf. *dokounta*, B1,31-32; B9).

But how are we to fit cosmological thinking in the Parmenidean scheme? I propose that an attention to the distinction between categorematic and syncategorematic terms may throw light on this issue.

The methodology employed will not only involve the effort of a coherent reconstruction but also seek corroboration through an examination of the doxographical tradition that assigns a theory of opposing cosmological principles and make reference to a so-called section "Against Opinion" in the poem. This examination, as I will demonstrate, supports the proposed interpretation of the ways of inquiry in connection with both the criticism of mortal opinions and the cosmological theory, as they are attributed to Parmenides by various witnesses in the Aristotelian commentary and other doxographical traditions.

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(1) Aëtius I 24; I 25; II 7; Simpl. *in Phys.*, 34, 12-17; 39,12-21; cf. Numenius fr. 31 des Places.

## On the issue of reorganize Parmenides Poem: some remarks about the necessity of not separate δόξα from cosmology

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2 Jul  
14h00  
Session 8

Since the publication of Kurfess (2012) work about Parmenides, it has become a tendency between specialists, to enquire if the standart edition of his poetry, made by Diels-Kranz in the middle of 20th century, that put the *alétheia* separated from *dóxai* and cosmology, creating a tripartite division of the Poem, is correct. From 2012 to the present day, others interpreters, as Conte (2016) and Cordero (2020), has tried to reorganize the fragments, giving another order for the Poem. Cordero, for example, believes that the *dóxai* does not belongs to the cosmology, because in cosmology we find some truthful fragments that cannot be considered as part of the erroneous discourse of mortals. The problem of this approach, as we will see and discuss in this presentation, is that it appears to disrepect the authority of the Goddess that teaches everthing to her disciple: she says, on the proem's last verses, that he has to learn everthing, both the *alétheia*, and also the opinions of mortals. Therefore, this assumption, if we reads it carefully, makes us to questioning if it is right to reorgize the Poem, as the own Goddess seems to establish a clear division between the contents, associating cosmology with opinions, and *alétheia* with the being. In the light of this, maybe it would be more appropriate to preserve the canonical edition of Diels-Kranz, that divides the contents of the Poem and does not separate the opinions of mortals from the world (*kósmos*) named by their discourse.

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## Binary Oppositions in Greek Philosophy: Female and Male in Parmenides


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2 Jul  
14h00  
Session 9  


Scholars believe that *all* the Presocratics work with the *same* understanding of the 'positive' and the 'negative' element in their binary oppositions between principles (Lloyd 1964, KRS 1983, McKirahan 2010, Wright 2008). I show that this is an oversimplification, using Parmenides as case study. Binary oppositions are omnipresent in Ancient Greek cosmology and embryology (Baldry 1932). They serve the purpose of explaining the universe and its phenomena (Lloyd 1962) and can have many forms. One principle is 'positive' and 'active' (e.g., Male, Hot) because it starts change, while the other 'negative' and 'passive' (e.g., Female, Cold) because it is *affected* by the other principle (Betegh 2021). However, although scholars tried to maintain the standard view for Parmenides (Thanassas 2011), textual evidence calls into question this conclusion (Mourelatos 2008, Songe-Möller 2002, Journé 2012). In the *Doxa*, while Light figures as a positive element together with

e.g., Fire, and Hot, Dark is the negative one together with e.g., Earth, and even Death (DK 28 46A). Nonetheless, Parmenides associated the Hot with the Female in his embryology, too (DK 52A, 53A), challenging the standard view of binary oppositions. I show that Parmenides does not fit into the typical opposition where the Female as inferior (i.e., negative) to Men (i.e., positive) (Lloyd 1964). I start by assessing accounts on embryology (DK 13A, 51A) against the Aristotelian and Hippocratic doctrines. I argue that Aristotle's theory, where women are 'passive', is the *not* the norm. Next, I show that a 'positive' view of the Female is consistent with the role the Goddess has in the *Aletheia* part, by comparing Hesiod's and Homer's use of the Female (Bergren 1983) with Parmenides. I conclude that the Female in Parmenides does not fit in a binary opposition with Male, but has a complex relation with it.

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2 Jul  
14h00  
Session 9  


## Zeno's anti-Eleaticism

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According to Plato, in a report that has been widely accepted, Zeno's arguments were meant to defend Parmenides' One from attacks by showing pluralism to be false and/or incoherent. Although widespread, this view is not monolithic: Eudemus, for one, has challenged it. In a famous report, Eudemus claims that Zeno *attacked* Parmenides' One, presenting as evidence what now we know as DK 29 B1-2. According to modern scholarly consensus, this text concludes that each *one* of the many things either has no parts - and, therefore, no magnitude, and no being - or it has parts - in which case its parts will either have no parts (and no magnitude and no being) or it will have parts, and on and on, which would purportedly prove that each one of the many things that are has infinite magnitude. At least two things, however, remain puzzling on this reconstruction. First, what is the force of Zeno's argument in its original dialectical context? That is, why would the target of Zeno's argument accept that a partless thing is also extensionless? And why would anyone accept that a plurality of ever diminishing parts - albeit an infinite plurality - yields an infinite extension? Secondly, how come Zeno's arguments do not harm the view he supposedly defends - namely, that the One is? For either this One will have parts or it won't - and, in any case, it would seem to fall prey to Zeno's arguments. For me, the simplest explanation to these puzzles is that Eudemus was right: Zeno was indeed attacking Parmenides. In my talk, I will point to evidence that these arguments are best understood not as generic attacks against Parmenides, but rather as attacks based on a close reading of some puzzling passages of Parmenides' poem.

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## The incorporeality of what-is in Melissus of Samos

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2 Jul  
14h00  
Session 9

The passage “it must not have a body” of Melissus’ B9 is in contradiction, real or apparent, with the contents of B3 – “[...] it must be always unlimited in magnitude (μέγεθος)” – and B7 – “it is full (πλέων).” After all, how can something without a body have magnitude and fullness? In this manuscript, I propose what I call the “immateriality thesis,” a view according to which what-is, as it has no body, no thickness, and no parts, is also immaterial. To defend it, I first examine the relationship between the B9’s terms σῶμα (body) and πάχος (thickness) and the concepts of corporeality (“spatial limits”) and materiality (“physical constitution”) in the philosophical and medical literature of the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. Subsequently, I argue that, in B9, the denial of σῶμα and πάχος is equivalent to the denial of materiality to Melissus’ what-is. Furthermore, to support the “immateriality thesis,” I move away from the traditional strategies applied to resolve the incompatibility between B3, B7, and B9 and propose a new approach aiming to undo this Gordian knot of Melissus’ thought. I call it “modal analysis.” When applied to Melissan fragments, the “modal analysis” revealed the essential property of what-is, which is the indisputable assertion that it is τὸ ἓν (the one). Next, what-is’ accidental properties – μέγεθος (magnitude), πλέων (fullness), σῶμα (“lack of body”), and πάχος (“lack of thickness”) – were compared to the essential property. The upshot was that the “immateriality thesis,” although not without some difficulties, ended up being the best explanation we have left to interpret Melissus’ philosophy.

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## Intentional and epistemic arguments in Gorgias’ *On non being*

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2 Jul  
16h30  
Session 10

My paper is about the question of the philosophic nature of two versions of Gorgias’ treatise *On non being* – the skeptical version of Sextus Empiricus (AM 65-87) and the peripatetic version of the Anonymous (MXG V–VI. 979a11-980b21). I suggest to correlate the epistemic sections of these paraphrases and outline the philosophical problems that are either implicitly contained in the arguments of Gorgias, or introduced into the text by the narrator or, in some cases, by the translator. Gorgias drew attention to serious epistemological problems, and his paraphrasers were able to recognize and interpret them from within the philosophical context relevant to each of them. This testifies to the equal philosophical status of both retellings: it is impossible to say that one of them is more rhetorical and the other – more philosophical, and that Gorgias himself is a nihilist or a builder

of tricky and unfunny jokes, but, on the contrary, he is an ambitious philosopher, whose contribution to ancient epistemology cannot be ignored.

Justifying my standpoint, I offer a comparative examination of the arguments that the informants adhere to when expressing the thoughts of Gorgias, and I demonstrate the philosophical problems discussed by Gorgias, based on both *MXG* and *AM*, trying to take into account how both versions complement and clarify each other in terms of presenting epistemic issues. I also intend to show how Gorgias modernizes and transforms the original views of Parmenides. Parmenides discusses how thought can be intended to an existing object and what the properties of such an object may be due to the intentionality of thinking. Gorgias, in turn, raises the question not only of noetic certainty, but of the cognition of any mental object, including the question of how thought can be directed to the non-being. I believe that B 16 DK interpreted in terms of ancient theory of pores can serve as a starting point for understanding of Gorgias' attitude. From this fragment it is possible to trace how Parmenides' view shifts from thought to any kind of comprehension and back, and how he makes thought (and comprehension in the broad sense) in *Doxa* dependent on the state of the body (senses). Perhaps this passage allows Gorgias to shift his epistemic focus from "being" to "non-being".

Gorgias discovers a number of significant epistemological consequences focusing on "non-being". Among them there are the issue of intentionality, the question of privileged status to any of a mental states, the nature of the word, the problem of the essence of words and language as an autonomous ways of knowing external essences, the problem of meaning as a references, the issue of intersubjectivity in cognition. Of these listed epistemological consequences, some of them are discussed only in *MXG*, and some are only in *AM* (we do not take into account the mentions, but only a detailed retelling). At the same time, both narrators retain the general structure of the epistemic section of speech, which has a complicated structure at each step: first, Gorgias discusses how cognition in general relates to being or non being (the intentional argument), regardless of whether the cognizable object relates to any real state of affairs; at the next step he distinguishes among the cognizing "state of the body" and noetic abilities, wondering about the privileged status of each of them (the epistemic argument) (in this case I am using the terminology of V. Caston). Finally, Gorgias puts them in dependence on the cognizing subject, or on the nature of the thing itself to be known. The last point depends on what kind of retelling – skeptical or peripatetic – we have to deal with.

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## Is the trustworthiness of *logos* sufficient to lead the way to knowledge?

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2 Jul  
16h30  
Session 10  
📄

I propose here to explore the philosophical point behind Gorgias' *Defense of Palamedes*, a speech in defense of a mythological character known for being unjustly killed. To do so, I identify parallels among the *Defense*, Parmenides' Poem, and some fragments of Melissus regarding the reliability of *logos* for achieving knowledge about something.

Specifically, I consider how Parmenides' goddess constructs a *pistos logos* through the presentation of an array of *sêmata* concerning *what exists* and her advice to the young man whom she addresses to use *logos* to realize a *krisis* between the two paths that she presents (B2).

Regarding Melissus, I analyze briefly the argumentative structure that he uses to establish one opposite over the other as a characteristic of what exists and then focus on his fragment 8, in which he presents his *megistos sêmeion* that *what exists* does so in the manner of what he calls *to hen*. I show that this argument concerns *logos*, for it traces back to the *semata* that Parmenides' goddess uses to construct her *pistos logos*, and it concerns the manner in which people conceive *what exists* to be.

I then turn to Gorgias' *Defense of Palamedes* and show that he gives to Palamedes' argumentation a similar structure to Melissus' argumentation in declaring that it is a *pistos logos*.

However, Gorgias and his audience are fully aware that Palamedes' speech fails to lead the jury that hears his case to knowledge of the truth, namely, that he is innocent. In this sense, it is my contention that, based on the parallel that I propose here, Gorgias' *Defense of Palamedes* can be also understood as a text that calls into question the reliability of *logos*, on which Parmenides' and Melissus' demonstrations rely.

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## Mechanisms of Sense Perception and Knowledge in Empedocles

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2 Jul  
16h30  
Session 11

The present paper takes as its starting point the long passage of Theophrastus' *De Sensibus* (§§ 7-24) devoted to discussing Empedocles' theory of sense perception. As is widely known, this is the only place where a comprehensive and detailed exposition of the mechanisms involved in sense perception and cognition according to Empedocles' theory can be found; in order to explain the workings of the organs of sense perception and the way in which men gain knowledge,

a set of mechanisms is displayed in Theophrastus' account of this thinker's theory. Accordingly, the following processes can be specifically distinguished as relevant to the interaction among the 'elements' or with the medium: attraction by similarity (τὸ ὅμοιον), mixture (ἡ κοῤῥασις), fitting into the pores (τὸ ἐναρμόττειν τοῖς πόροις), and effluence (ἡ ἀπορροή) which are viewed as fundamental operations or steps for the several functions of sense perception and cognition to take place. Among modern research devoted to this as yet not wholly clarified issue, the studies by Long (1966) and Curd (2016) about thinking and sense perception in Empedocles, as well as the paper by Sassi (2016), who set about to reconstruct a general theory of κοῤῥασις in Parmenides and Empedocles, will be particularly considered for the purpose of this paper. In fact, despite the detail of Theophrastus' account, scholars have often pointed out that there seems not to be a perfect match with extant fragments of Empedocles, probably because Theophrastus updated Empedocles' language through Peripatetic terminology. Therefore, several possible connections between Theophrastus' critical report and some extant fragments of Empedocles (Frr. 31B 3; 89, 90; 96; 98; 100; 106-109 DK) will be explored, so that, based on this comparative analysis, a new comprehensive attempt can be made here to outline Empedocles' own presentation of the mechanisms of sense perception and thinking.

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4 Jul  
9h30  
Session 12

## **Anaxagoras and the Autonomy of Ethics**

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Anaxagoras is generally viewed as having little interest in ethics. Indeed, he is the only major early Greek thinker not allotted a chapter in a recent massive multi-authored history of early Greek ethics (Wolfsdorf 2020). This view is rooted both in the paucity of Anaxagoras' surviving remarks on ethics and in an ancient biographical tradition that emphasizes his abstention from the ordinary activities of social life. Nevertheless, André Laks has given Anaxagoras a key place in his tripartite taxonomy of Presocratic ethics, in which he distinguishes philosophers who elaborate an ethical theory continuous with their cosmological views (e.g. Parmenides) from those who pursue only one of the two lines of inquiry (e.g. Anaxagoras) and from those who appear to discern some sort of tension between the conclusions reached by inquiry into nature and the principles that should govern human life (e.g. Empedocles). Laks writes that the two chief members of his second category, Anaxagoras and Protagoras,

This paper aims to extend and qualify Laks' analysis through an examination of the ethical doctrines attributed to Anaxagoras. I argue that while the mere existence of these remarks might seem to blur the picture of Anaxagoras' separation of ethics from physics, their content bears out the claim that he separates the two lines of inquiry. This very separation, though, allows for physical study to emerge as a distinct focal point around which a life can be oriented. With special attention to Anaxagoras' contention that observation of the cosmos is what

makes human life choiceworthy (DK A30) and to the remarks in Plato's *Phaedrus* (269e-270a) about the utility of Anaxagoras' teaching for Pericles' political career, I aim to show how Anaxagoras' detachment of physics from ethics issues in a distinctive and fertile ethical perspective.

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## Diogenes of Apollonia: ἀνήρ φυσικός

Deyvis Deniz Machín

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4 Jul  
9h30  
Session 12



Diogenes of Apollonia (*c. fl.* 431/423, a. C.) is a «pre-Socratic» that, even if he explained the human physio-cognitive faculties (Thphr. *Sens.*, 39-48) in virtue of animal physio-anatomical differentiations (DK 64 B6 = [LM D27]), and even if he made use of a stylishly-careful straightforward way to advocating for material monism (DK 64 B5 = [LM D10]) in opposition to the pluralist thinkers — highly likely against Empedocles or Anaxagoras —, nowadays is still awaiting for being fully recognized. Neither was he a second rate Ionian philosopher, lacking any genuine originality, nor, as a whole bunch of scholars (Rudberg, Jaeger, Zafiropoulo, Cappelletti, Barnes, Dondoni, Lask-Most), through following the narrowly-schematic, if undoubtedly highly relevant, Peripatetic doxography (DK 13 A4 [=LM D7]; Thphr. *Φυσικῶν Δόξων*, Fr.2, *apud Dox. Gr.*, p. 477; DK 64 A8 [=Laks, T.7c]), are inclined to be agreed upon, an eclectic thinker, about whom one might expect to be spoken only as a kind of unreflective and out of date synthesis of what put forward Anaximenes (air as material element/principle), Leucippus (the possibility of other worlds existence) and Anaxagoras (the doctrine of *nous*). In light of the *ipsissima verba* the sources have handed down (Diogenes Laertius, Simplicius), Diogenes is not but a man of physics of great reputation; his intellectual commitment is giving a non-theological account of the *eutaxia* the Cosmos exhibits (Diller, Laks, Graham, Dreßler). My communication is an interpretative attempt to shed new light upon Diogenes of Apollonia's philosophical standpoint, by sorting out the extent to which the material and physio-cognitive monism he advocated for has been misconstrued due to the following: (i) the intellectualist rendition *πολλὰ εἰδός* — from Schleiermacher and Panzerbieter onwards— has received and, likely following Theophrastus' report (DK 64 A19 [=LM D13 {=Laks, T.8}]), (ii) Herman Unsener's emendation (DK 64 B5 [=LM D10]), which, if seemingly soundly adequate, is yet problematic and questionable.

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## Archelaus' philosophy

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Considered as an intermediary between the Ionian doctrines of nature and the change of perspective carried out by Socrates, Archelaus of Athens has been relatively forgotten by historians of philosophy, especially because there is not enough material from which to derive safe and comprehensive conclusions about him (Diels, Kranz, 1951; Guthrie, 1971; Woodbury, 1971; Sider, 1980; Curd, 2007: 134-135; Betegh, 2016; Laks and Most, 2016: 185-217; Curd and Graham, 2018). Archelaus' philosophy can be partially studied through relationships with other thinkers, such as Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, Democritus, and Diogenes of Apollonia, who, according to the doxography, would be in Archelaus' philosophical spectrum, as he defended *homeomeriēs* and air as material principles.

In addition to the complex connection he had with Socrates, in this communication we will explore his cosmogony, seeking to highlight its specificity, as well as relating it to other cosmogonies in circulation at his time. One hypothesis to be verified is that by offering an apparently common cosmogony, similar in its elements to many others, his physical thought would not have attracted the attention of either his contemporaries or later historians, which would explain this relative oblivion. On the other hand, if this is not confirmed, we are left to explain the specificity of his cosmogony, detached from other matrices, reestablishing a specific place for Archelaus within the Greek cosmogonies of the pre-Socratic period. For this purpose, we will highlight the dissolution (*tékómenon*) of water by the heat of fire and its function in the creation of air and earth, as well as the role of mud (*ilūs*) as a nutrient for all beings, taking Hipólito as the main sources of analysis, (Hippol. *Haer.*1,17), Diogenes Laertius (D.L. 2, 16), and Simplicius (Simp. *in Ph.* 26-27).

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## I went to Athens and no one knew me

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There are plenty of biographical reports about Democritus, but the quality of the material is often a little dubious. In this text, I will analyze the testimonies about a possible visit by Democritus to Athens, an issue that seems to have been the subject of some controversy in antiquity. The case is reported by Diogenes Laertius through two conflicting testimonies, coincidentally provided by two different Demetriuses: that of Magnesia, active during the 1st century BCE, and that of Phaleron, active at the turn of the 4th to the 3rd century BCE. Between the two accounts, Diogenes inserts a comment by Thrasyllus (1st century BCE) about a possible identification of Democritus with an anonymous character from a pseudo-Platonic dialog called *Rival Lovers*. Having become the great hub of Greek culture

and intellectuality in the 5th century BCE, Athens was a common – and perhaps even inevitable – destination for the great thinkers of that period, many of whom were mentioned by Plato in his dialogues. It will emerge from the analysis of the Diogenian material that one of the probable reasons for the controversy – and perhaps even for the creation of a fiction involving an incognito visit by Democritus to Athens – may have been precisely to justify the fact that Plato never mentioned him in any of the authentic dialogues that remained.

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## **Why is Democritus the “laughing philosopher”?**

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4 Jul  
9h30  
Session 13



The aim of this presentation is to raise hypotheses about why Democritus became known in antiquity as the “laughing philosopher”, notably from a series of letters attributed to Hippocrates. Although his ethics seem to have focused on the notion of cheerfulness (*euthumia*), nothing in the fragments that have come down to us seems to corroborate the portrait presented by Pseudo-Hippocrates, nor do they point to a direct contrast with Heraclitus, who came to be known as the “weeping philosopher”. We therefore propose to investigate the reason for this characterization.

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## **The plurivocity and centrality of the notion of measure in the framework of Democritus’ ethical reflection**

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4 Jul  
9h30  
Session 13

It is not difficult to recognize the centrality and omnipresence of the notion of measure within the framework of the fragments and testimonies of Democritus of Abdera. By examining these texts, it is possible to reconstruct in broad outline the horizon of his reflections on ethical issues. The measure, and the calculation from which each individual establishes the measure for himself and for each circumstance, thus constitutes a key piece in the characterization of human actions and attitudes that lead to what, according to Diógenes Laércio, constituted the end of life human, this is good cheer (Τέλος δ’ εἶναι τὴν εὐθυμίαν) (DK68A1.45). When it comes to establishing the conditions that contribute to achieving this objective, it is possible to count on a significant number of texts from which to extract material to achieve this purpose. We have testimonies and fragments that attribute to the soul a whole series of operations of a noetic nature, among which are those expressed by verbs such as φρονεῖν, λογίζεσθαι and βούλεσθαι, and by other terms such as φρόνησις and λογισμός. And, to indicate what happens to humans as a consequence of these operations, we have, in the first instance, a

series of terms pertinent to the lexical field of the notion of measurement, such as those formed from the radical μέτρο- (μετρέειν, μέτριος, μετριότης, σύμμετρος, συμμετρία), those that express the idea of “temperance” or “moderation” in the execution of actions, in the satisfaction of desires and needs, in the conformation of attitudes and behaviors (σωφρονεῖν, σωφροσύνη), in addition to a significant number of terms formed with the addition of the adverb εὖ to express the character of knowledge, attitudes and actions. In my paper, I will present an examination of the measurement vocabulary, from which I attempt to show the nuances and convergences that serve to affirm the internal coherence of the set of Abderita fragments, as well as the connection between physics and ethics. To this end, I will examine the fragments recorded by Estobeu in his anthologies, the sentences that were transmitted to us under the name “Democrates” and other collections of sentences that constitute the Gnomica Democritea present in the Corpus Parasinum and in some authors listed in the Patrologia Migne.

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## Dionysus, Demeter and the Homeric Heroes in Metrodorus’ Allegoresis

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4 Jul  
14h30  
Session 14



We have evidence that the first figure to apply the allegoresis to the Homeric poems was Theagenes of Rhegium (late sixth century BC), who offered an original interpretation of some passages of the *Iliad* as if they were concealing a hidden message (1). Theagenes (sch. B *Il.* 20.67) inaugurated the two kinds of allegoresis that became customary some centuries later: the physical and the less prominent psychological or moral approach. In his view, for example, Hephaestus is fire and Poseidon water, and Athena is intelligence and Ares foolishness. The next figure in the history of allegoresis was Metrodorus of Lampsacus, in the late fifth century BC. For Metrodorus (Tatian. *Orat.* 21) (2), the *Iliad*’s heroes stand for the parts of the cosmos (Achilles is the sun and Hector the moon), and the gods, most strangely, for bodily organs (Demeter is the liver and Dionysus the spleen). This puzzling approach probably involves a scientific interpretation, since in medical texts organs were related with states of humor and types of characters. It is remarkable that in the same time in which Metrodorus wrote (or taught) his theories, the anonymous author of the Derveni Papyrus was also conceiving his physical allegoresis of an Orphic poem. According to him, the name ‘Zeus’ really refers to air, ‘Demeter’ to earth and ‘Olympus’ to time (3). This paper will try to explain which is the rationale behind Metrodorus’ interpretation of ‘Dionysus’ and ‘Demeter’ as referring to human organs and of the Homeric heroes to parts of the universe, comparing it with the previous allegoresis of Theagenes and the contemporary activity of the Derveni author.

(1) See Ford 2002.

- (2) See Nestle 1907, 1932, Richardson 1975, Hammerstaedt 1998, Califf 2003 and Fuentes González 2005. Janko 1997, 76-79 discusses, and dismisses, the possibility that Metrodorus was the author of the Derveni papyrus.
- (3) On the allegoresis in the Derveni Papyrus, see Laks 1997, Most 1997, Obbink 2003 and Struck 2004, 29-39.

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4 Jul  
14h30  
Session 14

## From Cosmos to Chaos: Unravelling Aeschylus' *Oresteia* and *Prometheus Bound* through the Presocratic Lenses

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The Presocratic philosophy profoundly impacted Greek thought during the transition from the archaic to the classical era. Yet, our classical education, with a tendency for hyper-specialisation, tends to obscure the depth of philosophical speculation involved in the composition of classical tragedy. If tragedy, as a poetic art, draws its mythical narratives from epic and Hesiodic poetry, it is not unreasonable to suggest that it also incorporates from somewhere its tendency towards profound inquiries into humanity and its coexistence with nature and the gods. Those trends, we suggest, were likely instilled by the first philosophers who first questioned myth and reality, and undoubtedly influenced the formation of ancient Greek intellectuals. Thus, our paper aims to examine the impact of Heraclitus, Anaximander, and Parmenides on the Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy and *Prometheus Bound*. While we acknowledge the significant differences between a play designed for theatrical interpretation and philosophical treatises, we believe tragedy also explored questions about god, the unity of opposites, the principles of reality, and Greek cosmogony. We relate these questions, raised by human suffering and the complex theology presented in Aeschylus' plays, with the philosophical inquiries and interpretive proposals regarding the Ancient Greek cosmos in Presocratic philosophy. This is supported by works such as Douglas Cairns' *Tragedy and the Archaic Greek Thought* (2013) and Nuria Scapin's recent book, *The Flower of Suffering: Theology, Justice and the Cosmos in Aeschylus' Oresteia and Presocratic Thought* (2020). For that reason, we must come back to the revolutionary thinkers that preceded Aeschylus to fully grasp his tragedy's essential aspects, although caution should be exercised in attempting to tie Aeschylus' poetry to any specific Presocratic thinker. With that in mind, will explore the philosophical correlations among the formation of the cosmos, the unity of opposites, the concept of justice, and the portrayal of Zeus in the plays. Furthermore, we will identify the philosophical roots that influenced the intellectual progress of Classical Athens.

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## The Presocratics' reception in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*: Socrates' critical approach to cosmology

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4 Jul  
14h00  
Session 15  
📄

The main goal of my paper is to analyze Socrates' views on Presocratic cosmology outlined in *Memorabilia*. My starting point will be *Memorabilia* 1.1.11-15, where Xenophon defends Socrates against the accusation of impiety. The second key text that must be considered is *Memorabilia* 4.7.5-7, in which Socrates expresses his suspicions towards astronomy as well as a harsh critique of Anaxagoras' speculations. A close analysis of both texts raises two overarching questions: Why does Xenophon intertwine Presocratic cosmology with Socrates' conception of the divine? What motivates Socrates' rigorous condemnation of both Presocratic cosmology and astronomical inquiry?

Indeed, all those questions touch upon some key notions of Xenophon's own philosophy, which must be taken into account. Firstly, I contend that Xenophon's endeavor to disassociate Socrates from his philosophical predecessors, particularly Anaxagoras, is grounded in apologetic reasons, a pattern observed in his treatment of other controversial figures like Critias and Alcibiades. Hence, Xenophon presents Socrates as a stern critic of impious (and atheistic) speculations revolving around the nature and the cosmos. Secondly, I argue that the contrast between, on the one hand, Socrates' general views on Presocratic cosmology and, on the other hand, his own conception of the cosmos derives from a deeper dichotomy between the notions of divine wisdom and human wisdom (*anthropine sophia*). This contrast serves as a foundational principle shaping Socrates' philosophical orientation. Thirdly, I argue that Socrates' disinterest in and critique of Presocratic cosmology are closely linked to the notion of "utility" (*opheleia*) but also to his own conception of *paideia*. This highlights the pragmatic underpinning of Socrates' philosophical inquiries and his emphasis on practical knowledge. In other words, since Socratic education seeks to cultivate *kaloi kagathoi* by providing them with all the necessary skills to properly govern and manage the city, the acquisition of knowledge is oriented towards its application in the private and the public spheres, for one's own benefit and that of one's fellow citizens. From this perspective, purely theoretical inquiries on cosmology and *astronomia* have no place in the proper education of a *kalos kagathos*.

By traversing this analytical trajectory, I aim to underscore Xenophon's portrayal of a significant gulf between the speculative endeavors of the Presocratics and Socrates' own philosophical task. This juxtaposition places Socrates as a pivotal figure in the history of philosophy, accentuating his distinctive contribution to the Western intellectual landscape.

## Notes on the Reception of Democritus in the Art of eloquence of Cicero and Thomas Hobbes

4 Jul  
14h00  
Session 15

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Our study traces some possibilities of thinking about the reception of Democritus of Abdera's notion of array (*táxis*), especially in rhetorical parameters of Cicero and Thomas Hobbes, i.e., *táxis* as *dispositio* from rhetoric. To support our hypothesis, we will analyze from this point of view Aristotle (*Metaph.*I.4.985b 5–21) and Diodorus Siculus (Hist. 1.8.1-9) doxographies about atomist philosophy. These passages point to ideas that were incorporated into both the *dispositio* and concepts of the arts of eloquence, especially in the birth of cities, political life, and the art of rhetoric itself. There are many fields of knowledge (ethics, metaphysics, politics, physics, etc.) to systematize the work of Democritus Abdera and we suspect that rhetoric or some art of good speaking can also compose this framework.

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## How politically engaged were the pre-Socratic philosophers? The cases of Pythagoras, Parmenides, and Zeno

4 Jul  
14h00  
Session 15

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I argue that a prevalent trait among some pre-Socratic philosophers was their active participation in the political affairs of their *poleis*. Like many of their fellow citizens, some philosophers were accustomed to discharging civic (legislation, governance, diplomacy) and religious (priesthood, financing and organizing festivals) duties, both within their cities and (as diplomats) beyond their boundaries.

To illustrate this, I will examine the cases of Pythagoras of Samos, Parmenides of Elea, and Zeno of Elea. In the case of Pythagoras, it will be discussed his departure from Samos and his involvement in the governance of Crotona. The evidence for Parmenides and Zeno speaks for their roles as legislator (Parmenides) and political revolutionary against tyranny (Zeno). Though the evidence in these three instances may not provide conclusive support for the thesis I am advocating for, I believe that some of it can be aligned with the evidence of a range of intellectuals who perform both civic and religious duties throughout Hellas. Presocratic philosophers, with notorious exceptions like Heraclitus, were no exception to the discharge of this or other types of duties.

Thus, the notion that philosophers spurned political life due to their dedication to philosophical studies appears more like a biased assumption, reinforced by tales like that of Thales tumbling into a well, rather than a proper evaluation of the part philosophers performed as citizens in their hometowns' political scene.

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## Dionysus in the *Derveni Papyrus*

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4 Jul  
16h30  
Session 16

The presence of Dionysus in the *Derveni Papyrus* is problematic. The god is not mentioned by name, but there are some references that suggest that the commentator alludes to him or his rites. The presence in the poem of myths that would refer to the origin of Dionysus seems evident. This is the case of the passage in the commentary in which the author seems to criticise the belief in a double incest of Zeus (col. XX 13-15) or of the interpretation of a fragment of the poem (*OF* 18, col. XXV-XXVI) that refers to Zeus' desire to unite with his mother (these, as is known, are the ultimate origin of the creation of the Dionysus of the Orphics, son of Zeus and Persephone). On the other hand, possible Dionysian elements have been pointed out in the details of the ritual described in the first columns. However, although the object of the text is to comment on certain religious practices and a poem, both attributed to Orpheus by the commentator, and it is well known that Orphica are intimately related to the Dionysian realm, it is evident that the commentator goes to great lengths to minimise the presence of Dionysian myths in the poem and to reinterpret its rites. The purpose of this paper, after a brief allusion to the presence of the Dionysian in the religious context of the papyrus find, is to carry out a detailed analysis of the text in order to determine the presence of the god in three contexts: the ritual described, the poem and the commentary. Its ultimate aim is to determine the commentator's philosophical attitude towards Dionysus and the Dionysian, which may be reflected in his allusions, no less than in his silences.

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## Heraclitus in Column IV of the *Derveni papyrus*: Three new suggestions

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4 Jul  
16h30  
Session 16



Column IV of the *Derveni papyrus* is justly famous for its integration of two fragments of Heraclitus (DK B 3 + B 94) into a single new fragment on the sun and its relation to the Erinyes. After a review of the context and the preserved sections of the column, I offer three new suggestions for the text, following the editions of Betegh (2004), KTP (2006), and Piano (2016):

[5] κατὰ [ταὐτ]ὰ Ἡράκλειτος μα[ρτυρούμενος] τὰ κοινὰ  
κατ[αγράφει] τὰ ἰδ[ι]α, ὅς περὶ κει[μένω] λόγῳ λέγων [ἔφη·]  
“ἡλί[ου τὸ ἐ]μοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ἀνθρώ[π]ου εὖρος ποδός [ἔστι,  
τὸ μ[έγεθος] οὐχ ὑπερβάλλων. εἰ γὰρ [τι οὐ]ρους ἐ[αυτοῦ]  
[ὑπερβαλε]ῖ, Ἐρινύε[ς] νιν ἐξευρήσου[σι, Δίκης ἐπίκουροι·

In the same way Heraclitus, while testifying to matters common/open to all, enrolls as his witnesses his private testimony, who, speaking on behalf of established tradition, said: 'Of the sun, the width is of my own human foot according to nature

- 1) instead of Sider's ἵκελα [τῶι ἱερο]λόγωι I propose περὶ κει[μένωι] λόγωι 'on behalf of (peri + dative) the received account'. In the previous lines the author mentions κείμενα 'things received' i.e. 'tradition'. Heraclitus, like the author, retains tradition i.e. talks of Erinyes.
- 2) I propose ἡλί[ου τὸ ἐ]μοῦ In other words, Heraclitus related the width of the sun to *his own specific* foot. This is supported by the mention in l. 4 of τὰ ἰδ[ι]α things private or related to an individual. 3) we can make sense of that mention of 'the private' by retaining the supplement μα[ρτυρόμενος] τὰ κοινὰ 'bearing witness to what is common' and supplying the missing verb as κατ[αγράφ]ει call upon/summon (in writing) LSJ II.3. This produces a nice, deliberate ambiguity, the universal logos expressed through the logos of Heraclitus the individual.

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4 Jul  
16h30  
Session 16

## Enigma and interpretation in *Derveni Papyrus*

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Written around 400 BC, partially destroyed in a funeral pyre between 340-320 BC, and discovered in 1962, the Derveni Papyrus (PD) is the oldest readable European book that we have. After intense work by archaeologists, papyrologists, philologists, and scholars of ancient philosophy, religion, and poetry, the editio princeps (KPT 2006) was published in 2006. In this edition, scholars T. Kouremenos, G. M. Parássoglou, and K. Tsantsanoglou contextualize, reconstruct, translate, and comment on the text contained in the papyrus. The result is 26 incomplete columns of an anonymous text, among which the first ones (I-VI and XX) describe and discuss aspects of an initiation rite. Column VII presents some considerations about poetry and its use by Orpheus, transitioning to the following columns (VIII to XXVI) where verses of a theogony attributed to Orpheus are quoted and commented upon. According to the Author of Derveni (AD), "poetry is something strange and enigmatic to human beings, and if Orpheus himself did not want to utter eristic riddles, then [he wanted] in enigmas [to teach] great things" (column VII, 4-7). Therefore, he considers Orpheus's discourse sacred and enigmatic, approaching it with conceptual elements present in some philosophers of the nature of the 6th and 5th centuries. Thus, the AD seeks to explain and position elements of the religious text in a new context, physical/philosophical, redefining them. Following the steps of the exegesis developed by the AD throughout columns VIII to XXVI of the PD, we will seek to answer the following questions: a) which philosophers

is the AD engaging with?; b) what are the “great things” (*tà megála*) to which, according to the AD, Orpheus refers?; and c) Why does Orpheus express himself “in enigmas” about them?

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## Defending Gorgias, the Comedian

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5 Jul  
10h00  
Session 17  


While epistemic contextualism was popularized in the latter half of the 20th century, there are precursors of this view to be found in Gorgias’s *Encomium of Helen*, an epideictic speech where he defends Helen of Troy by arguing that, if she left on account of the gods, love, or the power of *logos* (speech), then she is innocent. Gorgias certainly cares most about his distinct style of speech, but that does not entail that he is intentionally misleading the audience. We should see Gorgias through the lens of epistemic contextualism because he wants to comment on the nature of *logos*. In section 1, I will briefly outline Plato’s unflattering depiction of Gorgias in the dialogue bearing his name. In section 2, I will discuss the secondary literature on Gorgias. Remembered by Philostratus, Pausanias, Cicero, and Diodorus Siculus for innovation, not an indifference towards truth, the fragments about him paint him in a much different light than Plato did. In section 3, I will discuss epistemic contextualism, especially DeRose’s version that allows for the truth conditions of a knowledge ascription to change based on the utterer’s context. In section 4, I will outline one of Gorgias’s main arguments in *Encomium of Helen*: the power of *logos*. Gorgias cheekily warns us that speech can act on the soul as drugs do on the body during his speech (DK B11.14=LM 32 D24.14). Moreover, the audience would, like Helen, not be to blame. Instead, Gorgias himself would be, as he is the persuader (DK B11.11=LM 32 D24.11). This meta-commentary on the power of speech is directly concerned with the nature of truth. Therefore, we should see Gorgias as a precursor to epistemic contextualism rather than someone unconcerned with truth.

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5 Jul  
10h00  
Session 17



## Does Gorgias have a coherent theory of language?

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In this presentation, I will examine the issue of compatibility between Gorgias' treatise *On Not-Being* and his epideictical discourses (*Helena* and *Palamedes*). At first sight, given that Gorgias demonstrates in *On Not-Being* that communication is impossible, his claims hardly seem to leave any place for the power of rhetoric. Many critics, however, tried to escape the difficulty: some claim that it is the transmission of knowledge that is made impossible, allowing for the possibility of changing people's opinion, while A. Mourelatos maintained that Gorgias rejects a representational conception of language but would defend a behaviorist one. Both solutions limit the scope of Gorgias' arguments to make them compatible with his defense of rhetoric. My aim in this presentation is to show that these solutions fail to make Gorgias' theory coherent. A close examination of his arguments, both the "categorical" and the "interpersonal" ones, indicates that he makes it both impossible for language to transmit any representation at all and for the speaker to have any control on the mind of his interlocutor. This is due to the fundamentally polemical aim of the treatise *On Not-Being*: Gorgias does not really intend to establish the theses he supports, but only to show that it is possible to use philosophical arguments to demonstrate counterintuitive claims, thus undermining the pretension of philosophy to establish any kind of truth. It is then in the methods rather than in the content of the demonstration that we may find Gorgias' theory of language: discourse may have the power to change the opinions of the public, but since rational arguments can demonstrate one thing and its opposite, they cannot provide us with certain knowledge.

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## The reception of Empedocles in the Renaissance: Pico della Mirandola

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5 Jul  
10h00  
Session 18



Steiris (2019) states that "Fifteenth century humanists, notably Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), reappraised the importance of Presocratic philosophy and acknowledged its influence on ancient Greek philosophy." Given Ficino's and Pico's interest in expanding the prevailing philosophical canon and in reevaluating the positions of presocratic philosophers, this paper aims to show such a reevaluation specifically in Pico's thought. Pico's enterprise of recovery of all knowledge available in his time is well known. In this sense, the year 1486 is of special importance since it constitutes the period during which he assembled his 900 theses and wrote the famous *Oratio* later called 'On the

Dignity of Man'. Additionally, he wrote his *Commento sopra una canzone d'amore*. The presocratics and especially Empedocles play a prominent role in these works, not only as pre-platonic sages but also as important influences in the structure of his own philosophical proposal. Empedocles' name appears three times in the 900 theses, three in the *Oratio*, and once in the *Commento*. By analyzing these passages, I intend to show that Pico's reading is close to a Neoplatonic interpretation of Empedocles (characterized by Dillon in 2005 as a non literal reading), especially in his thesis II.5.5. In addition, I intend to show that his interpretation of Empedocles' Love and Strife is important to support his project of constituting a *pax philosophica* as he assesses the position of Empedocles as superior to that of Heraclitus (in *Commento*, II. 8). Finally, in the *Oratio*, he presents Empedocles as a forerunner of his positions on the human soul.

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## Revisiting Bianchi

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5 Jul  
10h00  
Session 18



The work revisits Ugo Bianchi's thesis (1974) about Orphism being a religion of the book (*religion du livre*). Bianchi's thesis joins the chorus of researchers who have found in the verses of *ta Orphica* a religious expression, alongside other Greek mysteries, with their own religious and philosophical characteristics. Exactly fifty years on, the "religion of the book" thesis is being received positively, especially in the circle led by Bernabé and Casadesús (2008), who present solid arguments in favor of it. However, skeptical criticism of this thesis remains vigorous, for example in the work of Edmonds III (2013). The methodology will consist of revisiting Bianchi's text and contrasting the positions of Edmonds III and Bernabé with regard to some sources on Orphism. To this end, some Orphic fragments will be analyzed, as well as a passage from Plato's *Cratylus* (400b).

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## Humoral and atomistic theory on embryology in *De genitura/De natura Pueri* and Democritus

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5 Jul  
14h00  
Session 19


The treatise *De genitura/De natura Pueri* is the first text to have survived in its entirety that analyzes the formation of the sperm and the development of the embryo. However, it is set into a medical-scientific context already established. As several scholars have already pointed out, Democritus seems to be the author who exerted the greatest influence on this medical treatise. In both authors there is a theory of sperm production and character inheritance. Therefore, this paper

aims at finding a solution to the problem of compatibility between the humoral theory of *Genit./Nat.Puer.* and Democritus' atomistic theory. The problem arises in understanding the mechanism that allows the phenotypic transmission of the two parents: a plausible solution, which I propose, is that, in both authors, the phenotypes are transmitted by means of the seed that comes from both parents and gives rise to the embryo, which later is structured by accretion of the various types of seed (those derived from the various parts of the body) according to the general physical principle of aggregation *per similes*.

Indeed, there are many connections between *Genit./Nat.Puer.* and Democritus, suggesting a common solution for the problem: 1) some testimonies point to a humoral theory in Democritus: DK68A153, A 154, A155, A162; 2) sperm is derived from the whole body: DK68A141, DK68B124; 3) both woman and man emit fertile sperm: DK68A142; 4) woman desires to unite sexually: DK68A142; 5) sex determination depends on sperm predominating in quantity: *Genit.*VI 1 and DK68A143; 6) in *Genit./Nat.Puer.* XVII, the experiment of the artificial bladder, by which the author shows that things of the same nature cluster in the same place, takes up the physical principle of DK68B164. Given these premises, I will argue that it is possible to find compatibility between the two authors.

---

## Certainly, a physician: a discussion about the authorship of *De Arte*

5 Jul  
14h00  
Session 19  


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The discussion concerning the attribution of authorship of the *De arte* mostly follows three paths: scholars sometimes claim that it is a text by a physician, sometimes by a sophist, or even by someone who is not only a physician, but also a sophist. In this paper, we will highlight the elements that would support the identification of this text as the work of a physician. To argue that, we first address some characteristics of medical practice that would require the ability to compose public speeches such as the *De arte*, and that, because of this requirement, the teaching and development of the art of speechwriting would also be present in medical schools. Moreover, we examine two passages of the text (III.1, 9-11; IX.1, 10-11) commonly used to attribute the authorship to a sophist. Our aim is to show that the first passage (III.1, 9-11) recommends the listeners to look for other discourses that teach more clearly over the nature of names (II.3, 4-8) and that the second passage (IX.1, 10-11) refers to the specificity related to each art, thus not implying that the author of the *De arte* composed other discourses that would defend the other arts. Furthermore, we analyze the use of the term  $\mu\upsilon\varsigma$  (X.3, 15-1) in the medical context, comparing this passage with others within the Corpus Hippocraticum in which it appears with a similar meaning. Finally, we analyze whether the two prescriptions presented in the first chapter (I.2, 4-6; 8-10) derive from medical practice, more precisely from the struggle against visible and




invisible diseases. Thus, we will intend to show that, in all probability, the author of the *De arte* is a physician, and this not only from a historical approach but also from an analytical and philological approach.

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## The Presocratic roots of the Hippocratic concept of balanced mixtures

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5 Jul  
14h00  
Session 19  


The assumption that the optimal and healthy condition of a living organism can be equated with a balanced mixture (*sym/metriê krasis*) of opposing qualities in the body is explicitly accepted in several Hippocratic texts (such as *Aer.*, *Nat. hom.*, *VM*, and *Vict.*), in late Plato and Aristotle. From a historical perspective, recent studies suggest two points of influence: (a) Plato and Aristotle drew inspiration from the medical tradition, and (b) the medical idea itself may have been influenced by the ideas of pre-Socratic thinkers like Parmenides, Alcmaeon, and Empedocles.

This paper aims to investigate the early history of this concept and analyze the pre-Socratic evidence within the context of medical thought. The central questions addressed are to what extent the theories of mixture proposed by the pre-Socratic philosophers influenced the ideas presented in the Hippocratic texts and what original contributions the medical tradition made to this theory, which went on to have a significant impact on both philosophical and medical thinking.

I will attempt to show that the fragments of Parmenides (B 16) and Empedocles (B 22), although attesting the key term “*krasis*”, do not show a specific focus on themes related to health and illness, nutrition and environmental factors that are typical of medical statements, nor do they explicitly express the concept of balance. In contrast, Alcmaeon’s account (B 4) is a unique precursor to the concept of balance and its important role in medicine. However, it does not express this theory using the terminology of “*krasis*” and “*sym/metriê*” (technical terms found in Hippocratic texts, Plato and Aristotle), nor does it suggest any direct relationship between the human body and factors such as food, exercise, environment and other aspects specific to medical discourse, as well as discussions of health found in the works of the most prominent philosophers.

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# New Books

## First Session (Tuesday, July 2, 11h15-12h, Auditorium 104)

- Arnaud Macé, *Les Éléates. Fragments des œuvres de Parménide, Zénon et Mélissos*. Traduits et présentés par Luc Brisson, Arnaud Macé et Jean-François Pradeau. Coll. Fragments. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2022. [↗](#)
- Arnaud Macé, *Philosophy of Science Information System: a participatory platform developed by the CDBP (Centre de Documentation et de Bibliographie Philosophiques) of the University of Franche-Comté*. [↗](#)
- Bruno L. Conte, *A Doxa no poema de Parmênides. Uma investigação a partir dos testemunhos antigos*. São Paulo: Loyola, 2023. [↗](#)
- Richard McKirahan, Forthcoming: *The Sophists*. Ancient Philosophies Series. Routledge, 2024.

## Second Session (Thursday, July 4, 11h15-12h, Auditorium 104)

- Livio Rossetti, *Ripensare i Presocratici. Da Talete (anzi da Omero) à Zenone*. Coll. Filosofie. Sesto San Giovanni: Mimesis, 2023. [↗](#)
- Nicholas Molinari, *Acheloios, Thales, and the Origin of Philosophy: A response to the Neo Marxians*. Archaeopress, 2022. [↗](#)
- Celso Vieira (org.). Forthcoming: *Dossier: "Style Matters in Presocratic Philosophy"*, Revista Archai, 2024.
- Alexandre Costa; Miriam Peixoto; Bruno Conte; Carolina Sánchez (orgs.). *Estudos pré-socráticos na América Latina*. São Paulo: Odyseus, 2024. [↗](#)



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