



Revista Archai
E-ISSN: 1984-249X
archaijournal@unb.br
Universidade de Brasília
Brasil

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375E-376C)
Revista Archai, vol. 15, núm. 15, julio-diciembre, 2015, pp. 105-115
Universidade de Brasília

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HERACLITUS, PLATO, AND THE PHILOSOPHIC DOGS (A NOTE ON REPUBLIC II, 375E-376C)

PICCONE, E. H. (2015). Heraclitus, Plato, and the philosophic dogs (a note on *Republic* II, 375e-376c).

Archai, n. 15, jul. – dez., p. 105-115

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.14195/1984-249X_15_10

RESUMO: Este artigo focaliza uma instância negligenciada da recepção platônica de Heráclito na República (II, 375e-376c), e tenta mostrar que é provável que a passagem de Platão seja uma alusão a B 97 de Heráclito («Os cães ladram para quem eles não conhecem») e B 85 («É difícil lutar contra o thymos, pois o que se almeja com isso se paga com ψυχή»). A principal reivindicação é que com o uso que faz da imagem de cães, Platão volta os seus olhos para Heráclito, e convida a explorar de a possibilidade que pelo menos alguns elementos da Kallipolis de Platão possam derivar de Heráclito - especialmente alguns fragmentos éticos e políticos. Uma breve pesquisa acerca desses elementos sugere haver uma profunda afinidade filosófica entre os dois autores em diversas áreas importantes (como a chamada «psicologia moral» e o «intelectualismo ético»), e questiona o lugar comum da interpretação tradicional de Heráclito como um defensor da moral aristocrática.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Platão, Heráclito, cães, thymos, phylakes, demos, polloi, aristoi.

ABSTRACT: The paper focuses on a neglected instance of the Platonic reception of Heraclitus in the Republic (II, 375e-376c), trying to show that it's likely that Plato's passage makes an allusion to Heraclitus' B97 ("Dogs bark at whom they don't know") and B85 ("It's difficult to fight θυμός, for what it longs for it pays with ψυχή"). The main

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Although the influence of Heraclitus on the ancient philosophical tradition can be taken for granted as a matter of fact, it's often hard to pin it down with enough precision in every instance. Possibly one of the most revealing test cases is Plato, in whose written works there is a deeply-embedded, opaque image of Heraclitus, widely acknowledged in the *Cratylus* and the *Theaetetus* (which contain seven of the nine explicit mentions by name in the dialogues and attribute him certain famous doctrines¹). Actually, the presence of Heraclitus in Plato goes far beyond these two dialogues, and can be detected in a considerable number of the writings in the *Corpus Platonicum*². As a rule, Plato doesn't quote Heraclitus much and when he does, he doesn't give his words exactly and fully, but adapts them to his own context, substantially transforming the originals. Scholarship has not been particularly keen on detecting the relevance of Heraclitus' art and thought in the *Republic*, although it might turn out to be important for a right understanding of Plato's own philosophical message at several crucial points of the argument (particularly books V-VII). In what follows, I will not even attempt a rough general sketch of the latter aspect, but will deal instead with just one instance of the reception of Heraclitus in book II (375e-376c). This note sets out to show

claim is that Plato's use of the image of dogs looks back to Heraclitus, which invites an exploration of the possibility that at least some elements of Plato's *kallipolis* might derive from Heraclitus – particularly from some ethical and political fragments. A brief survey of these suggests a deep philosophical affinity among the two authors in several important areas (as the so-called 'moral psychology' and 'ethical intellectualism'), and questions the commonplace traditional interpretation of Heraclitus as a defender of aristocratic morality.

KEYWORDS: Plato, Heraclitus, dogs, thymos, phylakes, demos, polloi, aristoi.

that it's likely that Plato's passage on the philosophic dogs makes an allusion to Heraclitus (DK22 B97: "Dogs bark at whom they don't recognize"). In what concerns the interpretation of Heraclitus enigmatic *dictum*, Plato seems to give a different side of the philosophy of the Ephesian, suggesting an anthropological (ethical and political) context of application. I'll argue that Plato's use of the image of dogs looks back to and sheds light on Heraclitus' thought, and explore the possibility that some elements of Plato's *kallipolis* might be connected to ideas in Heraclitus. Inter-textual analysis calls for a fair assessment of the relevant texts of both authors, which is not an easy task, each one of them being difficult to interpret in their own right. The influence of Heraclitus on Plato and the Platonic reception of Heraclitus constitute a territory not often visited by interpreters and commentators, sometimes slippery and always full of hermeneutical challenges. So: *Cave canes!*

The project of designing in thought an ideal polis is conceived precisely in book II of Plato's *Republic* (369c ff.), as the course that the search for the nature of justice must follow, yielding as a general answer (in book IV, 443c-d) the inner *ἀρμονία* both of the soul and the city. A quick look at book II as a whole shows an obvious surfacing of a well-known (though not unique) Heraclitean theme, in the specific criticism of Homer and Hesiod, leading to censorship and eventual banishment of politically incorrect poetry from the *καλλίπολις* — as it is later called (V, 527c2) —, because of the harmful effects of the immoral and false depiction

of the gods in their mythological tales³. Pre-Socratic influences here should include Xenophanes⁴ in the first place, but a harsh attitude towards the founding fathers of Greek παιδεία — extended to Xenophanes himself — is also very conspicuous in some Heraclitean fragments⁵. Plato's own criticism of traditional poetry comes up as part of the initial development of the appropriate παιδεία for the young Guardians (φύλακες, introduced at 374d). At this early stage of the long narrative argument these "Guardians" refer to the emerging class of professional soldiers in the "luxurious" or "swollen" city⁶, resulting from the fast-growing needs of the imagined community of citizens and a combination of factors such as overpopulation, the consequent need to make war, and the principle of division of work according to each one's natural abilities. Later on, an *élite* of philosopher-kings will gradually develop out of these primitive Guardians (who will be then distinguished from the shepherds, and referred to as "helpers"⁷), and eventually become the ruling class, coming into full view in book V. For the time being, besides the producers and craftsmen, there is only this class in charge of warfare (offensive and defensive), which will be expected to enforce law and order within the state, and to act always with the interest of the whole city in mind.

Before getting to the question of the rearing, training and right education of the Guardians, the interlocutors face the preliminary problem of the mere possibility of breeding good watch-dogs for the city, fierce and 'high-spirited'. At 374a-b, Socrates insists that in every case, whether horse, dog or any other animal, there's no courageousness without a high-spirited nature; for, he tells the impetuous Glaucon:

Don't you know spirit (*θυμός*) is an invincible thing that no one wants to fight with, and that its presence makes every soul (*ψυχή*) fearless and unconquerable in the face of every danger?⁸

Socrates' revealing connection of *θυμός* and *ψυχή* anticipates the moral psychology of book IV, where *ψυχή* is the broader concept and *θυμός* is one of its constituent parts⁹. Perhaps significantly,

Socrates may be evoking a famous saying of Heraclitus (B85): “It’s hard to fight passion (θυμός), for what it longs for, it pays with soul (ψυχή)”. That Heraclitus’ saying is in Plato’s mind here is suggested by the close lexical parallelism among Plato’s ἄμαχόν τε καὶ ἀνίκητον θυμός and Heraclitus’ θυμῷ μάχεσθαι χαλεπόν, and reinforced by the idea of ψυχή as the epistemic subject and the moral agent, so prominently held by Plato’s Socrates.

The starting-point of our passage is the assimilation of the natures of the Guardians-to-be and dogs of a good breed (375a). Guardians should possess the same qualities as good dogs — gentleness towards the οἰκείοι and not only fierceness towards strangers. Socrates now asks where can they find such a character that is both “gentle and high-spirited” (πραῶν καὶ μεγάλθυμον ἦθος, 375c5). Since these qualities have contrary natures (ἐναντία γάρ που θυμοειδεῖ πραεῖα φύσις, 375c5-6), and granting that without such a combination “a good Guardian will not come to be” (φύλαξ ἀγαθὸς οὐ μὴ γένηται, 375c8), the argument comes to a standstill, concluding that guardianship would be “impossible” (ἀδύνατον, 375d1). (It’s worth noticing the inference requires an additional premise, that of the mutual exclusion of contraries, which remains implicit.) Socrates pauses for a moment, going over what was said before and recognizing the difficulty. Before long, he finds the answer has been there all along, for the very image (εἰκόν, 375d5) of the city-Guardians as dogs, he argues, provides a way out of the difficulty, and a solid basis for the possibility of good guardianship based on such a “nature” or “character”,

[SOCRATES] [375e] As you know, the character (τὸ ἦθος) of dogs of a good breed is by nature (φύσει) this: they are most gentle with those habitually around and who are better known (τοὺς συνήθεις τε καὶ γνωρίμους) to them, but they are the opposite way with those they don’t know (τοὺς ἀγνώτας).

[GLAUCON] I know it well.

[SOC.] Then, this is possible, and we aren’t searching against nature (οὐ παρὰ φύσιν) for such a Guardian.

[GL.] It doesn’t seem so.

[SOC.] Don’t you think that the man who is to be

our Guardian still needs this: to become in his nature a lover of wisdom (φιλόσοφος τὴν φύσιν), besides being high-spirited (τῷ θυμοειδεῖ)?

[376a] [GL.] What? I don’t understand.

[SOC.] This, precisely, you can see in dogs, and it’s something worthy of admiration in a beast.

[GL.] What do you mean?

[SOC.] That when a dog sees a stranger, he gets angry (ὅν μὲν ἂν ἴδῃ ἀγνώτα, χαλεπαίνει), even if he hasn’t received any harm from him. But when it’s someone known, he greets him (ὅν δ’ ἂν γινώριμον, ἀσπάζεται), even if he never benefitted from him. Or have you never wondered about this?

[GL.] I had not until now turned my attention to the matter. But it’s obvious that he behaves this way.

[SOC.] Still, it shows a fine quality [376b] of his nature (τὸ πάθος αὐτοῦ τῆς φύσεως) and that he truly is a lover of wisdom (ὡς ἀληθῶς φιλόσοφον).

[GL.] In what manner?

[SOC.] In so far as he distinguishes the friendly from the hostile aspect (ὄψιν ... φίλην καὶ ἐχθρὰν διακρίνει) by nothing else than by his knowing (καταμαθεῖν) the one and his ignorance (ἀγνοῆσαι) of the other. And how would he not be a lover of learning (φιλομαθὲς), since he defines the friendly and the alien by understanding and by ignorance (συνέσει τε καὶ ἀγνοίᾳ ὀριζόμενον τὸ τε οἰκεῖον καὶ τὸ ἀλλότριον)?

[GL.] In no wise, he would not.

[SOC.] But lover of learning and lover of wisdom are the same?

[GL.] The same, indeed.

[SOC.] Then, may we be confident in establishing this also for man, that if someone is likely [376c] to be gentle to familiars and friends, he must be by nature a lover of wisdom and a lover of learning (φύσει φιλόσοφον καὶ φιλομαθῆ αὐτὸν δεῖν εἶναι)?

[GL.] Let’s establish this.

[SOC.] Then, he who is to become the fine and noble Guardian of our city shall be by nature a lover of wisdom, high-spirited (Φιλόσοφος δὲ καὶ θυμοειδής... τὴν φύσιν), quick and strong.¹⁰

The philosophical significance of the passage has been often overlooked and minimized, with occasional exceptions.¹¹ The main point of

the comparison, prompted by the pun φύλαξ-σκύλαξ, seems clear enough: the natures (φύσεις, 375a7) that qualify to be good Guardians, besides being fierce, must also be gentle with one another and with the citizens. That is, they should be like dogs of a good breed, in so far as these exhibit a naturally gentle and ‘philosophical’ disposition, as shown by their ability to (successfully) distinguish friend from foe based solely on the criterion of knowledge and ignorance. Etymological word-play at 376b suggests two different senses in which the word φιλόσοφος (used here for the first time in the *Republic*) can be taken: as ‘lover of wisdom’ (or ‘friend of the wise’, the traditional reading¹²) and as ‘wise about friends’¹³ (an alternative that, however far-fetched as it may sound, makes good sense in context). The nature or character of dogs can be termed “philosophic” merely because it implies a gentler psychic disposition that tempers their fierceness, a cognitive and rational faculty to balance the blind force of θυμός. Since the double analogy of Guardians with dogs and of dogs with philosophers comes to the oblique identification of Guardians and philosophers, the final point looks like an early and somewhat comical preview of the central thesis of book V, that philosophy and kingship must coincide in the same individuals (473c-d). The way the idea is put forward here is clearly playful, and calling dogs “philosophers” doubtless has an ironical edge, but the image can hardly be just an inconsequential silly joke of Plato’s¹⁴. For one thing, the likening of the Guardians and dogs is notoriously recurrent, and it anticipates especially important themes to be developed later on (*i.e.* internal conflict and harmony of the tripartite soul and the tripartite polis, centered in θυμός and personified by the Guardians as an intermediate social class and the detailed characterization of the philosopher ruler). Plato’s would seem to be a positive use of the image, especially if it is a proleptic wink at the central thesis of Platonic political philosophy, that “philosophers become kings in the cities, or those whom are called now kings and rulers become philosophers” (473c11-d2). But Plato’s apparently straightforward positive use of the image may be more nuanced than would seem at first sight. It

would be well to remember that the identification of philosophers and rulers (or, in more abstract terms, the conjunction of “political power and philosophy”, δύναμις τε πολιτική καὶ φιλοσοφία, 473d3) is in fact introduced as a paradoxical tenet (*cf.* 472a6: παράδοξον λόγον, 473e4: πολὺ παρὰ δόξαν ῥηθήσεται), and for good reasons (that is, not only because philosophical πολιτική would be the opposite of factual political practice, but also because the respective natures of the philosopher and the statesman are worlds apart).

Furthermore, there is a distinct possibility that Plato alludes at 376a to Heraclitus B97¹⁵:

For dogs bark just at whom [or: ‘at what’] they don’t recognize¹⁶.

This brief sentence was preserved by Plutarch (*An seni resp.*, 787c), whose use of the imagery suggests the opposite type of behavior — being gentle with friends and acquaintances — in a social and political context¹⁷. Strictly speaking, although it has often been thought to convey a criticism, the preserved sentence by itself does not voice an explicit value judgment (neither literally on dogs, nor metaphorically on men, nor in both senses on dogs and men at once). In fact, we know nothing of the original context, but Heraclitus is certainly taking up a Homeric theme. In *Odyssey* 14.30, Eumaeus’ guard-dogs bark loudly at Odysseus¹⁸ disguised as a beggar, and later (16.8-10), just before Telemachus arrives in Eumaeus’ place, still unrecognized, Odysseus says:

Eumaeus, some good comrade of yours is about to arrive

or at least some other acquaintance, since the dogs don’t bark,

but wag their tails. I hear footsteps¹⁹.

Further on (at 17.326-327), Odysseus’ own dog, old Argos, is the only one who silently recognizes him, even in disguise and after twenty years. The sequential ordering of these passages is meaningful, as the first two set up the narrative climax of the third, which, in turn, anticipates the outcome of

Odysseus' return, when he reveals his true self and slays the suitors. Whether or not Heraclitus echoes a popular saying²⁰, B97 likely reflects a Heraclitean reading and appropriation of Homer. If so, in my view the *Republic* II passage would be presenting us with a rare instance of Plato reading Heraclitus and Heraclitus reading Homer, all at once. One crucial question is what exactly the Heraclitean use of the Homeric theme might have been. Given the literary antecedents, the Heraclitean sentence, even if complete by itself, still implies something like "but they welcome whom they know" (περισσαίνουσι δὲ τὸν γνῶριμον). Read this way, the primary focus seems to be on the 'subjective' side: dogs are clearly — even if only indirectly — presented as relatively intelligent agents. The kind of cognition implicitly attributed to dogs involves more than sensory perception, and must include memory (so perhaps it'd be better rendered by "re-cognition") which eventually, through habituation, becomes experience. So, if B97 is in fact a criticism (as opposed to a factual observation of dog behavior), the sentence might be less about the fierce bark of dogs, than about why they bark. If an analogy is to work for such a hypothesis, dogs would have to be at fault, and fail to recognize a friend, someone they already know (rather than rightly identifying someone they've actually never met as a stranger).

It might be argued that, by the same token, Plato could just have taken the image directly from Homer. However, we can safely assume Plato knew first-hand Heraclitus' book. This can be taken for granted, within the *Republic* itself (cf. 497e9-498b1²¹), and even before (in dialogues such as *Symposium*, *Phaedo*, and *Cratylus*), while the fact of Plato's knowledge of Heraclitus' book is widely acknowledged for dialogues of later composition (e.g., *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, and *Laws*). And, for what it's worth, a handful of recurring key-terms further strengthens the likelihood that Heraclitus is neither being by-passed nor absent from Plato's mind. In the first place, ἦθος occurs in B78 and B119²², as the epistemic and moral framework of a man's being. Second, although certainly not rare in Plato, φύσις certainly comes from Heraclitus²³. Thirdly, as already noted, θυμοειδής and θυμός might echo

Heraclitus' language in B85²⁴. And last but not least, ψυχή arguably is, by its own right, a fundamental part of Heraclitus' legacy, as the archetypical concept of the moral and epistemic subject²⁵. On the other hand, it's Plato who brings to the theme the word φιλόσοφος, which was probably not in Heraclitus' vocabulary²⁶. Apparently, Plato is using Heraclitean imagery and language freely and for his own purposes, just as he does elsewhere, and as Heraclitus had done before with Homeric materials.

More clues are to be found at the other end of the Heraclitean legend. A later epigram²⁷ that must echo this particular fragment turns Heraclitus' words against himself, calling him "the divine dog who barked at the mob" (θεῖον ὑλακτητὴν δήμου κύνα)²⁸, thus suggesting that the ordinary man of the δῆμος (as opposed to the rulers, the powerful and the rich) is the object of the original comparison. However, the meaning of the word δῆμος in Heraclitus B44²⁹ is arguably not synonymous with "the many", but refers instead to "the people" as the sum total of the free citizens, including both the many and the few³⁰. The ironical qualification of "divine" doesn't really strengthen the likelihood of B97's being an aristocratic snarl aimed especially at the many, but it does imply that it voices an important and characteristic aspect of Heraclitus' philosophical and political stance, and points to an anthropological scenario (rather than a purely zoological one³¹), all the more so since the word θεῖον, instead of merely mocking his aristocratic arrogance, might mask an implicit third term, hinting at the idea of a proportional relationship, as some other fragments do³². If we assume the Platonic context may point at a similarly political application in the original, and try to picture what kind of city is depicted in the fragments, we get an image of Heraclitus' polis as structured by a threefold proportional ratio: the many (πολλοί, referred to with and without the article), the aristocrats (ἄριστοι, B29, unnamed but alluded as "the few", ὀλίγοι, at B104), and the true ἄριστος, the one man (εἷς) worth ten-thousand (B49) — the best according to Heraclitus' stricter and markedly epistemic standards, at odds with actual practice in the real polis of Ephesus.

On the point that the many are the intended objects of the analogy, although very extended since ancient times and certainly still dominant today among scholars, comparison of B97 with a couple other fragments suggests the possibility that Heraclitus has in mind the aristocrats, not “the people”:

B29: For the best (οἱ ἄριστοι) choose a single thing instead of all, ever-flowing glory among mortals. But the many are satiated like cattle (κτήνεα)³³.

B104: What is their intelligence or understanding? They believe the bards of the people and take the crowd as their teacher, knowing that ‘many are wretched, but few are good’³⁴.

The dominant interpretation of B29 reads it as Heraclitus’ enthusiastic endorsement of the aristocratic ruling class, a praise of the nobles for their superior choice of a single thing instead of all the rest (ἐν ἀντὶ ἀπάντων), and as a typical deprecation of the many, who are likened to “cattle” (κτήνεα). Now, whereas the latter point can be defensible (with the observation that it doesn’t necessarily entail attributing to Heraclitus an anti-democratic political position³⁵, and that a comparison of the many with cattle and dogs, although possible, seems *prima facie* unlikely), some objections can be raised against Heraclitus’ alleged aristocratic sympathies, in spite of what may appear at first glance. Besides his persistent criticism of the many, Heraclitus would seem to align himself on the side of the nobles mainly because of the assimilation of κλέος and ἔν, which is taken to validate allegedly shared aristocratic values³⁶. B49, “One (man) is <for me> (worth as) ten-thousand, if he were the best (εἷς <ἐμοί> μύριοι, ἐὰν ἄριστος ᾦ, where it should be noted that the reference is made conditionally and in the subjunctive, thus suggesting an ideal rather than a factual reality) and B33, “It’s also law to obey the will [or ‘counsel’] of one (man)” (νόμος καὶ βουλῇ πείθεσθαι ἐνός) have often been invoked to reinforce that view. It’s questionable, however, to take ἄριστος in B33 so flatly, as if it merely meant an aristocrat. As far as any one man does personify the true ἄριστος, the best candidate must be the shadowy figure of Hermo-

dorus³⁷, called “the ablest” (ὀνήϊστος) among the Ephesians in B121, where the political invective is class-blind: “All adult Ephesians would deserve to be put to death and leave the city to beardless boys”³⁸.

Furthermore, the object of the choice of “the best” in B29, “ever-flowing glory”, is said to be ἐν ἀντὶ ἀπάντων, “one thing *instead* of all”, implying a mutual exclusion which doesn’t match Heraclitus’ own conception of the rationality of unity and totality, paradigmatically expressed elsewhere as an identity, ἐν πάντα (B50), and as a cycle or a reversible relationship, ἐκ πάντων ἐν καὶ ἐξ ἐνός πάντα (B10). The phrase κλέος ἀέναον might conceal an ironic reference to the aristocratic illusion of pursuing immortality through fame, following the model of the Homeric warrior³⁹. Even if Heraclitus is giving to the aristocrats a better grade than to the many, they still ultimately fail the test, for from the viewpoint of his ethical intellectualism⁴⁰, it is σωφρονεῖν, “being of a sound mind”, not “ever-flowing” fame, that is the mark of ἀρετὴ μεγίστη καὶ σοφίη, “supreme excellence and wisdom”, according to B112⁴¹. If αὐτῶν in B104 refers to the same men who are designated “the best” (οἱ ἄριστοι) in B29, then these are probably so called ironically. Ephesian aristocrats, or their political operators in the assembly, perhaps even the speakers against Hermodorus, seem better candidates than the mob to stand for Heraclitus’ barking dogs. Independently of what the reference of ὁ δοκιμώτατος is in B28a (“The most reputed of men knows and guards mere appearances”: δοκέοντα ὁ δοκιμώτατος γινώσκει, φυλάσσει), whether it targets an aristocratic type, or individual figures of famous poets (say, Homer or Hesiod), the two final verbs –which describe the worthlessness of the epistemic relationship of the most reputed wise man to mere appearances— go well with the image of the barking dogs⁴².

B97 voices a connection between dogs *not* recognizing something or someone whose presence they perceive beforehand and reactively barking. This may plausibly suggest a number of things. For instance, that just as good dogs, men in general are prone to be mistrustful of people, things or ideas they aren’t familiar with (whence the need for

adequate rearing and training). Alternatively, Heraclitean dogs might be meant to illustrate a special (political) case of human ignorance, representing traditional figures (likely poets) or maybe even some contemporaries who reacted loudly in disapproval to Heraclitus' ideas or sympathies. In a moral and social context, B85 (on the difficulty of fighting θυμός and paying with ψυχή) and B43 (on the need of extinguishing ὕβρις) might serve to paint a fuller picture. Perhaps more to the epistemic point, B72 complements the critical analogy of the barking dogs with men who live unaware of the λόγος, the supreme γνώριμος:

From that with which they associate (ὁμιλοῦσι) most continuously, {the logos that rules all things} from that they differ (διαφέρονται), and the things they come across (οἷς... ἐγκυροῦσι) every day, these appear alien (ξένα) to them⁴³.

The Heraclitean characterization of human life as epistemic alienation is here phrased as a failure to recognize the known: the unspecified men who are the grammatical subject are said to "differ" from that which is most familiar, mistaking the evident for the alien and unknown. Marcovich thought that λόγος "seems to be personified here as a close friend of men"⁴⁴, but remains a stranger in their minds. They are hopelessly lost in confusion or sunken in deep oblivion, and don't have the first clue about what they really know and what they don't (although they will believe otherwise). A richer description of this strange ignorance puts the paradox in these terms:

B17: For many men don't think straight (φρονέουσι) about such things as they meet with, nor do they know (γινώσκουσιν) after having learned (μαθόντες) them, but fancy (δοκέουσι) themselves they do⁴⁵.

The general paradox, already explicit in B1's contrast of the λόγος and the ἀξύνετοι ἄνθρωποι, is thus carefully developed: that which is most knowable and always nearby, remains unrecognized (B72). Men are alienated from that which is ever present (τὸ μὴ δυνόν ποτε, B16), they make no sense of "such things as they meet with" (όκοίους ἐγκυρεῦσιν), and fall painfully short of φρόνησις (B2) and γνῶσις (B56), prisoners of their own defective μάθησις and self-serving δόξα

(B17), believing themselves they know what they don't. Not even the poets and sages reputed as wisest (B40, B42, B56, B57) would pass the epistemic test, and all are declared to be "separated from" or "cut off" from wisdom (σοφὸν ἐστὶ πάντων κεχωρισμένον, B108).

With this sketch of the background in mind, I suggest the Heraclitean use of the image of dogs was meant to stress human epistemic alienation regarding the λόγος, mirroring and substantially modifying the Homeric treatment of the theme of an unrecognized Odysseus back in Ithaca. If the saying had a sharper edge and implied specifically a political criticism, aristocrats need not be excluded, and can reasonably be seen as equally likely targets as the many. Heraclitus' political model is centered in the supremacy of the law and is structured by an axiological threefold proportional ratio: the many relate to the few as the few relate to the one. The middle term thus appears simultaneously as better than the lower extreme and as worse than the higher. The Platonic context suggests a very similar model in the image of the flock, the guard-dogs and the shepherd. Plato's use of the image of dogs may be thus reminiscent, not only of Heraclitus' image, but also of his political model. Both uses of the image are irreducible, but they are also strikingly similar, and this fact suggests a deeper, more complex philosophical affinity than the rather simplistic, negative and condescending view of Heraclitus with which Plato is usually credited, an affinity which can be substantiated by the texts themselves and considerably expanded. The task is waiting for an updated critical assessment from current scholarship.

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Endnotes

1 I'm referring to the so-called "Universal Flux theory" (πάντα ῥεῖ), which stems from Plato's *Cratylus* and *Theaetetus*, but is not backed by Heraclitus' *ipsissima verba*. Plato's image of Heraclitus' river (δις ἐς τὸν αὐτὸν ποταμὸν οὐκ ἄν ἐμβαίης), which often passes as genuine, is likely an imitation of Heraclitus B12, rather than an actual quotation or a close paraphrase of a different original version of the river-statement; cf. Hülsz 2009. For a thorough and updated discussion of the issue, see Fronterotta (2012; 2013, p. 83-93), and his contribution in this volume.

2 Including the famous passages in the *Sophist* on the Ionian and Sicilian Muses and Eryximachus' speech in the *Symposium* (where the reference to Heraclitus is unmistakable and explicit), as well as many others in which Heraclitus is alluded to (like the so-called 'cyclic argument' in the *Phaedo*, and Diotima's treatment of mortal nature in the *Symposium*, possibly the most widely recognized). I've briefly touched upon some Platonic relevant cases, from *Apology* to *Sophist*, cf. Hülsz (2003a; 2003b; 2009; 2011; 2013a).

3 Cf. *R. II*, 477a ff. Criticism of the epic poets is a central issue for the first outline of what the right *paideia* for the proto-guardians should be.

4 Cf. DK21 B10, B11, B12, B14, B15 and B16. Xenophanes' criticism of Homer and Hesiod is alluded to the falsity of their anthropomorphic conception of the divine and their depiction of the actions of the gods as outright immoral.

5 Cf. DK22 B40, B42, B56, B57. Heraclitus' basic criticism of Homer and Hesiod is centered on their epistemic shortcomings regarding unity (rather than on the moral implications of myths), but Xenophanes is also targeted as a polymath lacking true understanding. On the subject of Heraclitus' criticism of Homer (and Archilochus) in B42, see H. Granger (2009).

6 The τρυφῶσα or φλεγμίνουσα πόλις, contrasted explicitly with the first one, so austere as to lack any rulers, which is called by Glaucon a "city of pigs" (ὅσον πόλιν, 372d4), but is characterized by Socrates as "the true city" (ἡ... ἀληθινὴ πόλις), the "healthy" one (ὕγιης) at 372e.

7 Cf. 416a: δεινότατον γὰρ που πάντων καὶ αἰσχιστον ποιμήσι τοιοῦτους γε καὶ οὕτω τρέφειν κύνας ἐπικούρους ποιμνίων, ὥστε ὑπὸ ἀκολασίας ἢ λιμοῦ ἢ τινος ἄλλου κακοῦ ἔθους αὐτοὺς τοὺς κύνας ἐπιχειρήσαι τοῖς προβάτοις κακουργεῖν καὶ ἀντὶ κυνῶν λῆκοις ὁμοιωθῆναι.

8 374a9-b2: ἀνδρεῖος δὲ εἶναι ἄρα ἐβελήσῃ ὁ μὴ θυμοειδὴς εἴτε ἵππος εἴτε κύων ἢ ἄλλο ὅτιον ζῶον; ἢ οὐκ ἐννεόηκας ὡς ἄμαχόν τε καὶ ἀνίκητον θυμὸς, οὐ παρόντος ψυχῇ πάσα πρὸς πάντα ἀφοβὸς τέ ἐστι καὶ ἀήττητος. The explicit mention of θυμὸς 'being present in' ψυχῇ testifies to an intimate connection among the two. This fits closely enough the text of Heraclitus' B85 (on which see below, note 24).

9 Indeed, θυμὸς as the seat of passions, feelings, and desires is the root idea in both the denominations of the spirited and desiderative 'parts' of the irrational soul (τὸ θυμοειδὲς καὶ τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν), as opposed to reason (ὁ λόγος and τὸ λογιστικόν) in book IV.

10 Plato, *R. II*, 375e1-376c5 (my translation). I have suppressed the narrative references to both voices ('I said', 'he said'), and italicized the words closest to the text of DK22 B97.

11 Many editions of the *Republic* pass over the passage in silence. Guthrie (1975, p. 450, n. 1) briefly summarized it and was satisfied to observe that Plato "had a sense of humour". In Cornford's (1945) view the image is of little significance; but cf. Tait (1949, p. 205, n. 3). Annas (1981, p. 80) found it "disconcerting" that Plato's "sole ground" for his claim about the educability of the Guardians "is an analogy with animals". See also Sinclair (1948); and Saxonhouse (1978, esp. p. 892-895). Ferrari (2007, p. 184-ff) recognizes the recurrence of the comparison of dogs and Guardians in the *Republic*, briefly paraphrasing the passage of book II, but is silent about the possibility that Heraclitus' fragments 85 and 97 may be in the background there; later on (p. 188, n. 18), though, he insightfully brings in the image of the harmony of bow and lyre from Heraclitus B51 in his interpretation of the three-part soul at the end of book IV.

12 This can be further analyzed as 'lover of knowing' and 'lover of the known', cf. Tait (1949, p. 207).

13 Adam (1902, note *ad loc.*) refers to Brandt (*Zur Entwick. d. Pl. Lehr. v. d. Seelentheilen*, p. 10) who "ingeniously takes φιλόσοφον as = σοφὸν τοὺς φίλους".

14 This was the opinion of Sinclair (1948). See further on the philosophic significance and importance of the passage, Tait (1949, p. 203-211).

15 I'm aware only of four authors that have noticed this. Adam (1903) does mark the possible reference to DK22 B97 (and to B85 at 374a-b, with a reference to Ast), after pointing to a couple of very interesting parallels in the *Odyssey* (16.4 and 14.30, see below), without further developing the issue; Láscaris (1958, p. 338-ff.); and M. Pabón and Fernández Galiano (1981, notes *ad loc.*), following closely Adam.

16 DK22 B97: κύνες γὰρ καὶ βαῦζουσιν ὃν ἂν μὴ γινώσκωσι. (The version here assumed keeps the mss. readings rather than the emended text printed in DK). I keep καὶ as part of the quotation and interpret it in adverbial sense ('just', 'precisely'), after Marcovich (1967), who translates, however: "Dogs only [and not men] are accustomed to bark at everyone they don't know". I also keep γὰρ, usually excised by editors, after Mouraviev (2006, *ad loc.*) Marcovich saw B97 as an appropriation of a popular saying and declared its meaning to be unclear, conjecturing it might be read as a reply to the Ephesians' unkind reception of Heraclitus' paradoxical teaching.

17 Plutarch's use of Heraclitus here (*An seni sit gerenda res publica*) seems merely ornamental (cf. HERSHBELL, 1977, p. 191). Nevertheless, a fuller political reference in the Heraclitean original might be reflected less literally in the context immediately after the quotation, on the subject of the envy that affects young politicians, at first blocking their way to successful action, but then yielding and itself prospering in them, through love of glory (787c8-10): ...καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀρχόμενον ὥσπερ ἐν θούραις τοῦ βήματος μάχεται καὶ πάροδον οὐ δίδωσι· τὴν δὲ σύντροφον καὶ συνήθη δόξαν οὐκ ἀγρίως οὐδὲ χαλεπῶς ἀλλὰ πρᾶως ἀνέχεται ("... and at first, at the entrance to the tribune, [envy] fights and gives no passage, but then she upholds that familiar and habitual glory neither savagely nor harshly, but gently"). This recalls the language and the general sense of the use of the image in the passage from *R. II*, and so, it would seem to indirectly confirm the Heraclitean connection there.

18 *Od.* 14. 29-30: ἑξαπίνης δ' Ὀδυσῆα ἴδον κύνες ὑλακόμοροι. / οἱ μὲν κεκλήγοντες ἐπέδραμον... ("Suddenly the barking dogs, seeing Odysseus, / ran upon him with loud barking...")

19 *Od.* 16.8-10: Εὐμαί, ἡ μάλα τίς τοι ἐλεύσεται ἐνθάδ' εἰταῖρος / ἢ καὶ γνώριμος ἄλλος, ἐπεὶ κύνες οὐχ ὑλάουσιν, / ἀλλὰ περισσάινουσι· ποδῶν δ' ὑπὸ δούπον ἀκούω.

20 Cf. Láscaris (1958) and Marcovich (1967). It's noteworthy that none quote any parallels or give further indications of this. See notes 12 and 13 above.

21 For an approach to this passage, see Hülsz (2012).

22 DK22 B78: ἦθος γὰρ ἀνθρώπειον μὲν οὐκ ἔχει γνώμας, θεῖον δὲ ἔχει. DK22 B119: ἦθος ἀνθρώπων δαίμων.

23 Heraclitus' is the earliest philosophical use of the word, both as a grammatical subject and in adverbial use, denoting the objective ontological rational and unitary structure of things in general, man included). φύσις occurs in DK22 B1, [B106], B112 and B123. B1: ...κατὰ φύσιν διαίρων ἕκαστον: B106: ...ὡς ἀγνοοῦντι [sc. Ἡσιόδῳ] φύσιν ἡμέρας ἀπάσης μίαν οὖσαν; B112: ...ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαῖοντας; B123: φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ. For a closer look, including the only Homeric use of the term, see Hülsz (2013).

24 DK22 B85: θυμῷ μάχεσθαι χαλεπὸν· ὁ <τι> γὰρ ἂν θέλῃ, ψυχῆς ὠνεῖται. It's not easy to even make out what the primary relevant meaning of the term θυμὸς is here ("anger" and "heart" -as the seat of desire and strong emotions- are the most recurring choices in translations); the semantic range covers the notions of the self, the seat of life, feeling and thinking, so in a large measure, the meanings overlap with those of ψυχῇ, to which it is linked and opposed here. The Heraclitean image would seem to be about selfhood, and the hard battle, an inner one, roughly anticipating Plato's contrast of rational and irrational parts of the human soul. Cf. Democritus B236, which must be a quotation of and a comment on this very fragment: θυμῷ μάχεσθαι μὲν χαλεπὸν· ἀνδρὸς δὲ τὸ κρατεῖν ἐν λόγιῳ. It's thus tempting to read B85 together with B97; see notes 8 and 9 above about B85's echo at 374a-b.

25 Cf. the relevant 'psychic' fragments: DK22 B45, B107, B115, B117 and B118.

26 DK22 B35: χρῆ γὰρ εὐ μάλα πολλῶν ἱστορας φιλοσόφους ἀνδρας εἶναι (only the words in italics are likely to come from Heraclitus). The phrase φιλοσόφους ἀνδρας probably is an interpolation by Clement, but if

authentic, then this would be the earliest recorded use of the word φιλόσοφος in the Greek language — and the only one in the whole Pre-Socratic tradition! —, though it would not refer to Heraclitus' own procedure.

27 The epigram (*Anthologia Graeca* 7.479, framed as an epitaph for his tombstone) is attributed to Theodoridas (3rd century B.C.): Πέτρος ἐγὼ τὸ πάλαι γυρή / καὶ ἄτριπτος ἐπιβλής / τὴν Ἡρακλείτου ἐνδὸν ἔχω κεφαλὴν· / αἰῶν μ' ἔτριψεν κροκάλαις ἴσον· ἐν γὰρ ἀμάξῃ / παμφόρῳ αἰζῆρῳ εἰνοδίῃ τέταμαι. / ἀγγέλλω δὲ βοροῖσι, καὶ ἄστηλός περ εὐόσα, / θείον ὑλακτητὴν δῆμου ἔχουσα κύνα. [“I, a stone long ago rounded and an unworn *epibles*, / Hold within the head of Heraclitus. / Great age has worn me like the shingle, for in a wagon path / Bearing all humans I am stretched out in the roadway. / But I announce to humans — even though I don't have a *stele* — / That I hold the divine dog who barked at the mob.” (transl. STEFFEN, 2002, p. 162.)]

28 A move which seems rather common-place and recalls a well-known version of his death (D. L. 9.4: Νεάνθης δ' ὁ Κυζικηνὸς φησι μὴ δυνθέντα αὐτὸν ἀποσπάσαι τὰ βόλιτα μεῖναι καὶ διὰ τὴν μεταβολὴν ἀγνοθέντα κυνόβρωτον γενέσθαι, in which dogs devour an excrement-covered Heraclitus because they don't recognize him.

29 B44: Μάχεσθαι χρή τὸν δῆμον ὑπὲρ τοῦ νόμου ὁκωσπερ τείχεος: “The people must fight in defense of the law as (they do) for the city wall”. The only other Heraclitean use of the word is in B104, δῆμων αἰδοῖσι, in the plural, where it probably means “the towns”.

30 Cf. Senzasono (1996, p. 66, n. 48), who writes, quoting Mazzarino (*Fra Oriente e Occidente*, Firenze 1947: 231): “il *dēmos* nel VII secolo è lo stato e sempre continuerò ad avere questo senso”. Si tratta appunto di un ambito costituzionale ‘dove tutti i liberi partecipano alla vita della polis’; cf. Fronterotta (2013, p. 306-307) for a different view, more in line with the traditional interpretation of Heraclitus’ ‘aristocratic’ politics.

31 Several Heraclitean fragments deal with animals in one way or another. Excluding B97, B67 (the comparison of the soul to the spider, in latin and probably not genuine, *pace* Nussbaum 1972) and the lice of B56, here is a list: B4: *boves felices diceremus cum inveniant orobum ad comedendum*; B9: *ὄνους σύρματα ἂν ἐλέσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ χρυσόν*; B11: *πάν γὰρ ἔρπετόν πηληγὴ νέμεται*; B13: *ὕες γοῦν βορβόρῳ ἥδονται μᾶλλον ἢ καθαρῷ ὕδατι*; B29: *οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ κεκόρηται ὁκωσπερ κτήνεα*; B37: *sues caeno cohortales aves pulveri lavari*; B61: *ἰχθύσι μὲν πότιμον καὶ σωτήριον, ἀνθρώποις δὲ ἄποτον καὶ ὀλέθριον*; B82: *πιθήκων ὁ κάλλιστος αἰσχρὸς ἀνθρώπων γένει συμβάλλειν*; B83: *ἀνθρώπων ὁ σοφώτατος πρὸς θεὸν πιθήκος φανέται καὶ σοφίῃ καὶ κάλλει καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσιν*.

32 In particular, see B78 (about the internal distinction of a ‘human’ character —ἥθος ἀνθρώπειον— and a ‘divine’ one —θεῖον— on the basis of γνώμης ἔχειν), B79 (featuring the ratio πᾶις / ἀνὴρ / δαίμων), B82 and B83. Kahn (1979, p. 175) presents and comments B97 together with B87 (on the fool who gets excited at every λόγος) with the intention “to suggest a simile or ratio: as dogs react to strangers, so do foolish men to every *logos*”. I sympathize with this line of approach, but the intended analogy with B87 doesn't seem to fit well: dogs are aggressively active and discriminating, whereas fools are passive and the opposite of discriminating; and the unrecognized strangers are a mismatch for ‘every’ *logos*.

33 DK22 B29: αἰρέυνται γὰρ ἐν ἀντὶ πάντων οἱ ἀριστοὶ, κλέος ἀέναον θνητῶν· οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ κεκόρηται ὁκωσπερ κτήνεα. My rendering takes θνητῶν as masculine: “ever-flowing glory among (or simply, of) mortal men”. The syntax admits more than one construction: “The best choose one thing, ever-flowing glory, instead of all mortal things” (with πάντων ... θνητῶν in hyperbaton), or “The best choose one thing instead of all, ever-flowing glory instead of mortal things”, as if ἀντὶ was implicitly understood between ἀέναον and θνητῶν. One could punctuate after ἀέναον, as Mouraviev (2006) does: “The best choose one thing instead of all, ever-flowing glory. But of mortal things the many are satiated like cattle”. Cf. especially Sider (2013, p. 327): “The entire fragment has always been read as if the two clauses were in complete contrast, although there is in fact no evidence for a μὲν in the first clause. Thus, instead of a contrast between the upper and lower classes, as is usually understood, the second clause, following the first as explained above, can now be rendered ‘and the majority [sc. of them, the *aristoi*] glut themselves like cattle’. In other words, Heraclitean ethics loves to hide. οἱ ἀριστοὶ are not in fact ἀριστοί, and some of them are no better than οἱ πολλοί, the people they generally despise.

Thus, although Heraclitus may not be a friend of οἱ πολλοί, neither is he to be taken as a staunch defender of the upper classes.”

34 DK22 B104 (Proclus, *in Alc.*, p. 255, 15): τίς γὰρ αὐτῶν νόος ἡ φρήν; δῆμων αἰδοῖσι πεῖθονται καὶ διδασκάλῳ χρεῖωνται ὁμίλῳ εἰδότες, ὅτι ‘οἱ πολλοὶ κακοί, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἀγαθοί’. I suppress οὐκ before εἰδότες, after Clement's version (*Strom.* 5.9.59.1-5). About the aristocrats being the intended targets of B104, see García Quintela (1992, p. 80-ff.): “...el sujeto del fragmento es la aristocracia de Éfeso a la que se reprocha su mimesis con el pueblo” (p. 83). In support of this, the author quotes Theognis (665-6 and 797-8). Marcovich (1967, *ad loc.*) believes that αὐτῶν means the Ephesian rulers. For Kahn (1979, p. 175) it refers to men generally (“the mass of mankind”). Heraclitus' criticism of Ephesian aristocracy is further documented in B121 and B125a.

35 Cf. Vlastos (1947, p. 166-168), where he held that Heraclitus shouldn't be credited with an “aristocratic politics”. Acknowledging that he was “a misfit in Ephesian politics” (p. 166), Vlastos writes: “If our meager evidence permits any hypothesis concerning Heraclitus' political sympathies, it would be that he favored the limited democracy of the past. This is in line with his known admiration for Bias of Priene, who figures in the tradition as an early democratic statesman” (p. 167) and such a view doesn't really contradict his “contempt for the folly of the crowd” (p. 166), since “[t]he ‘many’ are not the *demos* but all who fail to meet the austere standards of Heraclitean wisdom, including the illustrious company of Homer, Hesiod, Archilochus, Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Hecataeus” (p. 166, n.106).

36 Kahn (1979, p. 233-234) observes that “[t]he terms of heroic choice recall the cosmic value of fire which, like gold, serves as payment for all things (XL.D.90): ‘one thing in exchange for all’” (p. 233), thus establishing “a formal parallel between the aim of a noble life and the omnivalent principle of fire” (p. 234). His observation is valid in so far as it concerns the contrast of two correlative moral paradigms, but doesn't necessarily imply Heraclitus' anti-democratic or pro-aristocratic political stance. The analogy of all human laws and the single cosmic divine one on which they depend appears in a different context (B114), dealing with the ξυνὸν πάντων, which surely stands for the λόγος (cf. B2: τοῦ λόγου δ' ἐόντος ξυνοῦ).

37 About Hermodorus, see Mouraviev (2003, p. 138-140) and Caballero (2008, p. 10-21).

38 B121: ἀξίον Ἐφεσίοις ἡβήδον ἀποθανεῖν πᾶσι, καὶ τοῖς ἀνῆβοις τὴν πόλιν καταλιπεῖν, οἵτινες Ἐρμόδορον ἄνδρα ἐωυτῶν ὀνήσιον ἐξέβαλον λέγοντες· ἡμέων μὴδὲ εἰς ὀνήσιος ἔστω· εἰ δὲ τις τοιοῦτος, ἄλλῃ τε καὶ μετ' ἄλλων. I quote Diogenes Laertius' version (Strabo's is shorter and gives ἀπάγξασθαι instead of ἀποθανεῖν). Although the final words of B121 give democratic equality as the Ephesians' justification for exiling their ablest citizen, aristocrats need not be excluded from participating. B125a, on the other hand, which looks like a comment on B125, is clearly directed against the wealthy: μὴ ἐπιλίποι ὑμᾶς πλοῦτος, Ἐφέσιοι, ἰν' ἐξελέγχωσθε πονηρεῦόμενοι (“May richness not abandon you, Ephesians, so that you are convicted of your wicked doings!”). An unflattering contrast between an adult male and an a πᾶις ἀνηβος recurs in B117. See further the praise of the true ἄριστος, the one with a soul endowed with wisdom, in B118: αὐτῇ ξηρῇ ψυχῇ σοφωτάτῃ καὶ ἀρίστῃ.

39 Cf. Sider (2013, p. 326): “ever-flowing fame all by itself would be a suspect phrase all by itself; add the word θνητῶν and it seems to lose all positive force”. Implicit criticism of warrior morality is possible in B24 (ἀρηιφάτους θεοὶ τιμῶσι καὶ ἀνθρώποι) and B25 (μόροι γὰρ μέζονες μέζοντας μοῖρας λαγχάνουσι).

40 Cf. Sider (2013), whose views on the subject I largely share. He concludes his thorough survey with the idea that Heraclitus' is an “intellectualist theory of ethics”, “one that should remind us of that found later in Plato, especially in the *Republic*” (p. 333), observing that in spite of hermeneutical risks “the similarities between the two are striking”, and finally wondering “whether there was more in the lost parts of Heraclitus' ethics that would strike us as Platonic” (p. 334).

41 In spite of doubts about its authenticity (based on the unusual language), B112 (from Stobaeus) can be prudently considered genuine at least in what regards the content. Cf. Hülz (2013b, p. 184).

42 A connection with B63 (ἐνθα δ' ἐόντι ἐπανίστασθαι καὶ φύλακας γίνεσθαι ἐγερτὶ ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν) is not impossible, but this fragment presents its own problems for interpretation. An eschatological reading of B97, read together with B63 (as the one García Quintela 1992, p. 222, n. 55 proposes) seems unlikely to me.

43 DK22 B72 (from Marcus Aurelius): ὡι μάλιστα διηγεκῶς ὁμιλοῦσι, [λόγῳ τῷ τὰ ὅλα διοικούντι] τούτοι διαφέρονται, καὶ οἷς καθ' ἡμέραν ἐγκυροῦσι, ταῦτα αὐτοῖς ξένα φαίνεται. Assuming it's not a mere paraphrase, it's hard to say how far the intended quotation extends to (*i. e.*, if it includes λόγῳ and the final words or not); Marcovich considered the whole last clause as belonging to Marcus; he was certainly right concerning οἷς καθ' ἡμέραν ἐγκυροῦσι, which looks like an echo of τοιαῦτα ... ὁκοίους ἐγκυρεῦσιν in B17 (see below, note 45). The point at the core of this criticism of the many is the paradox that they ignore what they already know, or to put it another way, the common (ξυνός) remains *for them* a stranger (ξένος). So even if the authentic text didn't mention λόγος, Marcus' Stoicizing interpolated reference to it is probably on the right track.

44 MARCÓVICH, 1967, p. 18. It's noteworthy the similar ambivalent use of the pronouns in both B72 and B97.

45 DK22 B17: οὐ γὰρ φρονέουσι τοιαῦτα πολλοί, ὁκοίους ἐγκυρεῦσιν, οὐδὲ μαθόντες γινώσκουσιν, ἐωυτοῖσι δὲ δοκέουσι. For an overview of λόγος in the fragments, cf. Hülz (2013c).

Submetido em Maio de 2015 e
aprovado em Junho de 2015.