Review

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Early Hellenic Anticipations of Logocentrism and Homocentrism

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Abstract. In this article, the intention of the authors is to show that hints of logocentric and homocentric views of the world, as the foundations of the modern civil era, despite the structural obstacles in their concepts, can be found in the works of the first Hellenic thinkers, and particular attention will be paid to the preserved fragments of the Pre-Socratics who are of interest for this research. The authors identified that indications of such approaches may be found in Pythagoreans, Parmenides, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and Democritus. Still, the early Greek philosopher who most obviously anticipated the letter homocentric views was Alcmaeon of Croton. His opinion that the man is different from other animals because he alone has understanding, while other animals have sensation but do not understand, represents a sign of the statements of numerous subsequent writers that *logos* abilities may be allocated only to humans and that the man has ontological primacy in regard to the so-called non-human living beings.

Keywords: Hellenic, anticipation, logocentrism, homocentrism, Pre-Socratics, thinking, sensation, (bio)ethics

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Обзор

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Элементы логоцентризма и гомоцентризма в ранней греческой философии

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Аннотация. Цель данной статьи – доказать, что в мировоззренческих установках первых греческих мыслителей можно обнаружить элементы логоцентризма и гомоцентризма как основные составляющие современного мира, несмотря на сложности структурного характера, лежащие в основе их учения. Особое внимание обращается на сохранившиеся фрагменты трудов досократиков, которые занимались данным вопросом. Авторы обнаружили, что данный поход наличествует в трудах Пифагора, Парменида, Эмпедокла, Анаксагоры и Демокрита. Б**о**льший акцент на гомоцентричные воззрения сделал Алкмеон Кротонский, утвердивший, что человек отличается от животных, поскольку наделен разумом, а у животных есть ощущения, но они не наделены разумом. Данная точка зрения представляет собой типичный подход многих других писателей, утверждающих, что Логос может находиться только в человеке, и поэтому он имеет преимущества онтологического характера перед так называемыми нечеловеческими существами.

Ключевые слова: греческий, элементы, логоцентризм, гомоцентризм, досократики, мышление, ощущение, этика

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Western civilization, whose vision of *cosmos* is still prevailingly homocentric, finds the origin for its standing points in Judeo-Christian tradition and in the views of ancient Greek philosophers. The intention of the authors is to show that hints of logocentric and homocentric, i.e. anthropocentric [1] views of the world, as the foundations of the modern civil era, despite the structural obstacles in their concepts, can be found in the works of the first Hellenic thinkers, and particular attention in the paper below will be paid to the preserved fragments of the Pre-Socratics who are of interest for this research [1].

[1] Parts of this paper have been published in previous years in several shorter or longer editions and interpretations. It would be difficult to list all the changes, especially those related to the content and style we made in the edited version of the work. The changes were made to minimise occasional digressions

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The Pythagorean Philolaus [2], in the book *On Nature* (*Peri physeos)* claims that there are four principles of rational animals (*Zoion tou logiku*): brain (*enkephalos)*, heart (*kardia*), navel (*omphalos*) and genitals (*aidoion*). Philolaus makes a distinction between the centers of intellect and sensation (**DK**44B13), as far as "The head <is the location> of intellect, the heart of soul and sensations. The conclusion that 'wise Philolaus' (*Philolaus….sophos*) (**DK**44A14) is drawing is that the brain shows the principle of man, the heart principle of the animal, the navel principle of the plant, and the genitals the principle of all of them together, because everything flourishes and germinates from the seed".

In the notes of Alexander Polyhistor, it is said that he also found the information that to some extent opposes the general objection of Aristotle to the Pre-Socratics [2], that they do not distinguish the reason (*nous)* and thinking (*phronesis*) from sensation (*aesthesis*) and others aspect of the soul (*phsyche*). In (**DL**,VIII,30), we can notice that "The soul of man, he says, is divided into three parts, intelligence, reason, and passion. Intelligence and passion are possessed by other animals as well, but reason by man alone" (Λαέρτιος, Δ. Βίοι καὶ γνῶμαι τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκιμησάντων) [3] [3].

What is evident from this fragment is that the soul (*phsyche*), according to anonymous Pythagoreans, is the *genus proximum* "intelligence" (*nous*), "reason" (*phrenas*) [4] and "passion" (*thumon*). The seat of the soul extends from the heart to the brain. The "part" of the soul that is located in the heart is "passion," while "reason" and "intelligence" are "parts" that are in the brain [5]. The particularity of man's status is also manifested by the conclusion that "intelligence" and "passion" are "parts" of soul that is deadly and decaying, while "reason" is "part" of the soul that is immortal and undecaying.

Parmenides's "The Way of Truth" in the poem *On Nature* (*Peri physeos*), then, presents a sort of research on the real nature of reality and the relation of that reality to sensible phenomena. The main purpose of Eleatism, the preservation of beings, could only be achieved by the complete determination of the whole as immovable, full, indivisible, eternal... If the senses speak contrary to what is obtained by the *logos*, it might be said in the Hegelian manner, then so much the worse for the senses. Eleatic ontology, primarily, provides a true model of the existing, it exposes the structure of reality that is always the same and which cannot be observed by the senses. The mental reality is true regardless of the fact that it can be inaccessible to sight so much that its expression can cause confusion in the opinion. The Eleatics showed that truth *Peri physeos* does not have to be on the side of what is sensibly appearing, i.e. of what is most easily presented by senses. The persistence and manifestation of truth, moreover, is in contradiction with the unsteadfastness and unreliability of sensory knowledge, so it is primarily in the sphere of thought [4]. In the prologue of his poem, Parmenides emphasizes the immutability of the rationally understood truth as we can see in fragment (**DK**28B1.28-30.) "It is right that you learn all things – both the unshaken heart of well-persuasive Truth and the beliefs of mortals, in which there is no true trust" [5].

The most famous Eleatic philosopher in fragment 7 (**DK**28B7) says "Do not let habit, rich in experience, compel you along this route to direct an aimless eye and an echoing ear and tongue, but judge by reasoning (logos) the much-contested examination spoken by me" [6]. The real subject of knowledge for Parmenides is the domain of the *logos*. On the basis of the prologue of the poem *On Nature*, it can be implicitly concluded that one man ("philosopher of nature" (*physicos philosophos*), as Parmenides is named in **DK**28A11) acquired a privileged position in an unexplainable way, the truth is primarily in regards to other mortal people [6].

In Empedocles scripts, a century later, it is also possible to notice a contradiction between the fragmentary insight of the senses, i.e. sensation (*aistheseos*) and synthetic insight that arises by means of thinking i.e. *logos* (*logos*), which in some sense is synesthetic. Therefore he invited his disciple Pausanias (**DK**31B3.9-13) to act this way: "But come, look with every means of apprehension, in whatever way each thing is clear, not holding any sight more in trust than <what comes> through hearing" [7], "or loud-sounding hearing above the things made clear by the tongue, and do not at all hold back trust in any of the other limbs, wherever there is a channel for understanding, but understand each thing in whatever way it is clear" [7]. Although the Sicilian believes that all living be-

and introduce necessary clarifications caused by our subsequent insights due to the availability of additional literature, as well as for the purpose of a clearer and more fluid presentation.

[2] Met.1009a38–1010a15.

[3] URL: http://www.mikrosapoplous.gr/dl/dl.html (date accessed: 1.11.2022).

[4] Met. 986b31-33. *GC*325a13-14.

[5] Curd, P. (ed.). A Presocratic Reader. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2011, p. p. 57, B1.28–30. Diels, H., Kranz, W. Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker I. Zürich. Hildesheim, Weidmann, 1985, s. s. 230, B1.28–30. (In German). See: **DK**28B5.

[6] Curd, P. (ed.). A Presocratic Reader. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2011, p. 59, B7. Diels, H., Kranz, W. Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker I. Zürich . Hildesheim, Weidmann, 1985, s. 234–235, B7. (In German).

[7] Curd, P. (ed.). A Presocratic Reader. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2011, p. 81, B3.9-13. Diels, H., Kranz, W. Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker I. Zürich . Hildesheim,

ings are thinking (*phronesis*) (**DK**31B110. **DK**28A46. **DK**28B16), he still makes a gradation and, through a kind of hierarchy of life, humans are above animals and animals are above plants. Within the human race, there is also a gradation according to this "sage of Acragas" (*Acragantinos Sophos*) (**DK**31B134). The souls of those wise men who have come to one step from deification assume the highest forms of humanity. Medicine men, poets, doctors and rulers of other people are free from human problems and share a table with other immortals (**DK**31B146, **DK**31B147). Empedocles thought he possessed most of the above characteristics, so it is no wonder that in one sentence (**DK**31B112.4.) he speaks of himself as an immortal god no longer a mortal **(DK**31B146. Kaluđerović, Ž. "Sicilian Muse" and Ensouled Beings. *forthcoming*).

The fact that things are neither simple in Anaxagoras works may be seen from his qualifications of the driving force or mind. *Nous* in his fragments has many features of the abstract principle [8] (**DK**59B12) considering that "The other things have a share of everything, but Nous is unlimited and self-ruling and has been mixed with no thing, but is alone itself by itself. ... For it is the finest of all things and the purest, and indeed it maintains all discernment (gnōmē) about everything and has the greatest strength. And Nous has control over all things that have soul, both the larger and the smaller. And Nous controlled the whole revolution, so that it started to revolve in the beginning. ... nothing is completely separated off or dissociated one from the other except Nous" [9].

The philosopher from Clazomenae proves that man's mental powers are superior to the physical power of animals [8]. Anaxagoras, following the work of Diodorus, says that humans will master animals through unique experience (*empeirai*), memory (*mnemei*), wisdom (*sophiai*) and art (*techni*) (**DK**59B21b). The confirmation of this thesis can also be found in the well-known Aristotle's view in the *Parts of Animals* (*Peri Zoon morion*) (687a7-12). According to this interpretation, Anaxagoras considers that man is the most intelligent of all living beings (*phronimotaton einai ton zoon anthropon*), and as the reason for this he states the fact that man has hands (*to kheiras ekhein*) [9].

Sextus Empiricus, then, states that according to Democritus who was some forty years younger than Anaxagoras, there are two kinds of knowledge (*gnoseis*) [10], one of which is acquired by senses (*aistheseon*) and the other by understanding (*dianoias*). The knowledge gained by reason "the Mocker" (*Gelasinos*) (**DK**68A2. **DK**68A21. **DK**68A40. **DK**68C3) calls a legitimate one and attributes certainty to it in the study of truth, and the one acquired by the senses Abderitian considers the bastard and does not attribute certainty to it in finding out the truth (**DK**68A105. **DK**67A30.

Consult: **DK**68A135(58)). Then, he elaborates the superiority of the true knowledge and adds (**DK**68B11) "When the bastard one is unable to see or hear or smell or taste or grasp by touch any further in the direction of smallness, but <we need to go still further> toward what is fine, <then the legitimate one enables us to carry on>" [10].

Democritus (and Epicurus) considers (**DK**68A105) that the soul has two "parts" (**DK**68A105) one rational (*logikon*) located in the chest and the unreasoning one (*alogon*), which is scattered throughout the body. The "part" of the soul that is suitable for guiding "Wisdom" (*Sophia*) (**DK**68A2) places in the head. The mind is the concentration of the soul in the head, i.e., the brain, similarly to the views of Anaxagoras (**DK**59A108), Diogenes of Apollonia [11], Alcmaeon, and later of Plato. Based on this, it can be concluded that the soul, according to Abderitian, is mind in the narrow sense, and that senses are something that is not a soul or something that is a lower form of the soul.

Although Democritus says that the need for posterity stems from the nature of all living beings, he, at the same time, thinks that a certain distinction between humans and animals should be established. The specific feature of the humans is that they are the only ones among the beings who have souls who think that some gain actually comes from offspring (**DK**68B278). In addition, in its "ethical" fragments [11], an author "who seems to have

Weidmann, 1985, s. 310-311, B3.9-13. (In German). Consult: Wright, M. R. Empedocles The Extant Fragments. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995, p. 162. **DK**28B7.4–5. **DK**28B6.6-7

[8] Betegh, G. The Derveni Papyrus. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 281. **DK**21B25. **DK**22B32. **DK**22B41. **DK**22B108. Compare: Fritz, K. v. *Nous, Noein*, and Their Derivatives in Pre-Socratic Philosophy (Excluding Anaxagoras). In The Pre-Socratics. Alexander P. D. Mourelatos (ed.). New York, Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974, pp. 23–85. Barnes, J. The Presocratic Philosophers Volume 2. London, Henley and Boston, Rotledge & Kegan Paul, 1979, pp. 103–110.

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[10] Curd, P. (ed.). A Presocratic Reader. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2011, p. 122, B11. Diels, H., Kranz, W. Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker I. Zürich . Hildesheim, Weidmann, 1985, s. 141, B11. (In German). See: Hussey, E. The Presocratics. Indianapolis, Bristol Classical Press, 1995, pp. 111–113. **DK**68A111.

[11] Kahn, C. H. Democritus and the Origins of Moral Psychology. In The American Journal of Philology, 1985, Vol. 106, No. 1, p. 1. Kaluđerović, Ž., Jašić, O., Kaluđerović Mijartović, Z.

thought about everything" [12] (*outos d' eoike men peri apanton phrontisai*) (*GC*315a35) (Trans. Ž. Kaluđerović) emphasizes another characteristic of humans, which suggests not only the difference between humans and animals, but also the difference between the Greeks and barbarians, which can be sublimed in the term *paideia* (**DK**68B33, **DK**68B179, **DK**68B180, **DK**68B181, **DK**68B182, **DK**68B183, **DK**68B185, **DK**68B187) [13]. The Hellenes know the value of upbringing and education (*paideia*) for the transformation of human beings, which, according to the teachings that came out primarily from the Socrates' reception, peaks in philosophy. The shaping of a person in line with a certain sense and purpose through *paideia* also allows the creation of a man's "other nature", which is, in fact, his "first nature". Democritus observes that the mere natural existence of man is not the state in which he should remain, and that man as seen from his own vision represents a special event in the *cosmos*.

The particularity of man is expressed through his discernment that his own spiritual existence is represented as a non-natural, second-natural or as the highest point of his natural existence, that is, as a path of departure from natural existence.

A Pre-Socratic philosopher, however, most clearly anticipated a homocentric standpoint Alcmaeon of Croton believed that sensation (*aisthesin*) is a result of the interaction of dissimilar (*me…omoioi*) things (**DK**31A86.1). At the same time, he "first determines the difference between men and animals" [14] (*men proton phphorizei ten pros ta zoia diaphoran*) (**DK**24A5) (Trans. J. Barnes). Alcmaeon claimed that man is different from other "animals" because he alone has understanding, while other "animals" have sensation but do not understand. Crotonian puts this in the following words (**DK**24B1a): "He says that men differ from the other animals because they alone understand, whereas the others perceive but do not understand" [12].

Unlike the opinion of other Pre-Socratics (**DK**31B103, **DK**31B110), according to Alcmaeon, there is no equality between thinking and sensation. That writer of the first 'treatise on nature' (*physicon logon*) (**DL**,VIII,83) was right is visible from Aristotle's statement, without referring directly to the views of Crotonian, which states that the sensation is universal in the animal world, the thinking is found in only a small division of it [15].

"The founder of empirical psychology" (Burnet) correctly concluded that the brain, and not the heart is the centre of all sensory activities in the human organism (**DK**24A5) (Trans. Ž. Kaluđerović) [16]: as far as "All the senses are connected with the brain in some way" (**DK**24A8. **DK**24A13. **DK**24A10) [17].

Perhaps Crotonian influenced Plato with this attitude, who describes him, also without mentioning the name, as saying that knowledge comes from the stability of memory and opinion, while memory and opinion come from hearing, sight and smell with the mediation of the brain (*Phaedo* (Phaidon (e peri phyches) 96b) [18]. Not only that in Alcmaeon's view there is a difference between thinking and sensation, but he also anticipates Stagirites' own theory of the development of higher functions [13], somewhat improving it by the identification of the brain as the centre of sensation [19].

The criterion of differentiation between humans and animals, which Alcmaeon states, is a kind of negation of his possible belief in the migrations of the soul (*panliggenesia*) [14] [20], but also a hint of later homocentric i.e. anthropocentric[15] claims about the ontological primacy of man in regard to other living beings.

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[13] Met.I.1. An.Post.II.19. *EN*1039b15 and further. *De morb. sacro*, 17.

[14] **DK**24A1. **DK**24A12. *Phaedr.*245c. *Nom.*895e–896a. *De An.*403b28-29. *De An.*404a20–25. *De An.*405a29–32. See: **DK**24B2; **DK**22B103; **DK**22C1; *Tim.*43D–E; *Phys.*264b27–28

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