

THE NATURE OF THE THEOLOGY OF THE EARLY GREEK PHILOSOPHERS

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«Whenever we speak of the beginnings of European Philosophy we think of the Greeks; and any attempt to trace the origins of natural or philosophical theology must likewise begin with them»¹.

This quotation contains an idea which is central to the study of the history of philosophy.

Although it is true that details concerning the theology of the Greeks can be found in the period of Homer and Hesiod, in fact the most serious attempt by man to approach the problem of God started, in fact, with the Greek natural philosophers².

The object of the natural philosopher's quest is the notion of the beginning ('Αρχή) of all things. By considering this notion «they sought to reduce the multiplicity of the universe to an ultimate unity»³. For them the whole variety of the universe originated from a single primary substance. And they believed they had really succeeded in finding «a unique homogeneous» principle, through the transformations from which the whole world must have emerged⁴. But all of them failed to realise that the principles they approved as homogeneous were a designation of a mixture, e.g. the term 'water' was a designation for a mixture, a mixture of a good many substances of quite different kinds, such as the moist, the cold, the dark; the term 'ether' designates a mixture of the bright, the warm, the dry, the light. e.t.c., to mention only these⁵.

1. W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Oxford 1947, p. I.

2. A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, Manchester 1968, p. xiii; cf. E. Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy, The Hellenic Age*, Engl. trans. by J. Thomas. Univ. of Chicago Press 1963, p. 36.

3. R. Bultmann, *Primitive Christianity*, Edinburgh 1956, p. 143.

4. F. M. Cleve, *The Philosophy of Anaxagoras*, New York 1949, p. 5.

5. F. M. Cleve, *ibid*, p. 5-6.

Behind the beginning of all things they put the idea of a God, or they identified it with the idea of the God⁶.

The process of the philosophical thought shows progress away from obscure and imperfect definitions to a much higher level. The basis of their theologico-natural teaching is common to each of them. The 'infinite' makes its appearance in the early cosmologies⁷ of early Greek philosophy. It answers perfectly to the fundamental Greek assumption of the reasonableness and wholeness of the universe rather than to any «metaphysical vision of the Unknowable»⁸. The word 'Infinite' is a symbol of the Absolute, and acquired this meaning when it came to be used as an attribute of God, «describing his completeness and perfection as compared with the finite world»⁹.

The intellectual presuppositions of the pre-Socratic philosophers were very inadequate for a systematic theological exposition. One reason for this was the fact that the aim of a complete theology was mixed up with other topics of philosophical concern. The main reason, however, was the fact that the pre-Socratic philosophers were in an evolutionary philosophical revolution. The Milesian philosophers, especially, stripped off the mythological and theological trappings from their account of the universe, whereby they believed themselves to be getting at the natural facts and offering «purely rational explanations»¹⁰. They were in fact, going behind the religious phase and unconsciously «by reproducing a pre-religious type of thought which had all the time persisted underneath»¹¹ etc. But philosophical assertions about the «divine are to be found in pre-Socratic thinkers from the very first»¹². The most significant feature that we can see in the pre-Socratic thinkers is the fact that each of them anticipates further developments by future philo-

6. C. Misch, *The Dawn of Philosophy*, Engl. trans., by R. F. C. Hull, London 1950, 224.

7. A. Ehrhardt, op. cit., p. xiii, that «the philosophical question of the 'beginning' has been widely neglected for centuries, especially by Christian theologians... the 'first things'... seem to have caused little stirring since the time when, in 1215, the Fourth Lateran council decided that *creatio ex nihilo*, the creation of the world from nothing, was part of the Catholic faith. Eleatic school of Greek philosophy found it necessary to warn thinkers not to concern themselves with the *μη ὄν*».

8. C. Misch, op. cit. p. 224.

9. Ibid.

10. F. M. Cornford, *The Unwritten Philosophy*, Cambridge 1950, p. xi.

11. Ibid.

12. W. Jaeger, op. cit., p. 6: cf. E. Bréhier, op. cit. p. 4.

sophers, and at the same time, accepts the work of his predecessors¹³. To be sure, water plays a proper part in the philosophy of the Ionian and Eleatic philosophers as it did in Homer and Hesiod¹⁴, as the origin of every living creature. The same feature is observable in theology. Though the philosophers in succession construct a personal idea about the divine principle nevertheless the background remains common for all this philosophical group. It was 'the mythological tradition', from which they derived their inspiration¹⁵. However their ties to the past did not prevent them from going beyond popular theological teaching in pursuit of a more systematic investigation of nature and natural phenomena. This was the real reason for their being called natural philosophers or physiologists. These philosophers were the first to realize the significance of the investigation of the divine not *ipsum per se* but in connection with nature. Nature is regarded as the physical revelation of the Divine in contrast with the superphysical view in Hebrew (indirect), and in Christianity (direct). It is possible for us to see in their philosophical systems, their efforts to spiritualize the matter of the world and materialize the spirit.

Since early antiquity Thales of Miletus was regarded as the founder of the Ionian school of natural philosophy. He is known through a tradition which does not go back further than Aristotle¹⁷. Thales proposed that *arché* (beginning) was water, but he did not neglect to point out that «the universe is full of gods, and everything is animated»¹⁸. This animation of all things is related to his teaching about *anima* (soul) which «is something ever-moving or self-moving»¹⁹. Because of its animating role in the existing world, the idea of the soul is a presupposi-

13. F. M. Cleve, *op. cit.*, p. viii; cf. T. V. Smith, *Philosophers Speak for Themselves*, Berkeley 1957, p. xi: «The early Greek period is more a field for fancy than for fact».

14. *Iliad*, XIV, 201, 302, 246.

15. E. Bréhier, *op. cit.*, p. 4f.

16. P. Diamantopoulos, Thales of Miletus, in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 8, p. 97a; cf. A. Ehrhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 143f.

17. E. Bréhier, *op. cit.*, p. 36-37.

18. Thales, A 22: cf. Aristotle, *De anima* A. 2, 405a 19: «φασιν αὐτὸν καὶ τοῖς ἀψόχοις μεταδιδόναι ψυχῆς, τεκμαιρόμενον ἐκ τῆς λίθου τῆς μαγνήτιδος καὶ τῆς ἡλέκτρου»; Id. *De anima* A. 5, 411a 7 and *Plato Leg.* X, 899 J. Kerschensteiner, *Zetemata*, etc. München 1962, pp. 26-28: P. Diamantopoulos *op. cit.* p. 97a; J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 4th London 1930, pp. 40-50. G. S. Kirk-J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, Cambridge 1957, pp. 74 ff.

19. Thales, A. 22; cf. K. Freeman, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, Oxford 1946, p. 53.

tion of inferring that «everything is full of gods» and «the mind of the world is god and everything includes soul and is full of gods as well»²⁰. Also that this divine mind «by means of its divine and mortal power penetrates through the elemental (basic) water - στοιχειώδους ὕγροῦ»²¹. Because he thought that the whole Cosmos was a living thing, nourished by the life-giving water of which it was composed «he was called an atheist; but tradition shows him to be a pantheist, seeing the life-force, which he equated with the divine, in the whole and in every part»²².

The paradox with Thales is that, while he investigated nature, in search of the first creative principle, at the same time he did not reject the national religious beliefs of his time, but respected them. This can be inferred from his behaviour regarding the philosophical Tripod for he suggested that it should be sent to the god of Delphi, «because wisdom belongs only to the god»²³.

The second Miletian philosopher is Anaximander, the disciple of Thales²⁴, who deviated from the teaching of his teacher²⁵. He proposed as the archè of everything, the *a p e i r o n* in the abstract. He does not discuss this principle «neither calls it water nor anything else from the so-called elements, but some nature different as a *p e i r o n* out of which the skys and their worlds were created»²⁶. The *a p e i r o n* is «eternal, divine and indistructible and that is the divine-Θεῖον»²⁷; the *a p e i r o n* also is 'material' in nature²⁸. According to K. Freeman²⁹ though the Non-Limited («Ἄπειρον») was material and therefore perceptible, it was removed from our perception by being out of reach». A. Ehrhardt, on the other hand, says: If the introduction of such a term should serve some useful purpose «Anaximander's approach to the problem of matter might even be described

20. Thales, A. 22a.

21. Thales. A. 23.

22. K. Freeman, op. cit. p. 54; cf A. Ehrhardt, op. cit. p. 28 f.

23. Thales, A. 28.

24. C. H. Kahn, Anaximander, in Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. I, p. 117a.

25. K. Freeman, op. cit. p. 56, that the word 'apeiron' «was an emendation of Thales view».

26. Anaximander, A. 9.

27. Anaximander, A. 15 and B. 3: «ἀθάνατον... καὶ ἀνώλεθρον (τὸ ἄπειρον-θεῖον); cf Aristotle, Phys. C, 4. 203b 13.

28. Anaximander, A. II: «τὸ δὲ ἄπειρον οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ ὕλη ἐστίν».

29. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 56.

with Cl. Baemker as 'hylozoism'³⁰. To my mind such considerations completely miss the salient point in Anaximander's cosmological theory. For such 'living matter', which in its eternal movement produces and annihilates accidentally innumerable worlds, 'exists' only dialectically by a process of reasoning³¹. Basically Anaximander remained faithful to the philosophical system of his teacher³² because he did not reject the view that all things came from water, and the progenitor of man had been fish- οὕτως ὁ Ἀναξίμανδρος τῶν ἀνθρώπων πατέρα καὶ μητέρα κοινὸν ἀποφήνας τὸν ἰχθῦν διέβαλε πρὸς τὴν βρωσιν³³.

Next comes another Miletian philosopher Anaximenes the disciple of Anaximander, who combined the teachings of his two predecessors. He suggested that air was the primordial element from which «emerged everything that exists and returns to it again»³⁴. As the Doxographer says, there is a distinction between what is unlimited in extent, and what is unlimited in quality (A.5). But Anaximenes chose a Non-Limited in quantity not in quality³⁵. He approved Anaximander's concept of Non-Limited in quality, and restored to it a definite quality, calling it Air³. Anaximenes contrasts the air with the human psyché (soul) «that keeps us and the whole world which is entirely ruled by the pneuma and air»³⁷. When he says pneuma and air, they do not have two different meanings; he uses the two terms synonymously.

W. Jaeger says that Anaximenes «shows firmly that this principle ('innumerable gods emerge from the Air') is connected with the whole Anaximandrian philosophy»³⁸. The fact is that Anaximenes, at this point, seems closer to Thales' teaching than to Anaximander's. The properties of the Air-Soul or Air-pneuma in Anaximenes teaching correspond to that of Thales'. Thales endeavored to give everything a soul and a soul which he identified with the one soul of the universe that

30. Cl. Baemker, *Das Problem der Materie*, 1890, p. 11 f.

31. A. Ehrhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

32. K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 57, that Thales suggested that all things are derived from water and he did not think an explanation necessary. «If not, then Anaximander is original in this also».

33. Anaximander, A. 30; cf Plut., *Symp.* VIII, 8,4 sel. 730E.

34. Anaximander, B. 2; cf Aet. 1,3,4; P. Diamantopoulos, Anaximenes, in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol I. pp. 118-119.

35. Anaximenes, A. 6; cf K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Anaximenes, B. 2; «καὶ ὅλον τὸν κόσμον πνεῦμα καὶ ἀήρ περιέχει (λέγεται συνανόμενος ἀήρ καὶ πνεῦμα)»; cf J. Kerschsteinner, *op. cit.*, pp. 72, 73, 77-80.

38. W. Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 37; cf E. Bréhier, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

«penetrates through the elemental water». This soul is regarded as eternal, immortal, indestructible and divine; and, which is close to the language used by Anaximenes to describe his conception of *Air*³⁹. These statements, according to Aetius (A. 10), mean much the same as Thales' view that all things are full of gods: «they refer to the powers inherent in elements and bodies, as for instance powers of motion. But *Air*, being Breath, is also Life and therefore Soul» (A. 22), A. 23, B. 2). This notion is unquestionable «connected with the divine character that Milesians give both to the world and to the primordial substance which Anaximenes calls immortal and imperishable»⁴⁰.

Pythagoras seems content to follow the theories of the contemporary magicians in this matter of the divine. He never exclusively occupied himself with this question. He was famous as both a religious and scientific teacher. His school was partly scientific, partly religious; «but of his own beliefs and teachings from which his followers have drawn their inspiration, we know hardly anything»⁴¹. His religious teaching appeared when a great religious revival took place in Greece. Nobody can say where he stands in all this⁴². The only relevant information which has survived is that he places god among the logical animals «the one is god, the other is man and the other is like Pythagoras»⁴³. We find in Pythagoras only the germs of Heraclitus 'Logos and Anaxagoras' Nous.

According to the teaching of Pythagoras the cosmos was one, eternal, and divided; men were divided and mortal; but the essential part of man, his soul, was not mortal; «it was a fragment of the divine, universal soul that was cut off and imprisoned in a mortal. Men should therefore cultivate and purify the soul, preparing it for return to the universal soul of which it was a part. Until then it must tread the wheel of reincarnation»⁴⁴. The transmigration of the souls is a subject frequently

39. K. Freenan, op. cit., p. 73.

40. E. Bréhier, op. cit., p. 42; cf F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*, London 1912, pp. 174, 176.

41. K. Freeman, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

42. K. Freeman, op. cit., pp. 80-81; cf E Bréhier, op. cit., p. 45.

43. Pythagoras, B. 7: «τοῦ λογικοῦ ζώου τὸ μὲν ἐστὶ θεός, τὸ δὲ ἄνθρωπος, τὸ δὲ οἶον Πυθαγόρας; cf Iambl. V, 31.

44. W. K. C. Guthrie, *Pythagoras of Samos*, in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. VII, p. 38; cf J. S. Morrison, «Pythagoras of Samos», *Classical Quarterly*, N.S., vol 6 (1965), pp. 135 ff and W. K. C. Guthrie, «Pythagoras and Pythagoreans», in his *History of Greek Philosophy*, vol I, Cambridge 1962, pp. 146-340.

held by primitive peoples who see in birth only a reincarnation⁴⁵, and is connected with the tales, so frequent in folklore in which the soul comes out of the body and goes to live in an animal or an inanimate object; by no means can it be linked to a particular origin⁴⁶.

Xenophanes seems to be nearer to Pantheism or Henotheism. In his system he logically disposes of the popular ideas of polytheism⁴⁷, and infers that «god is one, the greatest amongst gods and men and unlike their body and their mentality»⁴⁸, and this god «sees as a whole, thinks as a whole, hears as a whole- οὖλος ὄραϊ, οὖλος δὲ νοεῖ, οὖλος δὲ τ' ἀκούει»⁴⁹. His interest was deeply engaged by both science and religion⁵⁰. Xenophanes followed the general line which all the other Miletan philosophers⁵¹ had followed, in trying to give a form to god. He imagined that «besides the people's superstitions the universe is one, and god innate in everything, spheroidal and dispassionate, unchangible and logical»⁵². He does not say «that the world is god, so that god's form is merely the world's form... He merely makes way for a philosophical conception by denying that God's form is human»⁵³. In fact Xenophanes idealizes the nature of god abolishing the anthropomorphisms of the past. But in saying that «God is innate to everything» he betrays definite signs of pantheism; so that W Jeager is wrong in denying pantheistic intentions in Xenophanes, when he says that «Xenophanes is not to be dismissed with the word pantheist»⁵⁴. Xenophanes understood God as spheroid and seeing, hearing and thinking as a whole and «setting all things astir by the power of his mind- ἀλλ' ἀπένευθε πόνοιο νόου φρενὶ πάντα κραδαίνει»⁵⁵, while he also understood the fact that God himself remains unmoved⁵⁶. This means that Xenophanes ascribed to God actu-

45. L e v y - B r u h l, *Fonctions Mentales dans les sociétés inferiennes*, p. 398.

46. E. B r é h i e r, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-6.

47. G. B. G e f f e r d, *Xenophanes of Colophon*, in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. VIII, p. 353a: «Most famous are Xenophanes' satirical attack on the traditions of the Olympian theology, whose gods he vilified for their immortality»; cf K. F r e e m a n, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

48. Xenophanes, B. 23: «εἰς Θεός, ἔν τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστος, οὐκ δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὅμοιος οὐδὲ νόημα».

49. Xenophanes, B. 24; cf K. F r e e m a n, *op. cit.*, pp. 93, 95.

50. K. F r e e m a n, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

51. E. B r é h i e r, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-4.

52. Xenophanes, A. 35; cf Sextus, P.H. I, 224.

53. W. J e a g e r, *op. cit.*, p. 43; cf E. B r é h i e r, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

54. W. J e a g e r, *Ibid.*

55. Xenophanes, B. 25; cf J. K e r s h e n s t e i n e r, *Zetemata*, p. 90.

56. K. K. F r e e m a n, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

al divine properties, but without fully understanding the implications. He leaves it to be understood by men themselves that God and the world have a inner contact if not an identification. Xenophanes is the first thinker to shake the traditional beliefs and cults, by using rational argumentation: «if they are gods then do not lament for them, if they are men then do not make sacrifices—*εἰ μὲν θεοὶ εἰσι, μὴ θρηνηεῖτε αὐτούς· εἰ δὲ ἄνθρωποι μὴ θύετε αὐτοῖς*»⁵⁷. Therefore the God or the supreme arché of Xenophanes described as «*ἐν τῷ ὄν καὶ τὸ πᾶν*»⁵⁸ is made up of two ingredients: the intellectual concept of a deity stripped of obviously human qualities, and the thinker's desire for greater intellectual power and freedom from wanderings. «This God, as it is conceived by Xenophanes, is still anthropomorphic, as being described from a human standpoint»⁵⁹. But the God of Xenophanes is better than the gods of Olympian theology because he represents a human ideal which we know by experiment and experience to be an advance, and because he becomes a universal God and not a God of a nation⁶⁰. These views of Xenophanes exercised much influence upon the metaphysical side of philosophy. His influence is marked on the nature of the deity; and on the nature of knowledge⁶¹.

The thought of Heraclitus makes a great advance for the religion of Monotheism. As a matter of fact the question of monotheism versus polytheism was not raised in Archaic Greece. In referring to the 'one wise thing' which 'is willing and unwilling to be called Zeus' Heraclitus means that Fire or Logos is supreme «but lacks the personal attributes attached to Zeus in cult and myth. But even though a tendency toward monotheism is observable, we cannot credit Heraclitus with solving a problem he probably never considered. He attacked myth when it conflicted with his theories»². Never before had there been an intellectual achievement like this. The term *Logos* was made by Heraclitus the vehicle of his teaching but it was left undefined³. When

57. Xenophanes, A. 13.

58. A. Ehrhardt, op. cit., p. 63.

59. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 97.

60. Ibid.

61. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 95.

62. M. C. Stokes, Heraclitus of Ephesus, in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. III, p. 480; cf P. G. Fouyas, *Christianity and Mystery Religions in Conflict*, Athens 1968, pp. 23 ff about the meaning of Logos in Greek Metaphysics and in Christian writers.

63. M. C. Stokes, Heraclitus of Ephesus p. 477.

Christianity arose it linked the thought of Heraclitus with the best part of its own teaching. Christian theologians used the Heraclitean *Logos* as a prophetic apophthegma, and as a concept widely accepted, to describe the truth about the person of Christ⁶⁴. J. L. Stocks says «the Λόγος of Heraclitus of Ephesus, first ancestor in the line of descent which culminates in the Λόγος doctrine of the Fourth Gospel, was called by him the 'common' or 'universal'»⁶⁵.

Heraclitus starts his work *De Naturae* with the word *Logos* as the Evangelist John does in his Gospel: «τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦ δ' ἐόντος αἰών⁶⁶, «ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος κτλ.»⁶⁷. Though it still remains questionable whether or not there is a connection between the Heraclitean and Johnian *Logos* Heraclitus' *Logos* «expresses eternal truth and reality and is therefore eternal»⁶⁸. In fact this is one of Heraclitus' utterances»⁶⁹. Heraclitus discerns that the *Logos* rules the world⁷⁰ by its laws⁷¹ from which are fed the laws of men «δυνάμει... τοῦ διοικοῦντος λόγου καὶ Θεοῦ»⁷², «τρέφονται γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἀνθρώπειοι νόμοι ὑπὸ ἐνός τοῦ θείου»⁷³. This is because it holds as much as it wants and suffices for everything⁷⁴. The honour that Heraclitus offers to God is seen in the comparison which he sets forth between god and men: «a grown up man compared with god would be seen πῆθηκος (ape) as regards wisdom, beauty and everything else»⁷⁵. The divine σοφὸν (wise) is in fact distinguished from all other and is therefore called the one, the sapient (wise)⁷⁶. «Ἦθος γὰρ ἀνθρώπειον μὲν οὐκ ἔχει γνώμας, θεῖον δὲ ἔχει»⁷⁷.

While Heraclitus composes a new and very different theological system from those that preceded him, and seems to set himself apart

64. P. G. Fouyas, *Christianity and Mystery Religions in Conflict*, p. 23 f.; A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, pp. II, 13.

65. J. L. Stocks, *Reason and Intuition*, Oxford, 1939, p. 17.

66. Heraclitus, B. I: cf. J. Kerschesteiner, op. cit., p. 103 f.

67. John, A. 1.

68. W. Jaeger, op. cit. p. 112; cf. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 116; Heraclitus, B. 50.

69. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 123.

70. Heraclitus, B. 11; cf. Aristotle, *De mundo*, 6p. 401a 8.

71. Heraclitus, B. 31; cf. Clement of Alex. *Strom.* V. 105.

72. Heraclitus, B. 31.

73. Heraclitus, B. 114.

74. Ibid.

75. Heraclitus, B. 79: «άνηρ νήπιος ήκουσε πρὸς δαίμονος δκωσπερ παῖς πρὸς άνδρὸς» and Id. B. 83: cf. M. C. Stokes, op. cit. p. 480; K. Freeman, op. cit., pp. 122-3.

76. Heraclitus, B. 32 and B. 41.

77. Heraclitus, B. 78.

from the general line that his predecessors had followed; in fact he has not cut himself off entirely. He still pursued the religious quest in the field of nature. In his turn, he adopted fire as the first principle, saying «the thunderbolt steers all things — τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰακίξει κεραυνός»⁷⁸. This πῦρ or κεραυνός is borrowed either from mythology, or else from war. War plays a proper part in Heraclitus' system; war not only between men or gods⁷⁹ but between the natural elements, as Aetios maintains, that «Heraclitus declared the periodical πῦρ (fire) eternal (sc. god) and to be the destiny of beings (εἰμαρμένη), as the L o g o s, had been their creator; the whole by interconnection (ἐναντιοδρομίας)⁸⁰. The substance of destiny is the L o g o s which penetrates (διαχέεται)⁸¹ the universe; and the eternal body; and the seed (sperma) for the birth of everything⁸². While particular things exist, they do so in virtue of the lucking of the opposites in their strife. Thus there are two processes: «there is the interlocking of the opposites at a certain stage in their contest, and the particular object so created continues in existence as long as this tension is maintained»⁸³. In other places Heraclitus says that «war is father of all and king of all. Some he makes gods, others men. Some he makes slaves, others free»⁸⁴: «Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεὺς καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους».

It is worth quoting here the most comprehensive fragment about fire and its role in the world: «this cosmos the same for all, was made by neither a god nor a man; but it always has been and is and will be fire ever — living, kindling itself in measure, and quenching itself in measure»⁸⁵.

The whole of Heraclitus' theologico-philosophical system is based on three points; firstly the L o g o s, secondly fire (Πῦρ) and thirdly the constant change of all things. With Xenophanes and Heraclitus we are at a point where Ionian physics gives birth to a theology entirely op-

78. Heraclitus, B. 64: cf. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 114.

79. Heraclitus, B. 53.

80. Heraclitus, A. 8; cf. Aetios, I, 7. 22.

81. Heraclitus, B. 31.

82. Heraclitus, A. 8.

83. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 113; cf. W. K. C. Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek Religion, pp. 229-230.

84. Heraclitus, B. 53.

85. Heraclitus, B. 30; Clem. of Alex., Striop. III, 105.

posed to mythical conceptions, in which God takes on something of the impersonality, immobility, and intelligibility of a natural law⁸⁶.

Parmenides another Eleatic philosopher, being influenced partly by the philosophy of Xenophanes, and partly by Heraclitus. He brought together the two different systems with the aim of building up his own⁸⁷. In his system we notice an evidently polemical attack against Pythagoreanism⁸⁸. This has been shown by A. Ehrhardt⁸⁹ and J. Raven⁹⁰, based upon B. 8,26 (Diels-Kranz, 1, 237, 6 f): «αὐτὰρ ἀκίνητον μεγάλων ἐν πείρασι δεσμῶν / ἔστιν ἀναρχον, ἀπαυστον· ἐπεὶ γένεσις καὶ ὄλεθρος / τῆλε μάλ' ἐπλάχθησαν, ἀπῶσε δὲ πίστις ἀληθῆς».

According to A. Ehrhardt the term ἀρχή was taken up by the fifth-century Greek philosophy with a new intensity, but from a new angle. He is sure that the causative meaning of the term ἀρχή made its appearance into pre-Socratic philosophy at this time; «and it is to be assumed that the man who introduced it was Parmenides»⁹¹. The fragment stated above from Parmenides does not show this. What does appear, however, is the polemical remark attacking the Pythagoreans as we have already said.

Parmenides called God eternal, unmoved, unborn, spheroid and creator of all things⁹². He conceived God, as we already mentioned, as fire (Πῦρ), earth (Γῆ). He saw fire as the creative power; and earth as matter (ὕλη): «δύο εἶναι τὰ στοιχεῖα, πῦρ καὶ γῆν, καὶ τὸ μὲν δημιουργοῦ τάξιν ἔχει, τὴν δὲ ὕλης»⁹³. He says also: «Παρμενίδης δὲ ὁ Ἐλεάτης θεοῦς εἰσηγήσατο Πῦρ καὶ Γῆν»⁹⁴.

Parmenides failed in his attempt to vanquish the philosophy of nature because as he still bases his teaching on the same soil i.e. «the word of objective reality»⁹⁵. In the same way as all Miletian and Eleatic philosophers had rooted their philosophy in the idea of eternal existence as the basis of all knowledge, similarly Parmenides connects the

86. E. Bréhier, op. cit., p. 54.

87. D. J. Furlley, Parmenides of Elea, in *Encycl. of Philosophy*, vol. VI, p. 50.

88. A. Ehrhardt, op. cit., p. 57.

89. Ibid. n. 3.

90. J. Raven, *Pythag. and Eleatics*, 1948, cp. 21.

91. A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, p. 57; cf. J. Revan, op. cit., p. 35 f.

92. K. Freeman, op. cit. p. 148.

93. Parmenides, A. I; cf. Diog. Laert. IX. 21-23; J. Kerscheneiner, *Zetemata*, p. 116 f.

94. Parmenides, A. 3; cf. Clem. Alex. *Protr.*, V, 64.

95. W. Jaeger, op. cit., p. 103.

knowledge of physical existence with the sphere of religion⁹⁶. The novelty of Parmenides' thought lies in his rational and critical method which is the point of departure of all philosophical dialect in Greece at this time⁹⁷.

Melissos of Samos and Zeno of Elea conceived God as one, simple, unborn, boundless, eternal, without beginning and immortal. Aetios maintains that «Melissos and Zenon call god one and everything, as the only being, eternal and boundless»⁹⁸. Melissos' phrase «in the beginning exists that which has come into being, and will be now»⁹⁹ is an axion for him. But the meaning given to this saying in the context, according to A. Ehrhardt, is rather superficial¹⁰¹. It was quoted to support the view that «one should not assume that something which does not happen now might have happened in the distant past»¹⁰². Therefore «when it did not come to be, then it is and ever was and ever will be and it has no beginning and no end, and it is boundless. If it has come to be, then it has beginning and an end»¹⁰³. He does not put Being outside Time altogether; he calls it infinite in time. Melissos not only conceives the Being without beginning but also regards it as simple without material or body; and as the other elements which compose different things — εἰ μὲν οὖν εἴη, δεῖ αὐτὸ ἐν εἶναι· ἐν δ' ἐὸν δεῖ αὐτὸ σῶμα μὴ ἔχειν. Εἰ δὲ ἔχοι πάχος, ἔχοι ἂν μόρια, καὶ οὐκέτι ἐν εἶη»¹⁰⁴.

Everywhere else the Being of Melissos, like that of Parmenides, is talked of as spatially extended: «when he says that it has no boundary, he means that it is infinitely extended, not that it has no extension in space»¹⁰⁵. He represents the renaissance of the Miletian philosophy of nature, which became prominent about the middle of the fifth century B.C. His interest is with the concepts of the boundless ἄπειρον, and the beginning ἄρχή. In reality he opens the way to for Aristotle who dealt widely with this question of the beginning of the Being, and its reference

96. Ibid.

97. E. Bréhier, op. cit., pp. 55, 57-58.

98. Zenon, A. 30; cf Aetios, I, 7, 27; K. Freeman, op. cit., pp. 153 ff.

99. Melissos, B. I and B. 2.

100. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 165.

101. A. Ehrhardt, The Beginning, p. 4.

102. Ibid.

103. Melissos, B. 2.

104. Melissos, B. 9.

105. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 166; cf Melissos. A. 10 and 7, that according to Aristotle Melissos' argument on the infinite of Being was a logical fallacy because his whole position rested on one untenable hypothesis.

to movement despite the fact that he made a severe attack on Melissos' position.

Empedocles of Acragas was much influenced by Parmenides and even more by the Pythagoreans. We may trace Pythagorean influence in his religious teaching and probably «in the role he assigns to numerical proportion in the natural combination of the elements»¹⁰⁶. He conceives the four elements as the basis of all other things¹⁰⁷. These four elements are fire, air, water and earth which are corporeal and eternal¹⁰⁸. These four elements never change their nature, but merely through one another and produce different things at different times while themselves remaining unchangible. By this Empedocles is «trying to mediate between Eleaticism and phenomena, and taking a force observed a work in the world as his unifying principle»¹⁰⁹. According to Aristotle these elements are moving causes, or forces, in another, material causes as being part of the mixture¹¹⁰. The four elements are not sufficient in themselves to bring nature into existence. They must be supplemented with the activity of two additional formative powers, which accomplish the mixing (συγκρινόμενα) and the unmixing (διακρινόμενα) of the basic substance. The names of those two powers are Neikos (Νεῖκος) and Philia (Φιλία), Strife and Love. The basic elements are imperishible, unlike all other things¹¹¹. Since there can be no generation or anihilation of anything real, Empedocles «insists that to describe natural processes in terms of birth and becoming or death and destruction is to follow a linguistic usage which is systematical and misleading (Frgs 8@12). In reality there is only the mixing, unmixing, and remixing of permanent entities»¹¹². When Empedocles approached the problem of the empirical world, he made in some way a distinction between his two conflicting 'principles' of Neikos and Philia on the one hand, and the four ele-

106. C. H. Kahn, Empedocles of Acragas, in *Enycl. of Philosophy*, vol. II, p. 496.

107. A. Ehrhardt, *op. cit.*, pp. 43, 54.

108. Empedocles, A. 28; cf Aristotle, *Metaph.*, A3. 984a. 8; K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, pp. 182 ff.

109. K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

110. Aristotle, A. 10, 1073. 63.

111. Empedocles' A. 28; cf C. Kahn, *op. cit.*, p. 497; F. Solmsen, *Love and Strife in Empedocles' Cosmology*, in *Phronesis*, 10 (1965), pp. 109-148 especially p. 120; J. Bollak, *Comments on Empedocles Cosmology*, in *Hermes*, 96 (2), April, 1968, pp. 239-240; E. Bréhier, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

112. C. H. Kahn, *op. cit.*, p. 497.

ments on the other. But nowhere does he say exactly what his distinction may have been¹¹³.

Empedocles believed in the pre-existence of the soul and its transmigration. His belief in the transmigration of the soul, and the religious practice of vegetarianism is distinctly Pythagorean¹¹⁴. According to him the cycle of the soul is seen as a dramatic description of the fate of the soul-which he calls demon (devil)¹¹⁵. The transmigration of the soul is a means for its expurgation (*Κάθαρσις*)¹¹⁶ by the help of Neikos. The text of Empedocles about soul's transmigration through various mortal forms is as follows:

«There is a decree of Necessity, long since ordained by the gods, eternal, and sealed with extensive oaths, that whenever a demon who draws a long life for his lot shall sinfully soil his hands with murderous blood or forswear himself (in the service of Strife) he thrice must stray from the homes of the blest for a myrial years and he is born in time, in all manner of mortal forms, changing the arduous paths of life. For the Air by its might drives him into the Sea, and the Sea in turn spews him forth to the floor of the Earth; Earth tosses him up to the rays of the glittering Sun; Sun pitches him back into the eddies of Air. One passes him on to another, and all despise him. Now I am too, one of these, an exile from God and roamer, putting my trust in furious Strife..»¹¹⁷.

The above passage, from the surviving fragments of Empedocles,

113. A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, p. 70 and p. 71 nI.

114. C. H. Kahn, *op. cit.*, p. 498.

115. W. Jaeger, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-145; cf J. Kerschesteiner, *Zetemata*, pp. 134 ff.

116. A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, p. 27 comments on the term 'Katharmoi' that they are, to be used «for the interpretation of his (Empedocles) 'Physica' — and — it may be held with some confidence that Empedocles was not the first who taught that it was individualization by defilement which plunged the living (*τὰ ζῶντα*) into being. Already Anaximander, the first among the Greek philosophers who enquired about 'the beginning', put his questions because of a consciousness of guilt and defilement as well as because of its close connection with 'the end' and man's fear of it. Thus the process which was witnessed in Judaism by Ecclesiastes, of the change from a teleological to an ontological understanding of the cosmos, had its analogy in Greek thought, if at a slightly earlier date».

117. Empedocles, B. 115; cf J. Kerschesteiner, *Zetemata*, p. 124 ff; K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, pp. 187, 200.

118. A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, p. 27; cf Id. *Politische Metaphysik*, vol. I (1959), p. 39 f, on Dike and netherworld in Orphism and early Pythagoreanism; *Studi in memoria Emilio Albertario*, voll. II (1950), pp. 547 f, on Dike and the judgment on the dead.

shows his connection with Orphic conceptions about the wandering of the soul after death and its exile from the body¹¹⁹. Empedocles, because he believed that the human soul abides in animal's bodies during its purification protested against the eating of animal flesh and the blood-sacrifice- *μορφήν δ' ἀλλάξαντα πατήρ φίλον υἷδον σφάζει ἐπευχόμενος μέγα νήπιος*¹²⁰.

Empedocles even suggests that the spirit uniting all things is one which penetrates the universe as a whole¹²¹. He, like Xenophanes, uses the term *Sphairos* to avoid the dangerous conception that the four principles were four gods. All the pre-Socratic philosophers strove to describe the form of God and to avoid anthropomorphism by the same way, Empedocles thought that by use of the term *Sphairos*, he would escape the danger of polytheism.

So then the theology of Empedocles' philosophy would be regarded as a synthesis of the monism of Xenophanes and the Eleatics with a polytheism (that draws the consequences from his own physical pluralism. On the other side, in the doctrines of the Katharmoi the Divine is found within the man himself as his very soul, and the sway of the same eternal divine forces which nature herself obeys — Love and Strife and their Law — is traced in the soul's life)¹²².

Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, a real philosopher and not a babbling¹²³, presents an integrated philosophical thought. His most characteristic feature is a rational containment of the Being within the limits of the absolute divine principle. A comparison of him with the other philosophers of his period would show that he is the nearest to Heraclitus¹²⁴, in that they both base their philosophy in the rational basis of reason¹²⁵; or they have imposed over the other elements a ruler element. And this reigning element alone really is 'self upon itself'. (It is the only one beyond that relations of interdependence)¹²⁶. *Nous* (Intellect, Mind) is the only element thoroughly pure, not mixed with any of the others:

119. E. Bréhier, op. cit., p. 62.

120. Empedocles, B. 137; cf K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 202.

121. Empedocles, B. 136; cf Sextus, IX, 127.

122. W. Jaeger, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

123. F. M. Cleve, *The Philosophy of Anaxagoras*, New York, 1949, pp. x-xi.

124. E. Bréhier, op. cit., p. 64, that Anaxagoras translates the old Milesian cosmogonies into new terms and being.

125. F. M. Cleve, op. cit., p. 19; cf A. Ehrhardt, op. cit., p. 73 f.

126. F. M. Cleve, *Ibid.*

«νοῦς δὲ... μέμεικται οὐδενὶ χρήματι, ἀλλὰ μόνος αὐτὸς ἐπ' ἐντοῦ ἔστιν»¹²⁷. As Reason is a property of a pure mind; the Nous of Anaxagoras, is the power which creates all things. It makes up the world and decorates it¹²⁸. The Nous of Anaxagoras is closely connected with Christian thought, especially as systematically expounded by John of Damascus and other Christian writers¹²⁹. John of Damascus, from the point of view of his terminology comes close to Anaxagoras by expounding the relationship of the two *physes* (natures), which exist in the person of Christ. The sense of *Perichoresis* (περιχώρησις) explains the unity of two or more things in one thing or person. Yet it allows each of the constituents to hold its own properties. This teaching is found for the first time in the philosophy of Anaxagoras. By this concept he endeavours to explain how the *Nous* is in union (περιχωρεῖν) with everything in the world keeping it in being, decorating and ruling it¹³⁰. While mind is not mixed in all things by universal mixture, it is somehow in contact with, if not present in, all things.¹³¹ In other words Anaxagoras' *Nous* is the active principle «which however is only qualified to do just this, but may not separate anything from the total.» This is the view of A. Ehrhardt, in his important book *The Beginning*¹³². Ehrhardt also maintains that the *Nous* of Anaxagoras was not only a physical principle but at the same time a moral principle «and in both these capacities it was the creator of the *cosmos*»¹³³. Everything in the empirical world commenced of necessity in one minute point, and spread from there amongst the constituents» of the previous unmoved 'intermediate *physis*' of the πάντα ὁμοῦ, which potentially contained everything, though not perceivable through sense perception»¹³⁴.

127. Simpl., Phys., 156,13.

128. G. B. Kerferd, Anaxagoras, in *Encycl. of Phil.*, vol. I, p. 115; cf E. Bréhier, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

129. John of Damascus, *Expos. of Orthodox Fidei*, c. 18; cf Athanasius, *Incarn.*, *Orat.*, C, PG. 26, 404-405, 1224, 1236, 1237; Basil. PG 31, 1460-1461; Gregory of Naz., 38, PG. 36, 325; Cyril of Alex., PG. 75, 693; Epiphanius, 19, PG. 43,52; Maximus the Conf. PG. 89, 1286; Anast. Sinait., PG 89, 201, 1286; John of Damascus, *Expos. of Orth. Fidei*, cp. 2, 2, 8, 11, 12.

130. Anaxagoras, B. 12; cf J. Kerscheneiner, *Zetemata*, pp. 146 ff; K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 267 *Nous* «is the source of motion and of life» and A. 41.

131. G. B. Kerferd, op. cit., p. 116b.

132. p. 77.

133. p. 78; cf J. Zaphiropoulo, *Anaxagore de Clazomène*, 1948, p. 305; Anaxagoras, A. 61; Aristotle, A. 61.

134. A. Ehrhardt, *Ibid*, p. 78 f.

Anaxagoras maintains that the *Nous*, at its *perichoresis*, remains the same in everything great or small - νοῦς δὲ πᾶς ὁμοίος ἐστὶ καὶ ὁ μείζων καὶ ὁ ἐλάττω¹³⁵). Consequently, when speaking of *Nous*, one may speak of a real homogeneity¹³⁶. This *Nous* has the same substance as the soul but it is pure and rules the soul and everything else¹³⁷. Here we find similarity with Christian thought regarding the substance of the two spiritual human principles-the soul and the mind. Almost all Church Fathers who have made comments on these two principles hold the same opinion that we fail when we attempt to distinguish basically between the soul and the mind, in so far as these two principles have their substance in common, and are distinguished only in their activities. Aristotle says that Anaxagoras seems to accept the soul as different from the mind... but he uses both as one nature. The *Nous* that creates is amongst all things the purest and simplest, without any mixture. It includes the principle of knowledge and movement¹³⁹. According to F. M. Cleve¹⁴⁰ Aristotle is at a loss to know what is the proper meaning, in Anaxagoras, of 'Psyche'. «He complains that Anaxagoras has not expressed himself clearly enough about it, nor about the difference between 'psyche' and 'Nous'». According to Aristotle Anaxagoras speaks about them less plainly «Ἀναξαγόρας ἤττον διασαφεῖ περὶ αὐτῶν¹⁴¹» and in other words «Ἀναξαγόρας δ' εἶοικε μὲν ἕτερον λέγειν ψυχὴν τε καὶ νοῦν... χρῆται δ' ἀμφοῖν ὡς ἐν μιᾷ φύσει¹⁴²». The *Nous* of Anaxagoras is without passions. He excludes from his philosophy the idea of *Heimarmene* (fate). He sees this idea of Fate as an empty meaningless term¹⁴³.

Plato¹⁴⁴ says: «The just exists, of which Anaxagoras holds that

135. Anaxagoras, B. 12; cf J. Kerscheneiner, *Zetemata*, pp. 141 ff.

136. F. M. Cleve, op. cit. p. 18.

137. A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, p. 74.

138. Cyril of Jerusalem, 16, PG 33, 936; Hippolytus of Rome, PG 10, 833; ps. Athanasius, PG. 28, 536; Epiphanius, PG. 53, 164; Basil the Great, PG 31, 1340; Maximus the Confessor, 90, 840; John of Damascus, *Expos. of Orth. Fidei*, cp. B, 16; Isidorus of Pelusium, Book V, quest. 128 et. c.

139. Anaxagoras, B. 12, on the contrary Democritus regards the Mind as the same to the Psyche using the following reasoning: «εἰ τοίνυν ὁ νοῦς ἔχει περὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ψυχὴ δὲ ἔχει περὶ τὸ φαινόμενον, τὸ ἀληθὲς δὲ ταῦτόν ἐστι.» Democritus, A. 113.

140. F. M. Cleve, op. cit., p. 82.

141. Aristotle, *de anima*, 1, 2. 404b I.

142. Aristotle, *de anima*, 1, 2. 405a 13; cf F. M. Cleve, op. cit., p. 82 ff.

143. Anaxagoras, A. 66; cf Aetius, II, 4, 6.

144. Plato, *Cratyl.*, 413C; cf Anaxagoras, A. 55.

it is the nous; for he calls it the absolute ruler (ἀυτοκράτωρ), and mixing with nothing else, but ordering all things by pervading them all».

It is evident that Anaxagoras has influenced the great philosophers Plato and Aristotle¹⁴⁵. These men honoured him in their writings; they repeated the main points of his teaching; and they also criticised him. Anaxagoras used the sense of Mind in so far as he identified it with the mind of man. In a pantheistic way he said that the creator of the world is the Nous, the Nous is God. The Nous that is in our mind is for every body his own God. Everything is mixed with Nous «ὁ Νοῦς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ἐν ἑκάστῳ Θεός»¹⁴⁶.

Diogenes of Apolonios following Anaximenes called God the soul of the world¹⁴⁷. This soul is air, which is also the archè of all things and knows and moves all other things¹⁴⁸. This soul is imperishible¹⁴⁹ «τοῦτο αὐτοῖς καὶ ψυχὴ ἐστὶ καὶ νόησις¹⁵⁰». It rules everyone and everything it seems to be God... and everything partakes of it¹⁵¹. He says «it seems to me that it is great (the soul), and powerful, and eternal, and immortal and variable in kind — τοῦτό μοι δῆλον δοκεῖ εἶναι, ὅτι καὶ μέγα καὶ ἰσχυρόν καὶ ἀτιδίον τε καὶ ἀθάνατον καὶ πολλὰ εἶδος ἐστὶ»¹⁵². This soul is a small part of God, according to Theophrastus' interpretation of Diogenes «ὅτι δὲ ὁ ἐντὸς ἀήρ αἰσθάνεται μικρὸν ὄν μέρος τοῦ θεοῦ-ἐστὶν-»¹⁵³.

In Demopritus' philosophical system we find a development of the philosophical system of his teacher and predecessor Leukippus. The difference between the two is due to the fact that Democritus formu-

145. W. Jaeger, op. cit., p. 167.

146. Anaxagoras, A. 48; cf A. Ehrhardt, The Beginning, pp. 74-76; F. M. Cleve, op.cit., p.26, that it is usual to take the Nous of Anaxagoras for a deity «setting purposes» and Anaxagoreanism for a theological doctrine. «True, Nous is a being that works consciously as the omnipotent God of the Bible. But Nous, not being creator, is only cognizant of what will result from his interferences. 'Nous knows all the mechanical possibilities lying in the elements and, out of those various possible courses of a world, chooses the most beautiful and most variegated... The world of Anaxagoras to be sure is in blind mechanism; it is a seeing mechanism» cf Simpl., Phys. 156, 13 f.

147. Diogenes, A. 8; cf K. Freeman, op. cit., pp. 283-4.

148. Diogenes, A. 20; cf Aristotle, de anima A. 2. 405a 21; J. Bumet, Early Greek Philosophy, London 1930, pp. 352-358; J. Kerscheneiner, Zetemata, p. 176.

149. Aetius, IV, 7. I; cf Diogenes, A. 20.

150. Diogenes, B. 4.

151. Diogenes, B. 5.

152. Diogenes, B. 8.

153. Diogenes, A. 19; Theophr. de sens. 39 (42).

lated a far more complete system¹⁵⁴. It is undoubtedly hard to find in their philosophy the sense of God as a personal power creating and ruling the world «Leukippus and Democritus the world is neither animated not ruled by providence, but it consists of the traditional nature of the atoms (ἄτομα)»¹⁵⁵.

In contrast to Leukippus Democritus tried to create a philosophical system more or less physical, resting on the contemplation of nature. His achievement in this field deserves to be called, to some extent, the philosophy of the future physics. This is emphasized in our own time when his theory about the indivisible atoms has found relevance with the splitting of the atom. He regards the atoms as the monathes (Μονάδες) which, when they have come together give things size and form, while the atoms themselves are devoid of form being «ἀπίλους καὶ ἀπαθεῖς ἐν τῷ κενῷ»¹⁵⁶. Movement of the atoms in empty space is performed by chance «from the automatic Tyché»¹⁵⁷.

Sextus says that Democritus maintains that men have arrived at the idea of God through the wonders (παραδόξων) of nature; «when the first men watched the cosmic meteorological processes like thunder and lightning, stellar conjunctions, and eclipses of sun and moon, they were filled with fear and believed that these things were caused by the gods»¹⁵⁸.

The above passage suggests that Democritus continued to believe the traditional ideas. Ideas which mankind arrived at in its first religious steps, trying to approach the problem of God's existence and manifestations. The passage by Clement of Alexandria suggests the same thing¹⁵⁹, that «Democritus is quite in accord with the spirit of his own enlightened era»¹⁶⁰.

Democritus applied his theory of atoms even to the human soul

154. G. E. R. Lloyd, Leukippus and Democritus, in *Encycl. of Philos.*, vol. IV, p. 446.

155. Leukippus, B. 2; cf. G. E. R. Lloyd, *Ibid*, p. 3448; Kersescheneiner, *op. cit.* pp. 150-161; E. Bréhier, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

156. Democritus, A. 57; cf. K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

157. Democritus, A. 67; cf. Aristotle, B. 4. 195b 36; G. E. R. Lloyd, *op. cit.*, p. 448; K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

158. Democritus, A. 75; cf. Sextus, IX, 24.

159. Democritus, B. 30; Clement of Alex. *Protr.* 66 and *Str.* V. 193.

160. W. J a e g e r, *op. cit.*, p. 138; cf. E. Bréhier, *op. cit.*, p. 72. that «Democritus admitted the existence of the gods; but for the same reason as men, they are transitory combinations of atoms and subject to universal necessity»; Diog. Laert., IX, 45; Cicero, *de nat. deorum*, I, 25.

which he regarded identified to the human mind. According to Aristotle¹⁶¹ he held «ἀπλῶς ταῦτόν ψυχὴν καὶ νοῦν». And his late commentator Philoponus¹⁶² is in accord with Aristotle that ταῦτὰ γὰρ ἀμφοτέρω (that is ψυχὴ καὶ νοῦς) παρ' αὐτῷ (Democritus)¹⁶³.

As regards the questions whether Democritus' metaphysic assigned everything to chance was much debated; «it was, according to K. Freeman, generally agreed that though he appeared to make chance supreme, this was not really true. There appear to be three stages in his creation: the first, fixed by necessity or unchanging law, in the immutable nature of the elements, atoms and space and the 'natural compulsion' which makes the atoms move in space; this is very essence of things, their 'nature' or potentiality, which is fundamental»¹⁶⁴.

Democritus is regarded more as a scientist¹⁶⁵ than as a theologian. He did not reject what his social environment imposed on him concerning religion, as Protagoras had done. Protagoras denied all the gods of the State and for this reason was condemned to death, but escaped from Athens and died during a journey at sea. W. Jaeger says that «Protagoras is backing away from the whole previous philosophical Treatment of the problem of the Divine by denying that there is anything certain about it». «He introduced the rationalistic philosophical movement amongst the Ionians. He had stated that man is the measure of all things; in another place he says that 'I am unable to discover about gods» because «of their uncertainty and the short-life of man»¹⁶⁶. Even in court he declared: «About the gods, I know not where they are or not; neither

161. Aristotle, de anima A 2. 404da 27.

162. Philoponus, 83,27 in Diels-Kranz, II, p. 109.

163. Cf P. J. Bicknell, The Seat of the Mind in Democritus, in Eranos, vol. LXVI, 1-4 (1968), p. 16, full details pp. 10-23; C. Bailey, The Greek Atomists and Epicurus, Oxford 1928; W. K. C. Guthrie, A. History of Greek Philosophy, vol. II, Cambridge 1962, p. 433 n. 3.

164. K. Freeman, op. cit., p. 303; Democritus, A. I, A. 39, A. 66 and B. 168; A. Ehrhardt The Beginning, pp. 34 ff.

165. R. G. Bury, «The Origin of Atomism», Classical Review, vol. 30 (1916), p. 1-4 and D. J. Furley, Two Studies in the Greek Atomists, Princeton Univ. Press 1967. pp. 58 ff 127-128 (Melissus), 79-104, 112 ff, 127-130, 170-175, 181-182 (Democritus), 79-103, 127-130 (Leukippus).

166. W. Jaeger, op. cit., p. 189.

167. A. Ehrhardt, The Beginning, p. 133.

168. Protagoras, B. I: cf K. Freeman, op. cit., pp. 346-7; E. Bréhier. op. cit., p. 74.

169. Protagoras, B. 3; cf K. Freeman, Ibid.

have I any knowledge as to what they are»¹⁷⁰. He thus dismissed religious intuition as a source of the recognition of the truth, and abandoned the hope of discovering the truth by way of scientific observation. Protagoras' example became essential for the development of Aristotle's metaphysical doctrine of truth¹⁷¹.

Concluding this Essay we may give a summary of the theme by saying that the ambition of the pre-Socratic philosophers was to find out how and where all things originated, and what had been present in the beginning¹⁷². They based their contemplation on nature; and on the first principles from which everything originated. These they called eternal elements, some they called immortal gods. A few of them, Anaxagoras and Heraclitus included, came nearer to the conclusion of one God. They justified this on logical grounds. In so far as they approached the true God they were the prophets of the nations. It was hard for them to formulate a notion of God, and they hated the anthropomorphisms ascribed to God. Their attempt to teach that God was the creator and conservator of the world failed, degenerating into Pantheism or Henotheism.

The philosophy of the pre-Socratic philosophers lacks differentiation between theology and other branches of thought. The early Greek philosophers worked upon representations of a complexity and richness but also of a confusion which we can 'scarcely imagine'¹⁷³. They did not so much 'to invent as to disentangle and choose, or rather the invation was in this discernment itself. The ideas which the first philosophers used, those of destiny, justice, soul, God, were not notions which they created or elaborated themselves; they were common ideas, collective representations which they found'¹⁷⁴. So there arises a methodological difficulty. Theology and philosophy lie as an indivisible organism. And these philosophers never considered 'the theological components apart

170. Protagoras, B. 4.

171. A. Ehrhardt, *The Beginning*, pp. 133-134; cf Aristotle, *Metaph.* I. 3, 984a, 15; W. Marx, *The meaning of Aristotle's ontology*, 1954, p. 35 f; E. Bréhier, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-76, that «Protagoras' attitude towards Athenian religion, obviously a very important one, had a rather unhappy ending because of his rational method of approach. At the beginning of the fourth century the intellectual movement culminated in political cynicism and in mere virtuosity»; K. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 346, about the destiny of Protagoras after his attack against the traditional religion.

172. W. Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

173. E. Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy, The Hellenic Age*, p. 4 f.

174. *Ibid.*

from the physical or ontological¹⁷⁵. But nevertheless the philosophical theology of the early Greek thinkers marks the starting-point of a gradually developing universal theology.

Generally speaking the foundation of belief in the early Greek philosophers, is clearly natural. There are some striving towards a higher sense of the Divine. The Logos of Heraclitus and the Nous of Anaxagoras, approach the apocalyptic truth of Hebrew and Christian Monotheism. The arguments, used by these philosophers, are enough to justify logically the existence of one God as the creator and conservator of the world, unborn, eternal, simple, self-moved, providential and immortal. By being able to ascribe these predicates to God, the pre-Socratic philosophers constitute an important part of learning in the Philosophy of Religion¹⁷⁶.

175. W. Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

176. I quote once again from E. Bréhier's book, *The History of Philosophy, the Hellenistic Age*, p. 76 to present the relationship of the pre-Socratic philosophers' work with that of the famous Greek philosophers, in the classical period. He states: «nothing in the movement of the Early Greek philosophers that was positive was lost, any more than from those that preceded it. Ionian naturalism, the rationalism of Magna Graecia, the religious spirit of Empedocles and of Pythagoras, the humanism of the Sophists, all these come together in the most famous of the Greek Philosophers, in Plato».