JEFFREY DIRK WILSON, Wonder and the Discovery of Being: Homeric Myth and the Natural Genera of Early Greek Philosophy

Aristotle asserts that philosophy, which begins in wonder, seeks principles and causes in the world, just as mythology does, but each in a different way. This article argues that Homer analyzes the world according to Vico’s imaginative genera; early Greek philosophy according to natural genera, and philosophers in the strict sense (for example, Plato and Aristotle) according to rational genera. Thus, Homer’s rainbow is the goddess Iris, which Xenophanes divides into natural object and divinity, and which Aristotle calls principles or causes. In the transition from imaginative to natural genus, wonder is lost because the enchanted world of mythology has become explicable in terms of the five senses. Plato’s and Aristotle’s philosophical approach seeks to restore wonder without remythologizing the world. Homer’s Oceanus myth is examined, in relation to the testimony of Thales and the fragments of Xenophanes, and as reflected explicitly and implicitly in the works of Plato and Aristotle.

EVA BRANN, Presocratics or First Philosophers?

EDWARD C. HALPER, Heraclitus and the Possibility of Metaphysics

Heraclitus is famous for affirming contradictions, though most readers do not regard the content of his fragments as contradictory. Examining fragments 1 and 50, this article argues that Heraclitus aims to assert a special class of contradictions, the intrinsic conflict between the content of any universal metaphysical claim and the assertion or reception of that claim. Such contradictions undermine the possibility of metaphysics as a science that knows all things. Second, the article argues that Heraclitus himself embraces this sort of contradiction by making it, as it were, the content of his Logos. Third, the article examines three other solutions to the problem that have been advanced, mostly tacitly, by other philosophers. The article concludes with some steps towards a different way of preserving the possibility of metaphysics.

WILLIAM DESMOND, Flux-Gibberish: For and Against Heraclitus

The article is a reflection occasioned by an impression of Aristotle’s irritation at the views of the Heracliteans. It offers a reflection that is inspired by, companioned by Heraclitus. It looks at aspects of the approaches of Hegel and Nietzsche as also taking a companioning approach. There is something resistant in Heraclitus’s mode of articulation that makes one diffident in (pro)claiming that now at last one is the privileged one to understand him. Heraclitus offers us striking thoughts that strike one into thought—that open up philosophical porosity to the deepest
perplexities. In more detail, the author considers what is intended by flux-gibberish and how this bears on the determinacy and constancy of intelligibility. If some pervading sense of the flow of becoming must be granted, how does this bear on the constancy of intelligibility? How can we think the flow and the constancy together?

DANIEL O. DAHLSTROM, Heidegger’s Initial Interpretation of Parmenides: An “Excursus” in the 1922 Lectures on Aristotelian Texts

In lectures and writings during the 1920s, Heidegger appropriates what he takes to be the basic insights expressed in Parmenides’ Poem, even as he criticizes other decisive and fateful aspects of it. He gives his most ample, early account of major parts of Parmenides’ Poem in 1922 lectures on Aristotle. The aim of this study is to review Heidegger’s account in those lectures, with a view to showing how Heidegger’s reading of Parmenides contributes to thinking that culminates in the project of fundamental ontology. To this end, following the detailed review of that account, the article addresses the significance of Heidegger’s references to Parmenides in Sein und Zeit.

GEORGE LUCAS, Anaximander and the Ordering of Time: Metaphysics Viewed from the Margins of History