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FINKELBERG (A.) *Heraclitus and Thales’ Conceptual Scheme: a Historical Study*. (Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 23.) Pp. xii + 415. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017. Cased, E135, US\$145. ISBN: 978-90-04-33799-2. doi:10.1017/S0009840X18000380

This book represents more than a decade of work (p. ix) by this eminent scholar. It is intended primarily for scholars of Classical Greek; however, F.’s laudable practice of, in most cases, providing English translations and repeating them when needed, makes it accessible to non-specialists and undergraduates, as he intended (pp. ix–x).

The work begins with a preface, a note on ‘Sigla and Abbreviations’ and an informative methodological chapter entitled ‘Questions of Method’. The main body of the work is divided into two parts. The first focuses primarily on Heraclitus, the second on ‘Thales and Pre-Platonic Thought’. Part 1 comprises ten chapters and an appendix: (1) ‘Heraclitus: The Life and the Book’; (2) ‘Fire: Want and Satiety’; (3) ‘The Solstices of Fire’; (4) ‘The Fugitive δαίμονες’; (5) ‘Fighting Souls’; (6) ‘Heraclitus and Other Teachers of Salvation’; (7) ‘The One and the Many’; (8) ‘The Mind that Is in Us’; (9) ‘The Logos’; ‘Appendix’; (10) ‘The Companions of Gods’. Part 2 comprises four chapters: (11) ‘The Thaletan Conceptual Scheme’; (12) ‘The One’; (13) ‘The One versus the Many’; (14) ‘The Thaletan Conceptual Scheme and the Thaletan Tradition’. The book closes with an appendix of Marcus Aurelius’ quotations; a list of references; an index of modern authors; an *index nominum et rerum*; and an *index locorum potiorum*.

The list of references is 43 pages in length, which displays the immense amount of literature which F. has, in the main, taken into account and deployed as part of the support for his argumentation. It was wise that he decided against a bibliography (p. x), as it might have required its own volume. F. prefers to quote his sources rather than merely providing a reference, in order ‘to allow the reader to judge the evidential basis’ for themselves (*ibid.*). Given the frequency with which sources are incorporated into F.’s argumentation, the reader will find this practice most helpful.

F.’s method involves careful interpretation of the ancient sources and evidence, especially the Peripatetic sources. He acknowledges that this ‘runs counter to the prevalent conviction that our knowledge of the early thinkers must be based on their own words’ (p. 1). He considers Part 1, on Heraclitus, to be ‘in effect a case study of the reliability of secondary evidence for the early thinkers’, which he then generalises ‘to Peripatetic evidence on the Milesians’ (p. 237). This strategy is not made clear at the outset, and, while reading Part 1, one finds oneself wondering what F. is aiming towards.

The title of F.’s book would appear to be a neutral one, perhaps decided upon in an effort to avoid appearing tendentious. He later reveals that he considers this book to be an exposition of what he calls the ‘Thaletan conceptual scheme’ and the tradition that follows from it. The interim thesis would seem to be that ‘the teachings of the Milesians and Heraclitus had a common conceptual scheme (not necessarily fully articulated from the outset)’ (p. 247), and in Part 2 he extends the tradition stemming from this scheme to include Xenophanes, Parmenides, Empedocles and

others, while arguing for a much tighter relationship between the thought of these figures than is usually considered to be the case. If the reader does not mind a spoilt surprise, I suggest reading Chapter 14, ‘The Thaletan Conceptual Scheme and the Thaletan Tradition’, in which F. provides an overview of what he considers to be the history of that conceptual scheme and tradition, before beginning again at Chapter 1 and following the argumentation that is intended to support his conclusions. [328] Although this would perhaps be a less methodologically rigorous order, it could be a more humane one.

Considered apart from the overarching historical thesis, there is much in this book that will be of interest to scholars and debated for many years to come. F. argues for the inclusion of some candidate fragments, and suggests that others be retained where they have been in question. For example, he argues that an (in)famous river fragment, B91a, found in Plato’s *Cratylus*, which, incidentally, has not been retained as a fragment in the new Loeb edition (A. Laks & G. Most, *Early Greek Philosophy, Volume III: Early Ionian Thinkers, Part 2* [2016], pp. 168–9), should be retained (pp. 156–7).

I was especially interested to find, in the appendix to Chapter 9, that F. follows R. Dilcher in arguing that the unity of opposites thesis in Heraclitus is a “*phantasma* of scholarship” (p. 215). A full response to these arguments would be beyond the scope of this review. However, I venture to suggest that F. does not sufficiently distinguish between the basic interpretative options of *unity* and *identity*. The latter is certainly not Heraclitus’ view, but I do not believe that F. takes account of a charitable interpretation of the former. For instance, he does not address the view put forward by A.P.D. Mourelatos (in ‘Heraclitus, Parmenides, and the Naïve Metaphysics of Things’, in *Exegesis and Argument, Phronesis* supplementary vol. 1 [1973]), despite an updated version of this article being included in one of the works in F.’s list of references (A.P.D. Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides* [revised and expanded edition 2008]). Mourelatos there argues for his own views regarding early conceptual schemes and an interpretation of the unity of opposites that does not resort to ‘a vague idea of unity’ as others have done (F., p. 215). Instead, Mourelatos explains it to be a *necessary* or ‘internal’ relation of complementarity. Heraclitus’ examples of unity of opposites *could* be construed as expressing mere ‘truisms’ (ibid.), but are better explained as being expressions of a *necessary* truth posited in response to a naïve understanding of the relations between opposites as being *contingent*.

F.’s book appears not to have been properly proofread; there are a number of orthographical errors, many are non-homonymous misspellings, which should have been caught by any standard spellchecker. Fortunately, most of these will introduce no ambiguity for those who are familiar with the context. Although, some are personal names and there is one that provoked a double take: “This sentiment resonates in Heraclitus [sic]: “Heraclitus declared that [. . .]” (p. 245). The same misspelling also occurs on pages 39 and 306. Having abdicated, Heraclitus would not have wanted to be repeatedly confused with an emperor. Other misspelt names include Aristotle (p. 2 n. 5), Theophrastus (p. 43 n. 13) and Anaximander (p. 249 n. 40).

A more unfortunate error occurs when F. reproduces F.J. Whitfield’s translation of L. Hjelmlev’s statement of the *principle of generalisation* and quotes part of a remark: “This principle . . . has always implicitly played a role in scientific research’ (p. 35 n. 69). F. does not employ quotation marks when doing so. Hence, he does not make it clear that he is quoting and not paraphrasing, nor that the remark is truncated. In my estimation, the original makes a weaker claim because it begins: ‘We believe it possible to prove that this principle’, and proof does not immediately follow (L. Hjelmlev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language* [English trans. 1961], p. 69). This is the only error of

this kind that I noticed. This having been said, I do not believe that these faults tarnish the book too much when it is considered as a whole, and I happily recommend it to the scholarly community for their consideration.

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