



THE BREAK AND CONTINUITY OF MYTH IN HERACLITUS'S PHILOSOPHY

Shumet Amare Zeleke

Email: shumetzeleke@gmail.com

Facebook account: shummetammare@yahoo.com

This paper is the result of my own single handed effort. No one participates either in writing or editing.

Abstract

The chief aim of the paper is to analyze critically and qualitatively a continuity and break of mythological accounts in Heraclitus' philosophy using primary and secondary sources. The basic motive of the author is point out the contentious issue of the continuity and break of Greek mythology in the works of some Pre-Socratic philosophers. The author argues that myth did not completely polish from early Greek philosophy taking into account Heraclitus's philosophy. This is the ample reason partially to deal with the break and continuity of mythology in early Greek philosophy.

Key Words: Myth, Mythology, Philosophy, Break, Continuity

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N.B.

All the fragments which I mentioned hereby in this article are from professor Charles H. Kahn's Book entitled "The Art and Thoughts of Heraclitus: An Edition of Fragments with Translation and Commentary", which is published in 1979 for the first time. The fragments which are put in square brackets are from mixed bag. They are either partial quotations or paraphrases that may or may not preserve the exact utterance of Heraclitus or reports that are assumed as Heraclitus' words or phrases, but they may not be his own words and phrases.

Stigmatization of Myth and a Shift to Logos

Throughout time, man's modes of thought have been changing. The change of the mode of thought brings the change of understanding of the previously pictured world or more briefly, previously articulated views of the world are seen in different manner. Accordingly, our understanding of the world is changed (Kuhn, 1996:111). The change of our explanation also changes our existence. If we trace back to the scientific knowledge, we found variations of pattern and paradigm shift, and successive shift of paradigm is a healthy development of mature science. This is common in physics, chemistry, astronomy etc. There is also a similar shift from myth to philosophy. But, there is weird assumption which implies that Greek philosophers radically shift from myth to philosophy and supposed myth as "irrational" and a non-traditional paradigm before philosophy, which is assumed "wholly" rational.

The modes of thought which are replaced by new explanations are subject to be criticized as they are not genuine and right. It may have been reliable witness to examine the discussion of some scholars (philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists and so on) about myth as irrational and philosophy as rational, a shift from mythical explanation to philosophical explanation or in general rationality and its growth.

This paper mainly concerns with the category of human thought; mythical category and philosophical or sometimes scientific category, a movement from mythical to philosophical

thought which often contrasted *mythos-logos* to stigmatize myth as something inefficient to explain reality and the other of philosophy.

Myth as the category of human thought attributed as the by-product of primitive mentality, and philosophy assumed as an advanced by-product of human mind. Then the category implicitly or explicitly entails an idea that human mind is different from time to time. It can be represented by the metaphor of old machine and newly designed one or any equipment of technological devices. Such kinds of features (features of primitive and advanced mentality) are occupied by another trouble which is rooted in ethnocentric attitude (Goody, 1995:1-18). The trouble with the category of primitive and advanced mentality or in metaphorical speech “they and we” (the primitive and advanced mentalities respectively) is not well articulated and backed by logical analysis. But, for this topic it is not appropriate to talk in detail about the issue of the division of “they and we” because it is more anthropological aspect of human culture and all aspects of humankind. This is not the aim of the thesis.

The binary dichotomy of human thought (myth and philosophy) reminds us once again to ask whether or not philosophy in ancient Greece from the six century B.C to onwards has a breaking point which divides myth and philosophy in clear line. Is there pure and complete break and clear line between myth and philosophy? With the connection of this Jack Goody succinctly points out as follows:

[W]hy are they primitive and we advanced? We try to state the nature of these differences in a very general terms- the move from myth to history, from magic to science, from status to contract, cold to hot, concrete to abstract, collective to individual, ritual to rationality. Such movement inevitably tends to be phrased not only in terms of process but of progress too; in other words it acquires a value element, a procedure that tends to distort the way we perceive the kind of development that has occurred , especially when this is seen in such general terms (1995:3-4).

From the above stated quotation, we can comprehend that the pure break between myth and philosophy is difficult. The explanation of myth how the world comes into existence, for instance in the case of Homer and Hesiod, in ancient Greece is considered as a kind of “pseudo-

explanation” (ibid:2). The reason behind this is because myth as a discourse is considered as primitive, pre-logical, simple etc. The arguments that enabled early Greek philosophers to argue and assert myth is pre-logical, simple, primitive and in general irrational come from the nature and aim of myth itself.

In the first case, there is an argument which denigrates the caliber of mythologists and their works by considering the aim of myth is only to satisfy material need. Some scholars and philosophers denigrate myth as simple and its aim is to satisfy material (physical) needs (ibid: 5). Accordingly, by and large explanation of philosophers, the labor which is exerted by ancient Greek poets in their description of the world does not get its merit of intellectual dignity. Early Greek philosophers had an intention that myth does not have intellectual interest. It is difficult, I personally believe, to deny the intellectual interest of Homer and Hesiod. Myth also fulfills the intellectual requirements and the subject of the thought was life, nature, god and the entire world with its multiples; not only how to satisfy your material need.

The myths of Homer and Hesiod go beyond the satisfaction of physical need. The intention of Homer and Hesiod was to teach the people how the entire world comes into existence. Being was the central question and issue of their thought. Hence, the general critics that myth employed to satisfy physical needs is superficial and oversimplified assertion. Let me take an example which is not out of my theme to strengthen my argument that says philosophical myths have intellectual merit and ancient Greek poets have intellectual interest. Homer records that ancient Greeks before him believed that the begetters of the world are Okeanos and Tethys- deities of water (Guthrie, 1957:18). Homer and Hesiod were occupied in philosophical questions, but the articulation of their description is different with that of philosophers.

Nonetheless, it is less problematic if we tend to think that myth is pro-philosophical process. This idea is persuasively expressed by Morgan quoted in Llod’s book entitled *Demystifying Mentalities* in 1990 as follows;

[T]he *logos–mythos* contrast offered an *explicit* category distinction that could be, and frequently was, invoked in order to downgrade whole classes of discourse. It . . . provided a way of casting aspersions on those who engaged in such discourse or

at least did so exclusively, inappropriately or unselfconsciously, without, that is, recognizing what they were doing. (2000:34).

Each of the myth especially philosophical myths tries to answer philosophical questions in their own way. For instance, Hesiod's myth tried to articulate metaphysical analysis for the coming to the existence of universe (Hard, 2004:21). But, we should not forget that all myths are not philosophical and because of this it is possible to arrange myths hierarchically according to their non-philosophical or pro-philosophical sense and aspects. Some myths have conceptually deep philosophical ideas. Such kinds of myths demand high caliber of mental function to be analyzed. Other myths are superficial and oversimplified. Such kinds of myths have a simple corpus.

So, when philosophers concern in the study of myth, they must not totally and entirely depreciate myth as it is irrelevant and irrational. Some myths play the same role with that of philosophy by responding for metaphysical questions and consequently strive to resolve the metaphysical problem. It is better, rather than denigrating and depreciating myth, philosophers must understand the departure of the point that myth and philosophy separately goes in their own way and provide progressive explanation why they depart.

The second argument of early Greek philosophers comes from the personification and symbolism. Anthropomorphic and symbolic features of myth are characterized by philosophers as irrational elements of myth. Lack of contemplation and scrutiny belonged to myth while philosophy incorporates rational and reasonable argument as early Greek philosophers assume. Philosophy, according to early Greek philosophers, is non-symbolic. Such a decisive step, for the first time in the history of western philosophy, was taken place in ancient Greece (Ionia) in the 6th century B.C. by the man called Thales (Guthrie, 1957:11-29). Thales argues the underlying principle of the universe is water and everything is full of god (Drozdek, 2007:3-8). The expression that everything is full of god is sometimes considered as Thales borrowed an idea from mythical thought. Whereas, others like Morgan said that the expression that everything is full of god does not necessarily mean god in the sense of mythical expression rather a natural force (Morgan, 2004: 31).

Therefore, according to early Greek philosophers, the quest of reality can be addressed by scientific explanation and observation with having rational thought. In other expression, the

cause for the existence of things can be verified by observation in philosophical accounts of the universe which is not common in mythical account. At this time philosophers postulate that the basic substance for the existence of the world is actual and single. But, it does not mean that all early Greek philosophers assumed observable actual primal cause. To mention a single instance, Heraclitus' primal cause of the cosmos is indeterminable through sense. In this sense, philosophers made a decisive step from myth to philosophy and it can be said that there is a movement from mythos to logos by assuming one observable primal substance as the cause of phenomenal world. This had also enabled them to explain the multiplicity of natural world "as due to the modifications of something *within* it" (Guthrie, 1975:17). This is particularly the great achievement and success of human reason which is not common in all mythical explanations of ancient Greeks. It was also, in fact, a remarkable attainment of speculative reason. By so doing, Greek philosophers put the triumph of human reason over mythical anthropomorphic assertions (ibid).

Yet myth did not entirely exclude from philosophical discourse because of verification. Myth incorporated in philosophical discourses either by slightly polishing or dressing up reason or problematizing mythical elements. However, Morgan further argues that raising the second order question i.e. verification and observation has enabled philosophers to stigmatize mythical thoughts (2004:35).

Therefore, as a whole, critical philosophy rose by opposing the anthropomorphic primal causes which are indeterminable, multiplicity and variety of myth, and from some concepts of mythical account. Greek philosophy did not rise out of void and starts from afresh question. Revising some of the treatises of early Greek philosophy is worth to understand the matter well.

Early Greek philosophy, by disregarding its mythical origin, tried to indoctrinate the idea that philosophical thoughts are rational positive thoughts and gradually philosophy tried to oust myth. (Barnes, 1982:2-3). In other expression, philosophy is an acknowledged discourse, but not myth because it is symbolic and then it must be replaced by philosophy (Morgan, 2004:25-30).

Thirdly, some early Greek philosophers criticized not only the multiplicity of Greek myths, but also the absence of spontaneous growth from single myth and the problem of distortion of meaning at the time of transmission from generation to generation. Criticizing such problems is

to some extent just. But, as long as myth is told for a purpose, its corpus will have particular issue from other myths. If each myth has its own particular purpose, it is difficult to expect spontaneous and derivative growth from a single myth. In this sense, critic of spontaneous and derivative growth of myth is not sound.

The early Greek philosophers' distortion of definition of Greek myth contributes a lot to the image of myth as irrational and philosophy as rational. Although early Greek philosophers assume philosophy as rational, a stance that philosophy, for its concern, is wholly rational and always provides rational justification which is the exact-correspondence of reality is problematic and implausible. Since the concept of myth associated with "a sense of scandal, a reaction to cultural elements that seemed morally or intellectually inappropriate (such as divine rapes or infidelities)" in a biased manner without close interrogation, it is difficult to be sure talking about Greek myth (ibid:33).

After all, the Greek word *mythos* (myth) does not have such kind of definition. The concept of Greek myth is inappropriately comprehended by philosophers. Myth is dynamic in definition and interpretation especially in the case of Greeks. Because of this universal definition of myth is impossible. Without having common agreed definition of myth, it is difficult to understand myth.

Fourthly early Greek philosophers assumed that myth and philosophy quarreled in the employment of language to explain reality. So, there is also an argument to expel myth from intellectual arena based upon the use of language. According to early Greek philosophers, mythologists and poets provide their explanation of the world as if there is a natural kind of correspondence between reality and language (ibid:1- 37). It is not difficult to understand that there is no natural correspondence between the word which is employed to express reality and reality itself. In such a case, the work of the philosopher is striving for accuracy. However, the problem of language is not remained only the problem of myth, it was also the problem of philosophy. Heraclitus faced the problem of language to express reality and persuaded to employ oracular signs.

The fifth disgusting element of myth for philosophers is myth is a form of convention i.e. societal acceptance and agreement of the assertions of myth. It implies that the convention in myth is accepted whether or not the convention is right or wrong. The convention of myth is

irrespective of truth. To some extent the conventional claim of myth connected with its “time-honoured” nature (ibid:37). The conventional claim of myth is another reason for philosophers to attack myth as unexamined enterprise. And unexamined enterprise is an obstacle to intellectual growth and to remove superficial thoughts (ibid).

By suggesting that myth is conventional and for that reason it must be replaced by other kind of thought i.e. philosophy. Hence, early Greek philosophers confined themselves in the work of reconfiguring the conception of the world by the poets and mythical tradition in merging mythical thoughts with their philosophy and modifying slightly with their “new philosophical literacy awareness” (ibid:2).

However, the conventional nature of myth could not be taken as the absence of examination and scrutiny. For philosophers caricatured the nature of some moral and social conventions of Greek myth as true as to all myths and said that myth is sacred and untouchable. Examination and scrutiny is permitted without attacking gods.

Early Greek philosophers assume that their vision of the world is completely different from the vision of myth (ibid :30). Then they developed an intention to eradicate mythical thoughts and discourse of their predecessors substituting it by their own explanation of the world (ibid: 30). Because myth is the product of primitive mentality and philosophy is the product of advanced mentality, this change of mode of thought (a change from mythical attitude to philosophical outlook) is also viewed as a change from irrational to rational discourse by early Greek philosophers (ibid). Hence, this change shows that mythical explanations were accepted accounts of existence of the world in different paradigms before philosophy. Often, the poets are considered as story tellers and their discourses were considered by early Greek philosophers as concrete and nothing is abstract (ibid).

The efforts of early Greek philosophers to eradicate myth and replace it by their own discourse the so called philosophy usually considered as the rejection of *mythos* and accepting of *logos*, roughly philosophy, because the thoughts of the poets were considered as malicious as it has nothing valuable. This in turn contributes much for the grotesque characterization of myth as “irrational” discourse and philosophical discourse as “rational” and valuable. They assume, however, by implication, philosophy is wholly rational. The characterization and representation

of myth and philosophy as irrational and rational respectively is “philosophical self-definition and self-presentation”, and must not be taken as for granted (ibid). For this characterization and representation myth and philosophy, in other contrast mythos and logos, are two opposing modes of reflection.

Nevertheless, undermining myth as totally irrational is not fair critic. The question of reality is the concern of both philosophical myth and early Greek philosophy. According to Morgan, the road to philosophy especially in the case of early Greek philosophy began when a philosopher knows myth unless and otherwise the journey from mythos to logos is difficult (ibid: 32). Understanding and textualization of myth renders the birth of philosophy. Homer and Hesiod’s myths are not totally irrelevant and irrational. Hesiod’s theogony is more or less the best among other his predecessors’ myth in systematizing the beginning of the world (Ring, 2000: 13). But, it does not mean that there is no decisive shift from mythos to logos. The problem, however, is that it is difficult to draw a clear line between myth and philosophy and the boundary of the two modes of thought. In addition to this, the total condemnation of myth as totally irrational is unacceptable critic. While some early Greek philosophers were engaged in condemning the myths of their predecessor poets, they, however, did not produce their works out of nothing and free from myth though they think as if their work is free from myth. “What distinguishes them is that their use of myth is self-conscious and designed to raise second-order questions about the use of language (both their own use and that of the poets).” (ibid: 35).

In the early Greek philosophy, from the works of Thales down to Aristotle because he believed that stars and sun have souls; there are many philosophical accounts that are not free from myth (Guthrie, 1957:15). The disparagement of myth as totally irrational, and the acknowledgement of philosophy as wholly rational are mistakenly asserted ideas; in one hand, there are philosophical treatises that are not free from myth, and on the other hand, early Greek philosophers told us myth is irrational. If myth is irrational their philosophy is at least partly irrational, since it is not free from irrational elements of myth. After they claim philosophy is rational and myth is irrational, they mixed both myth and philosophy those which contravene each other. So, early Greek philosophy is not totally rational that discards all mythical elements. In fact Homeric and Hesiod’s myths are comparatively rational. There were irrational myths in Greece in remote time before Homer and Hesiod (Hard, 2004:21, Kirk and Raven, 1957:10).

Deformed views of all mythical explanations contribute a lot to develop a stereotyped perception about myth. The study of myth must be undertaken by taking into account these deformed and stereotyped views of myth. Then, undoubtedly, those who concern in the study of myth may come up with the conclusion that philosophy especially western philosophy originated from and within philosophical myth. To be sure for this assertion, it is easy and enough to reexamine the question of early Greek philosophy and the concern of some mythical explanations such as Homeric poems, Hesiod's theogony, and Orphic explanations of ancient Greeks were the same i.e. the question of being (Guirand, 1959:92, Ring, 2000:14).

In fact, mythical accounts of ancient Greeks did not incorporate essential ideas which dominate philosophical treatises in the modern time such as space, time, cause and effect, substance, personality and so forth. However, early Greek philosophy is fundamentally about nature though there are philosophical treatises which deal with God, soul, matter, etc. but, they are not rigorous and persuasive. The philosophical concepts of space, time, substance, personality and so on are dominant in the intellectual works since Aristotle (Durkheim, 1964:9). Then, it is fair to draw a conclusion that many accounts of early Greek philosophy were cosmogony like philosophical myth. As Durkheim briefly argues:

For a long time it has been known that the first systems of representations with which men have pictured to themselves the world and themselves were of religious [mythical] origin. There is no religion [myth] that is not a cosmogony at the same time that it is a speculation upon divine things. If philosophy and sciences were born of religion [myth], it is because religion [myth] began by taking the place of the sciences and philosophy (1965:9).

In the above quoted paragraph, Durkheim asserted that "There is no religion [myth] that is not a cosmogony" (ibid). Nevertheless, there are some traditional cults and myths which are not cosmogony. It is sound that some traditional cult of religion (philosophical myth) had functioned like philosophy before it born. This implies the fact that philosophy was never born out of void. Rather, it was born out of myth. So, I dare to say that myth, especially philosophical myth, was intellectuals' treatises at a given time and replaced by philosophy. By intellectuals, I mean the forerunners of philosophers, in the case of ancient Greece, like Homer and Hesiod.

Ancient Greek philosophical myths and early Greek philosophy interact on the same area to understand reality and nature. Philosophy uses, to explain nature, argumentative expression which is absent in mythical expression. But, it is not fair to totally ignore the potential of philosophical myths to have argumentative assertions and philosophical significance. Philosophical myths are not simply mere reflections of poets to have audience. They fabricated beyond this purpose to satisfy intellectual demand.

According to early Greek philosophers, the mythical thoughts of their predecessors, poets, are a system of thought which is peculiar for primitive mentalities and irrational (Morgan, 2004:1). But, early Greek philosophers employed and incorporated the elements and thoughts of mythical explanations in their philosophical works which is claimed rational to reformulate people's ideas. After philosophers negatively reformulated people's ideas about myth, they create philosophy.

The intention of early Greek philosophers to exclude mythological explanations of the world and mythical elements of the poets in their works shows that they had wanted to identify themselves from poets. The exclusion of mythical thoughts, at least in principle, can be taken as the sign of philosophy for its "self-identification" from mythical treatises (ibid: 37). The acknowledgement of philosophy as rational treatise and myth as irrational treatise made possible philosophy to identify itself from myth. Since, early Greek philosophers assumed that rationality is alien for myth; therefore, rationality is the fundamental and decisive quality of philosophy to identify it from myth.

For the reason that it is difficult to assume that all poets did have an intellectual ability to understand the world and its nature properly, supervision of mythical accounts of the world is necessary. The poets of ancient Greek deployed their own criteria to produce their treatises according to cultural and social settings they had. Poets inhabited in diversified cultures and social atmospheres. They also use uncritical assertions in their treatises. However, the story that early Greek philosophers had uttered about myth and philosophy is both are completely different and have nothing in common. The common ground of myth and philosophy is deliberately denied. This is uncritical and deliberately done to stigmatize myth. This stereotyped stigmatization makes us to have an idea that myth is uncritical and irrational.

Some philosophical-mythical treatises cannot be deconstructed by philosophical treatise. From antiquity to onwards, there are philosophical issues which could not be addressed by philosophy. Hence, it is rationally fair to assume that some philosophical mythical explanations are beyond what philosophy and science explain. Transcendental world and issues are some examples of such type that philosophy and science could not address once forever beyond reasonable doubt. Hence, there are philosophical issues which could not be accurately comprehended by philosophy for the limitation of capacity of humans' reason and understanding. Hence, it is impossible to have absolutely certain knowledge of everything from philosophy. If that is so, philosophy is not wholly rational. Then, the primacy of philosophy and its argumentative analyses need attention to be reexamined again.

All negative attributes of philosophical myth of ancient Greeks may inspire one to suggest the accessibility of truth is difficult. Truth in mythical treatise, as early Greek philosophers supposed, is inaccurate and philosophical treatises are the only means to grasp reality. Comparatively, philosophy explains truth better than myth because it employs argument. Argumentative expressions are expected to be consistent or coherent with experienced facts either by observation or any other mechanism. The problem, however, is that though we have coherent picture of an argument, we will have inaccurate understanding of a thing or the coherent argument may be inaccurate with the fact. This is because of the problem of language and limitation of human understanding; common problem for both philosophy and myth.

A reflection of philosophical myth is, then, rational though the poets misused language. If philosophy comes up with 'absolute knowledge', it is difficult, but not impossible, to transmit this kind of knowledge as it is because of the deficiency of language to express reality; language is incapable to do that. Philosophy does not also escape the problem of language to express reality. Hence, we cannot ignore the potential of philosophy to be irrational.

On the whole, before the polemic critics of philosophers, there were no literature which show that myth is irrational and incongruent with reality. In the same way, there were no literature that affirm myth is verifiable and argumentative (Morgan, 2004:10). But, after the rise of philosophy this manner changed. Myth characterized as maliciously irrational and because of this philosophers intended to replace myth. Then, the shift from myth to logos is highly praised by

early Greek philosopher though the characterization of myth as irrational is oversimplified and their works never free from mythical elements. In addition to that myth never entirely and radically discarded as pseudo-treatise of nature. Early Greek philosophers intentionally tell us distorted and caricatured views of myth.

Myth in Heraclitus's Philosophy

In one polemic fragment, Heraclitus attacked that the traditional authority of myth to explain nature, and other his predecessor philosophers such as Xenophanes, Hecataeus and Pythagoras. The only person among his predecessors (poets and philosophers) who got the praise of Heraclitus was Bias of Priene. "In Priene", Heraclitus said, "lived Bias son of Teutames, who is of more account [logos] than the rest." (frag.62). Heraclitus declares that everyone must pay attention to him because he is the only person that had the access of truth. The authority that Heraclitus appeals for his teaching and caliber to have better access for reality is based upon sensual experience which is first hand information; seeing the best among other sensual experiences. In this sense, he is completely different from poets because they do not appeal first hand information of sensual experience of seeing, hearing and so on. Though Heraclitus appeals to sensual experience to establish knowledge, by taking into account the category of empiricist theory of knowledge, it is difficult to align him with empiricist philosophers in terms of knowledge.

Appealing to first hand information from senses is the mechanism and program to criticize traditional myth. Then, based on this program, Heraclitus refused the first principles of the world which are stated in mythical tradition because they were unobserved. In addition, those unobserved entities are beyond experience and explanation based on sensual activities. Because of this the explanation of the whole world which is accepted by the poets in mythical tradition became beyond the experience of the sense. Hence, he demythologized the world by appealing to the knowledge of sense experiences.

According to Heraclitus, Hesiod, Pythagoras, Xenophanes and Hecataeus are educated (frag.18). However, due to their failure to produce a genuine understanding of the universe, as he suggests, it is impossible to doubt the fact that their minds are not taught properly. He said that "Much

learning does not teach understanding. For it would have taught Hesiod and Pythagoras, and also Xenophanes and Hecataeus.” (ibid). In this case, Heraclitus aligned aforementioned philosophers with the poets; in the case of poets, Hesiod is mentioned by name (ibid). The common mistake for philosophers those who are mentioned by name in fragment 18, and poets especially Homer and Hesiod, Heraclitus thinks that their souls did not speak the right language. Unless the soul or mind speaks the right language, bad witness will be delivered to the people.

Then, according to Heraclitus, speaking the right language is not only necessary, but also precondition to produce genuine knowledge because to produce genuine knowledge there must be a right meaning and interpretation of experiences of senses. This is entirely new not only for myth but also for philosophy before him. This can be taken into account as the second stage of natural philosophy because natural philosophers before him highly depend upon sensual experience. There is nothing such a thing *speaking the right language* before Heraclitus.

The concept of god in traditional mythology is attractive issue for Heraclitus. However, he and traditional poets did not have the same god. In the case of mythological treatises, gods and goddesses were symbolic and anthropomorphic (Hard, 2004:21). They were unobserved entities. We have also multiple kinds of deities in mythological traditions. Some of the gods and goddess, as we can understand from mythical treatises, were the prime stuff of the world (ibid :24). But, in the case of Heraclitus god is day, night, satiety, hunger, peace, war, etc. (frag.123). As we can understand from the fragment (123), the phenomenal things such as day and night, sensual feelings such as hunger and satiety, activities of human being such as peace and war are god. This understanding is alien for the mythology of ancient Greeks. So, Heraclitus tries to correct mythological tradition view of gods which could not be defined well. But, it does not necessarily mean that mythical elements about god are completely expelled from Heraclitus’ philosophy.

The concept of soul was significant in Homer’s poems and Heraclitus’s philosophy. And the theory of soul is an issue that needs attention whether or not Heraclitus operates in the mythical tradition. In Homer the soul did not have special function than other organs. At the time of death it descended down to Hades (frag.111). But, in Heraclitus’ philosophy the soul has especial function and the soul has especial duty than other organs in organizing sensual activities (frag.109). In this sense, the soul is the mind of man. The theory of soul, in Heraclitus’

philosophy, is more or less about the human nature. The identity and the characters of the man can be explained in the theory of the soul. But, there is no absolute break with Homeric views of soul. For Heraclitus soul is both immortal and mortal (frag.92). The soul never become dung after death, rather, death is the departure of the soul from human flesh and descending down to Hades-the underworld god. Heraclitus claims "Greater deaths are allotted greater destinies." (frag.96). It seems that he believed in reincarnation of the soul. Hence, in the case of incarnation, the concept of death is slightly different with that of Homer. Accordingly, the souls of the virtuous men-those who have morally abided soul in the time of their life in this world, do not lose proper quality of their soul at and after the time of death (frag.96). The souls of the virtuous men raised above either- air. Those who have morally corrupted souls, their souls lose their quality and identity. Their soul transmitted to daemon (ibid).

Heraclitus' concept of soul developed from mythical tradition especially from Homer. The difference between the comprehensions of soul is slightly different. Then, in any mechanism, concluding that the concept of soul and other elements such as Hades and daemon are purely philosophical is not free from reasonable doubt. After all, Hades and daemon are mythical elements mostly common in Hesiod's theogony. Hades is "Greek god of the UNDERWORLD" (Daly, 2004:58). Then, the concept of soul in Heraclitus' philosophy is the version of traditional mythical concept of soul. Daemon is mythical element and spirit (Belton, 2009:73). Sometimes the word Hades is often used as a less offensive synonym for Hell (frag.111, Hard, 2004:22). This is according to mythology of ancient Greeks. In Hesiod's theogony Hades is the lowest part of the earth that the soul live after death. Thence, Heraclitus incorporated many mythical elements in his philosophy. The concept of reincarnation of the soul never escapes the problem of myth in any mechanism.

The concept of strife is another point that is explained by both mythical and philosophical traditions. In mythical tradition, especially in Homeric treatises, the concept of strife or opposition is real and genuine i.e. two opposite things never coexist together in harmony. But, Heraclitus rejects this concept. Edward Hussey briefly points out 'Heraclitus rebukes the poet [Homer] who said: "Would that strife might perish from among gods and men!"; for there would be no fitted structure (*harmonia*) if there were no high-pitched and low-pitched, nor would there be animals without the opposites male and female'(2000:106; quoted in Aristotle, *Eudemian*

ethics VII.i 1235a 25-29). Then the contrast between Homer and Heraclitus in the concept of opposition is clear. What Heraclitus added is that the multitude did not comprehend the unity of opposites. He said that the sum of all things being agreed by variance.

Then he censured Homer's need to eradicate conflict or strife within men and god. For Heraclitus strife and opposites are good for cosmic harmony. "One must realize that war is shared and Conflict is Justice, and that all things come to pass (and are ordained?) in accordance with conflict" (frag.82).

Generally, Heraclitus criticized the poets as bad teacher of people. In one of his fragments he said the poets did not know what is good and bad. In especial brutal attack he said that Homer must be expelled from intellectual field for not knowing the riddle of the lice. "Homer deserves to be expelled from competition and beaten with a staff - and Archilochus too!" (frag.21).

The conceptual analysis and comprehending of logos assert that the condemnation of mythical tradition and previous existed philosophy depends upon linguistic explanation criterion. He argues that truth is accessible and expressible, but the problem in mythology and previously existing philosophy is a matter of right language. In other words, truth is accessible and expressible if and only if the soul speaks right language. But, he is septic in the language of mortals. According to Morgan, Heraclitus believed that "mortal language is misrepresentation whose preparation is due largely to the poets" (2004: 54). The best example in the misrepresentation of mortal language is the understanding of logos by the multitude as private possession (frag. 1&2). These fragments make clear that logos is public, not private. Whereas, in mythical tradition, Heraclitus further argues, logos was comprehended as private possession. Given that logos is private, the commonness of logos for everyone is absent. For this problem he attacks Homer and Hesiod. "Thinking well is the greatest excellence and wisdom: to act and speak what is true, perceiving things according to their nature." (frag.32).

Heraclitus intended to take us out from mythological tradition which is characterized by proliferation of multiple versions of myth and used simplistic mortal language because this is the heinous fault as he thinks. As stated above, there should be right language to express a thing. Then implicitly he concludes that previous poets and philosophers never know this and because

of this they rush into mistake. The use of simplistic language brings failure to perceive reality. Then to have apparent comprehension of reality, simplistic language is atrocious. However, his fragment seems contrary to his model of the right language to describe the world. “The lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither speaks nor conceals, but gives a sign.” (frag.33). Thus, this shows that language alone is inefficient to express reality.

Heraclitus criticized the poets as they never speak the right language. Nonetheless, Heraclitus does not escape the problem of simplistic language certainly because total comprehension of logos is difficult in language. In the fragment (33), we found reliable evidence that shows the problem of language that Heraclitus faces that “The lord ... neither speaks nor conceals, but gives a sign”. Who is the lord? What is the function of “The lord” in frag.33? In this fragment for the reason that language is insufficient to comprehend reality, he needs the help of “The lord”. Although lucidity and simplicity of language renders multiple versions of accounts and incomprehension of mythical tradition, Heraclitus was unaware to understand the disjunction between language and reality. Whatever language either right or simplistic mortal language, there is a disjunction of reality and language which expresses reality. As there is no natural link between language and reality, there is no also naturally particular right language which is endowed to express reality. It is a matter of convention.

Among the polemic arguments towards myth and poets is personification of unobserved entities. There are extant fragments of Heraclitus that repeats the same thing (personification or symbolization). Fragment 44 is an example for symbolization of “Furies” as minister of justice or natural law and read like this, “The sun will not transgress his measures. If he does, the Furies [Erinyes-in Greek language], minister of Justice, will find him out.” The minister of Justice, Furies (Erinyes) will find anything out if it passes its limit or transgress the law of nature. The Furies is the Roman name of the three avengers of wrong doers of traditional Greek mythological gods (Daly, 2004:46). The term ‘Erinyes’ here, personifies the natural law- the law of regularity. Natural phenomena are subject to restraints of a measure. They are not “as mere empirical unchangeability”, and Justice, Dike in Greek language, personified as the daughter of Zeus in Hesiod’s theogony; “Dike governs not only among men, but she is also a norm of cosmos and punishes crossing the boundary” (Drozdek 2007:37). Beyond that the terms Dike and Erinyes are common in Greek mythology. In fragment 33 the term “Delphi” is mythical

element which is systematically incorporated in Heraclitus' philosophy. It is reasonable to look what Ancient Greeks and Romans do understand by the name of Delphi. It is the "most venerated shrine in ancient GREECE and probably the oldest. It lies on the remote slopes of Mount PARNASSUS, high above the Gulf of Corinth, which separates mainland Greece from the PELOPONNESUS." (Daly, 2004:39).

Heraclitus was interested to reevaluate the traditional mythology and anthropomorphism of god. The question, then, is that why he employed the personification of law of nature by Erinyes. Regarding this, he said that those who bear witness to the lies will be punished for correction for the sake of Justice. His fragment ran like this, "Justice will catch up with those who invent lies and those who swear to them." (frag.87). The other evidence for Heraclitus' deliberate use of mythical elements is frag.116, which says that "If it were not Dionysus for whom they march in procession and chant the hymn to the phallus, their action would be most shameless. But Hades and Dionysus are the same, him for whom they rave and celebrate Lenaia." In some mythical accounts of Greeks, Hades is the god of the dead and phallus is a genital picture of male that symbolized as the force of life. The festival of Dionysus is characterized by dancing or ritual madness and frenzied activities. Thus, the elements and acts of mythical tradition are common in Heraclitus' philosophy. But, they are not in the sense of full-blown mythological sense. In the same manner, they are not purely philosophical rather show the continuity of myth in philosophical treatises.

Another fragment bears reliable witness for Heraclitus' systematic use of mythical elements. In fragment 118 he said that the only truly wise "unwilling and willing to be spoken of by the name Zeus". Once again Heraclitus used the name of the mythical god Zeus. The interpretation of the fragment is highly connected with the essence of god that is divinity. The divinities of Zeus are being wise enough, intelligent etc. The divine nature of Zeus has enabled it to bring opposites into harmony. In fragment 54 there is also another indicative sentence that shows Zeus as the only wise god that "steers all things through all" personified the plan or natural force which is more or less universal because it steers all things through all. Thus, the ambiguous fragment, (frag.118), did not avoid mythical explanations and elements. Suggesting that Heraclitus responsibly and systematically use mythical elements and explanations in his treatise is just and right. In Hesiod's theogony, Zeus attributed as having the essence of intelligent and wisdom

(Woodard, 2009:86-87). Nevertheless, Heraclitus was anti-anthropomorphism of god. This is true at least in ideology and principle, but not practically. Practically, he did not expel the problem of symbolization of gods and natural law though he rejects the personal character of Zeus such as being male; father of other gods in the sense that the lord is unwilling to be spoken of by the name Zeus (ibid).

According to Heraclitus and his predecessor philosophers, the notable difference between myth and philosophy is the question of authority. Myth regarded as an authoritative and social conventional. Mythical authority is in the sense that, myth provides unquestionable sacred truths-devoted to deities and unverifiable truths (Hard, 2004:21-22). In ancient Greek mythology challenging gods and goddess was forbidden (ibid). There is also faulty assumption that induced alternative explanations, critics and modification of already existing explanations are absent in mythological tradition and this renders absence of spontaneous growth (ibid). In addition, there are no alternative solutions for the riddle of nature. In opposite, however, there is a claim that philosophy is authority-free enterprise. There is no obligation to take a given account of nature as universal and unchangeable.

Whereas, though Heraclitus brutally criticized the traditional myth as an authoritative never make his philosophy authority-free. In one of his fragment, he said that everyone must listen “not to me, but to the report [logos]” (frag. 36). After all, what are the assurances that he gives us to accept his assertion, “listen to the logos”. No guarantee is given for the listeners of logos. Unless he provides guarantees for his assertion to listen the logos, the question of authority once again becomes the character of his philosophy. With the connection of this, philosophical concept of dogmatism is an authoritative because according to this principle truth is unshakable and once established it is needless to modify or replace it. Kirk and Raven pointed out that “Heraclitus regarded himself as having access to, and vainly trying to propagate an all-important truth about the constitution of the world of which men are a part” (1957:188).

In Heraclitus’ philosophy fire, ever-living-fire, not visible fire is the cosmic principle. In ancient Greek myth there was an analysis that fire (aither) is found over the upper part of atmosphere. Aither had characteristic of divinity and believed that it is the home of Zeus because in mythology Zeus is known as the sky god. It is simple to understand that in Heraclitus’

philosophy fire is invisible and the purest essence of hot or heat energy. The phenomenal world is the manifestation of invisible ever-living-fire is the derivative of ancient Greek myth, “the warmest and driest soul” is “most intelligent”... “because in this state it becomes closest the pure cosmic fire which was divinity” (Guthrie, 1957:51). The soul is dry exhalation matches with Heraclitus’ belief the soul was made up of fire (frag. 113). Fire, in this case, is not visible fire, but invisible. Hence, it is absurd to think that fire as a prime stuff of the cosmos is Heraclitus’ own original concept.

The concept of god and ritual activities of Heraclitus’ philosophy is another point to argue that myth is never completely forced out from early Greek philosophy. The relationship between god and men in ritual activities does not escape the reasonable doubt. In fact, god in Heraclitus’ philosophy is not corporeal. He was interested in religious activities and cults. Then he acknowledged that god is day, night, hunger etc. (frag.123). There is still an obsession of representation and symbolization of god. God represents day, night, hunger, satiety etc. In addition, the question of divinity calls attention whether or not Heraclitus believes in divinity. It is possible to assume that according to Heraclitus, “every opposite can be expressed in terms of god: because peace is divine it does not follow that war is not equally divine” (Kirk and Raven, 1957:192). Then the concept of divinity is the invention of traditional mythology.

The conceptual framework of flux is considered as if original work of Heraclitus. He tells us that without perpetual flux the physical world could not come into existence (Geldard, 2000:63). Then change is not only fundamental for cosmos, but also necessary precondition for the existence of it. Everything is flux. He said that “All things are requital for fire; and fire for all things, as goods for gold and gold for goods” (frag.40). Any phenomenon is, therefore, the result of permanent change of fire and this is the reason for the existence of cosmos. Cosmos is the result of permanent change of fire (invisible fire). Hence, the physical world is the result of the transformation of fire into other modes of existence.

Nonetheless, the theory of flux is not original and new for Heraclitus. As similar philosophical ideas are found here and there in different works of different philosophers, the concept of flux was not alien for mythology. According to Plato, quoted in Kirk and Raven (1957:16), “... Homer”... said that “Okeanos begetter of gods and mother Tethys’ declared all things to be

offspring of flux and motion.”. Then the treatment of the idea of flux as entirely Heraclitus’ idea is obviously unfair. It is, rather better to regard that Heraclitus discovered nothing entirely new regarding the idea of flux. He was simply a proponent of the Homeric idea of flux. Drozdek asserts that “Heraclitus is merely the follower of Homer who “made all things the offspring of flux and motion”” (2007:27).

To sum up the subject so far, the dissatisfaction of early Greek philosophers by already existed myth stimulates them to reevaluate and criticize myth. The dissatisfaction is mainly because of linguistic deficiency to explain reality, symbolization, conventional and authoritative nature of myth, multiplicity of myth, the aim of myth, distorted meaning of myth, verification and devoid of logic, characterization of myth as supernatural belief and the assumption that irrationality is the essential nature of myth are interwoven reasons for early Greek philosophers to engage in the reevaluation of mythical traditions.

The inconsistency of mythical treatises, according to Heraclitus, must be rejected and replaced by the common agreed constant views of the world. To have such common agreed view of the world, he advised us, we have to know the character of logos, commonness and accessible for everyone. Then he tried to picture the world in different way with that of poets and predecessor philosophers.

The modification of myth and the change of mythical explanations by philosophical explanation are not by themselves problematic. The substitution of the view of the world is good if and only if the view of the world that being substituted is less accurate than the new one. The problem, however, is the distorted and caricatured views of myth are grossly incorporated in the philosophy of early Greek philosophers. Comparatively philosophy is more rational and has had good explanations about the world. But, it is not wholly rational. There are many unclear and inaccurate explanations in philosophy. Then the shift from myth to philosophy is appreciable. But, the shift must not be in the sense that the shift from totally irrational to wholly rational. The characterization of the movement from mythos to logos did not be regarded as the move from primitive to modern mentality.

It must be clear that myth is sometimes irrational, but irrationality is not the only essential feature for myth. But, I am not undermining that the shift from mythos to logos has nothing

better than the previous explanation of the world. The rise of philosophy is the beginning of scientific enterprise and explanation because it appeals at least verification. Nonetheless, my hostility is with the characterization of myth as totally irrational and the picture of philosophy which is portrayed by early Greek philosophers as wholly rational and as if it is pure from any mytho-poetic element.

Last but not least, I would state that philosophical myths have truth-seeking questions that the issues in philosophical myth are philosophy laden. Kevin Schilbrack argues in a few words persuasively that the study of myth has positive contribution for philosophy as follows:

In short, then, a philosophical contribution to the study of myths, though now moribund, waits on an appreciation, first, of the ways in which philosophical issues are woven into the theories at work in the social sciences and, second, of the ways in which philosophers of religion or of culture might broaden their studies to include narratives. The fact is that communities often tell stories that explain how the different forms of existence were established; stories that sanction a particular interpretation of history; stories that identify paradigmatic forms of proper behavior. Such stories can provide models of the lived world and of how best to operate within it, and philosophers can analyze and evaluate the truth and the rationality of these models. It can be expected that such stories will typically have an ideological function, but coming to terms with the interpretive and explanatory work of social scientists should strengthen and not eliminate a philosophy of myths. (2005:468)

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