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Learning from Heraclitus to Better Understand Genocidal Regimes

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Abstract

This article will argue that from Heraclitus' writings on fire, we can better appreciate how genocidal regimes use it against a target population. In doing so, I am not arguing that I have presented the proper reading of Heraclitus' thoughts. Rather, I have tried to approach the available Fragments in a way whereby we can learn from Heraclitus about the potentially genocidal dangers and consequences of fire. To do this, I will approach Heraclitus' Fragments through a framework provided by Martin Heidegger. Ultimately, I will argue that from Heraclitus' thoughts we can better comprehend how tyrannical regimes utilise fire to exact genocides.

Keywords: Heraclitus, Martin Heidegger, Legal Philosophy, Genocide, International Criminal Law

1. Introduction

The great pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (*fl. c.500 BC*) presented a series of cryptic and obscure thoughts on the constitution and underlying processes of the Universe. Although Heraclitus is most famous for his theory of flux and contingency, his thoughts on fire are just as insightful. Even though there are only a few surviving Fragments of Heraclitus' work, we can see that fire is an important constituent in his philosophy. For Heraclitus, fire is an omnipresent force which underpins the dynamics of the Universe. This article argues that from a closer inspection into Heraclitus' thoughts on the nature of fire, we will not only cultivate new perspectives into his philosophy but better understand a State's genocidal actions too.

This article has two objectives: first, I aim to show that we can systematically learn from Heraclitus' philosophy the various ways that a State can use fire to perform genocidal actions. By arguing this, I intend to expand Heraclitean legal theory beyond an analysis into his natural law theory (Singh, 1963), the organisation of justice (Shaw, 2019), or his thoughts on the strength and stability of the State (Schofield, 2015). Crucially, I argue that there are nuances within Heraclitus' thought on fire which have been missed by Heraclitean scholars particularly

in relation to how fire can be used to exact genocides.¹ My intention is not to show that Heraclitus was trying to create a logical approach to understand *how* regimes use fire to commit a genocide as this would involve a deeper textual, hermeneutic, and etymological analysis of his writings. Instead, I am arguing that we can *identify* that the way in which Heraclitus conceptualises fire is similar to the way that genocidal State's use it. Consequently, we can understand more deeply how genocidal regimes operate.

Looking ahead a little, in Section 2, I will outline three key problems that scholars face when examining Heraclitus. To avoid presenting another subjective interpretation of Heraclitus' writings, I shall adopt an approach similar to Martin Heidegger's. Heidegger acknowledges the Fragment(s) but rather than focusing upon etymology or translation, he emphasises what we can learn from them. In other words, the focus is placed upon what we can *learn from* Heraclitus rather than how we can *better learn* Heraclitus' philosophy.

We can see a broadly similar approach in modern Heraclitean scholarship. For example, David Shaw indicates that 'there is some uncertainty as to whether Heraclitus ever said that the universe is composed exclusively of processes rather than of things' (Shaw, 2019, p.166) Shaw is indeed correct in identifying that although this sentiment may be 'correct', Heraclitus himself 'did not hold that view in isolation' (Shaw, 2019, p.166). Furthermore, in Malcolm Schofield's brilliant analysis of Fragment 114 DK, we can see that the 'prime purpose of Heraclitus' saying is to offer a clue to the way humans may arrive at an intelligent understanding of things' (Schofield, 2015, p.66). In this article, by adopting a methodology akin to Heidegger's, we may too arrive at a more nuanced and insightful understanding of the way in which genocidal regimes utilise fire.

This contrasts with G.S. Kirk's examination, for example, who advocates a close and meticulous examination of the Fragments whilst dismissing subjective and hypothetical interpretations unless they are substantiated with references to other Fragments. Although there are genuine, worthy, and valuable academic merits to Kirk's method, his approach can stifle any lessons we can learn from Heraclitus' work because one's creative potential is sacrificed for the sake of contextual certainty which is impossible given that no scholar can ever know what Heraclitus truly meant in his work. Therefore, Kirk, and others who advocate a similar approach to him, can lead us to spend too much time focusing on the meaning and interpretation of the Fragments rather than what we can learn from them. This article wants to examine Heraclitus' Fragments and see whether there is anything we learn from this prophetic thinker concerning the actions of genocidal regimes.

This article's second objective is to expand on Charles H. Kahn's analysis of the verbs within Heraclitus' writings on fire (Kahn, 1983). There are two reasons why I have chosen Kahn to help me elaborate on Heraclitus' Fragments and how they facilitate a deeper appreciation of how the State can harness and deploy fire to carry out genocides. The first reason is that Kahn approaches Heraclitus's Fragments on fire with a view of understanding how it can mechanically operate rather focusing heavily upon the core and original meaning of the Fragments. Essentially, Kahn's approach is similar to Heidegger's in that it is focused on understanding Heraclitus and what we can learn from him rather examining the Fragments to better learn Heraclitean philosophy. The second reason is that Kahn provides a seminal insight into the language used by Heraclitus. In this article, I will expand on Kahn's analysis, and argue that from Heraclitus's thoughts, we can see that fire is an integral feature of the State's armoury. Furthermore, I argue that from Heraclitus' idea of the transformative and motivational nature of fire, we may even create a warning system to alert people when the State is either about to commit a genocide or is committing a genocide.

¹ To state that regimes use fire to commit genocides is a rather banal statement. In the twenty-first century, fire was used in the Bosnian genocide to cleanse the soil and force migration. In the Armenian and Cambodian genocides, fire was used to conduct mass burnings against the target population. During the Holocaust, fire was used to burn and dispose of dead corpses. In addition, we can see that fire has been used throughout history. If we restrict ourselves to Western Europe, then we can see that in England, there was the massacre of the Jewish people in Clifford Tower. In Ancient Athens, Alexander the Great burned the Palace of Persepolis. Furthermore, in the Hebrew Bible fire is integral. God is the Divine overseer when Moses encounters the Burning Bush. Not to mention, that Sodom and Gomorrah were set on fire and Elijah destroys the messengers of Ahaziah by fire. Within all these historical, cultural, and theological examples, fire is a common weapon of war. This, however, is the banality. I think, however, we can learn something more from Heraclitus's thoughts on fire which will re-envision how State's commit genocidal actions.

To achieve these two objectives, an analysis of Heraclitus' thoughts on fire is required. Speaking very broadly, one may identify three components to Heraclitus' thought on fire. These three components are distinct but they can mutually reinforce each other. Therefore, it is possible to place them under one umbrella especially given the limited number of Fragments available to us. This does not necessarily rule out valid philosophical and textual reasons for analysing each component separately. This article, however, does not intend to delve into such philosophical discussions. Consequently, I will not provide a distinct analysis of each of the components here. The reason is that the focus of this article is to better understand how genocidal regimes use fire against a target population after exploring Heraclitus' Fragments. To do this, I will treat each of the three components holistically whilst focusing on the thread that binds them together which is the lightning bolt.

The first component of Heraclitus' thought on fire is seeing it as the overseeing sun. Here, fire is used as an ever-watching tyrannical presence that can dispense justice against those that threaten the security of the State. Second, fire is seen as a transformative force. It is associated with flux, strife, and unity which can transform matter and states of affairs. Finally, fire is seen as a judge. Fire can be used to discriminate and separate to achieve certain objectives.

In this article, I will broadly examine the notion of the lightning bolt in the first component. Specifically, how the lightning bolt is harnessed by the State. Thereafter, I will explore how the State goes onto use the lightning bolt as a transformative weapon. Next, I will focus on how the transformative force of the lightning bolt is seen within the third component where fire becomes a judge. I argue that this thread in the three components can help us further understand how States can use fire to exact genocides.

The article shall be organised as follows: Section 2 will look at the issues surrounding the translation and interpretation of Heraclitus' Fragments. This Section will acknowledge the common problems in a study of Heraclitus' thought. Furthermore, it will advance how I shall proceed in my analysis of his writing and thinking on fire. In Section 3, with consideration of the drawbacks highlighted in Section 2, we shall explore the first two components of Heraclitus' thoughts on fire. This will involve looking at the relationship between fire and the lightning bolt. Section 3 will also examine how fire is harnessed by the State and how lightning is used as a transformative weapon. Section 4 will explore the third component of Heraclitus' thought on fire. In Section 4, we will explore fire as judge. In order to do this, we will explore Kahn's examination of the verbs surrounding fire and Heidegger's thought on fire and lightning in Heraclitus' writings. Thereafter, I shall critically apply this to concrete examples of genocide. By doing this, we will be in a position to better understand the subtle ways in which genocidal regimes use fire.

2. The Problems when Approaching Heraclitus' Thought – Adopting Heidegger's Framework

There are three problems which everyone faces when approaching Heraclitus' thought. First, there is problem of interpretation. This goes beyond a matter of hermeneutics and exegesis and is rooted in the fact that we have so little of Heraclitus' writings. In addition, the writing that we do have from Heraclitus are, generally, fragmented sentences. Therefore, situating the Fragments in an interpretative context is a difficult undertaking let alone pinpointing Heraclitus' true and authentic meaning behind his writing.

Second, there is the problem of translation. It is not only an obstacle for scholars to translate an author who is famously called "Heraclitus the Obscure" and "Heraclitus the Riddler", but also for the reader is reliant upon the translation, interpretation, and understanding of future thinkers. Notwithstanding that Heraclitus' 'obscurity is a calculated consequence of his style, which is usually compact and often deliberately cryptic... [and] is a formidable obstacle to understanding' (Hussey, 2005, p.378).

The final problem concerns the structure surrounding the Fragments themselves. This was recognised by ancient Greek philosophers such as Aristotle who held that it 'is difficult to punctuate Heraclitus' writings because it is unclear whether something goes with what follows or with what precedes it' (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1407b14-18). More recently, Jonathan Barnes summarises the problem:

It is hard to know how best to present the surviving fragments of Heraclitus' work. The problems of identifying them, of establishing the Greek text, and of translating the Greek into English are greater for Heraclitus than for any other Presocratic author... But there is a further problem: how to arrange the texts? Any arrangement insinuates some general interpretation of Heraclitus' thought, and every interpretation of Heraclitus' thought is controversial (Barnes, 2001, p.48).

To avoid these problems, this article shall not rely on a sole translation of Heraclitus' work. Rather, this article will adopt a comparative approach to the translations of Heraclitus' writings. Since there are so few Fragments of Heraclitus' writing available to us, I wish to adopt a broad study of the array of translations. The intention of such a methodology is that it will minimise the reliance of a particular translation of a Fragment. By adopting a wide and comparative approach to the translation of certain Fragments, we can start to learn from Heraclitus philosophy itself. For example, in Section 4 there is a study of Fragment 66 DK despite issues surrounding its authenticity and meaning. With Fragment 66 DK, I will present varying translations of the Fragment which could help us gather a sense of what Heraclitus was trying to convey and apply it to genocidal regimes.

2.1 Adopting Heidegger's Approach to Heraclitus' Fragments

Heidegger highlights that if an individual is to arrive at the 'inception' and 'constitutive core' of Heraclitus' thought then one must be 'if possible... true to the word' of Heraclitus when translating the Fragments (Heidegger, 2019, p.37). This involves going beyond a mere literal translative approach because the 'stakes are very high indeed' (Heidegger, 2019, p.37) regarding an ancient, fragmentary, and poetic thinker. Heidegger was shrewd enough to be aware that any translation, including his own, are dependent on the translator's interpretation which can themselves have a devastating impact upon the *word* of Heraclitus – *word* being here Heraclitus' true, authentic, and original meaningful expression. Heidegger writes:

Here *translation* becomes a kind of *transporting* to the other shore, one which is hardly known and lies on the opposite side of a wide river. Such a voyage is easily led astray, and most often ends in a shipwreck (Heidegger, 2019, pp.37-38).

This does not necessarily mean, however, that one should avoid this task. Instead, it is a task that should be undertaken with seriousness whilst acknowledging the natural obscurity of Heraclitus' thought and writing. For Heidegger, this obscurity is the result of Heraclitus writing in such an inceptual period of thinking about thinking or 'essential thinking' (Heidegger, 2019, pp.37-38). In fact, one must approach the Fragments with the conceptual and philosophical mindset that Heraclitus' sayings 'must remain as obscure as the originary word' (Heidegger, 2019, p.38) because that is their inherent nature – to be obscure because they are thoughts that involve a type of original and inceptive thinking. This inceptual thinking, according to Heidegger, necessitates obscurity and difficulty, but not impossibility, due to the historical era in which they were composed.

Indeed, for Heidegger, even if we were to possess Heraclitus' writings 'intact' and 'think-after the thinking of this thinker' then this would 'still be a difficult task' (Heidegger, 2019, p.22). This is because, according to Heidegger, 'even at the time when his writings were still accessible in their entirety, bore the epithet... "The Obscure"' (Heidegger, 2019, p.21). It is beyond the remit of this article to explore why Heidegger considers Heraclitus philosophically obscure. For the purposes of this article, however, it is important to recognise Heidegger's warning that we should not further shroud Heraclitus' obscurity. Heidegger writes:

When we attempt to enter into the thinking of Heraclitus, we in truth set out on dangerous ground. By means of a certain and entirely incorrect image – but one which, precisely owing to its incorrectness, appeals to the modern imagination – we could say that the region of the words of this thinker is like a minefield where the slightest misstep annihilates everything into dust and smoke. We should be careful not to turn essential obscurity into mere murkiness (Heidegger, 2019, p.28).

Therefore, Heidegger advocates that we should take considerable care at 'every step, and it is necessary to have a view of what is and is not possible' (Heidegger, 2019, p.28) when it comes to understanding Heraclitus' writings. This also applies when looking at the context of the Fragments and their arrangements. Heidegger writes:

Because the particular choice of passages quoted by the aforementioned authors [Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Hippolytus, etc.] is determined from out of their own unique paths of thinking or writing – paths that occur later than Heraclitus – we can only make out, through meticulous consideration of the position of these later writings, the context in which the quotation is embedded, but not the context from out of which it was torn. The quotations do not directly pass on to us what is essential in the writing of Heraclitus’s (i.e., the authoritative and organised unity of its inner structure) (Heidegger, 2019, p.29).

This is antagonistic to Kirk’s position where a closer and forensic examination of the text, which incorporates acknowledgement of wider Fragments and their origin in the writings of previous thinkers, is required. For Kirk:

[T]he present-day scholar who wishes to gain the clearest possible idea of what Heraclitus thought must resort in the first instance to the actual surviving fragments, and must base his reconstruction primarily upon these, using the ancient indirect evidence as ancillary. In these circumstances the fragments themselves must be subjected to the most careful possible examination of authenticity and content; hypothetical interpretations must not be given credence until they are adequately corroborated by other fragments (Kirk, 2010, p.30).

Instead, for Heidegger, when approaching Heraclitus, ‘we do not strive after a philological/historiographical reconstruction of the writings of Heraclitus’s; rather, we seek to prepare ourselves for the as-yet delivered word to meet us from out of its essential core’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.30). In other words, if our attention is fixated on the historical and philological realm of Heraclitus’ writings then we cannot ‘prepare’ for his ‘as-yet delivered word.’ In this article, I extend this Heideggerian framework and argue that we would miss vital lessons from Heraclitus’ writings which we could re-envision the actions of genocidal regimes when they use fire to target a specific population.

Furthermore, if we look at the problems that Heidegger identifies when it comes to the task of translating and interpreting Heraclitus then we can further distance ourselves from Kirk. Chief among the problems that Heidegger identifies is that when it comes to ‘mere literal translations, single words are confronted by almost mechanically lexical counterparts’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.37). Heidegger continues:

But mere words are not yet words in the fullest sense. Therefore, when translation seeks to be not only literal, but also true to the word, the words must receive their naming power and their structure from the already presiding fidelity to the unifying word (that is, to the totality of the saying) (Heidegger, 2019, p.37).

Yet, as we saw above, for Heidegger, the ‘stakes are very high indeed’ when it comes to Heraclitus’ writings because we are in ‘the realm of transportive translation’ where ‘all translations are poor, only more or less so’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.38). Heidegger acknowledges that his own work on Heraclitus is not exempt from ‘this judgment [sic]’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.38). This is for several reasons but I shall note three important ones here. First, for Heidegger, scholars should not ‘measure the inceptual language of the Greek thinker [Heraclitus] by means of the yardstick of subsequent Hellenistic grammar’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.18). Second, the writing and ‘word’ of Heraclitus writing ‘attends to “the obscure”’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.26). Finally, for Heidegger, not only does Heraclitus’ thinking necessitate obscurity but belongs to poetry. Heidegger writes that since:

The word of inceptual thinking... [is] within the region of essential history it is no coincidence that the history of thinking belongs first and foremost with that of poetry, then such a situation must have its peculiar explanation in the way and the form in which the inceptual word of Heraclitus speaks to us (Heidegger, 2019, p.33).

Heidegger goes onto write:

Translations undertaken in the realm of the vaunted word of poetry and of thinking, however, are always in need of interpretation, for they themselves are an interpretation. Such translations can either inaugurate the interpretation or consummate it. But it is precisely the consummating translation of

Heraclitus's sayings that must necessarily remain as obscure as the originary word (Heidegger, 2019, p.38).

This provides an underpinning for the methodology of this article. One salient motivation for adopting a Heideggerian framework is that provides a degree of flexibility to explore Heraclitus's writings without over-emphasising the authenticity of the thinker's sayings. Kirk's approach is certainly valid in preventing highly subjective and hypothetical interpretations of Heraclitus's writings. This article, like Heidegger's approach, does not advance a *true* or *authentic* insight into Heraclitus' sayings. Rather, this article wishes to use Heraclitus' writings to better understand how fire is used in genocidal regimes.

In addition, I will take into consideration Heidegger's warnings and shall avoid stretching Heraclitus' thoughts beyond their fragmentary limits. Instead, I shall build upon some of the insightful and prophetic assertions made by Heraclitus on fire. To do this, I will examine Kahn's analysis of Heraclitus' on fire in Section 4. As noted in Section 1, Kahn adopts the position of understanding and learning from Heraclitus rather than better learning Heraclitus. Consequently, Kahn's approach can be, to an extent, categorised in the same realm as Heidegger. Therefore, it would be consistent with the Heideggerian framework to utilise Kahn's analysis of the Fragments on fire when looking at the actions of genocidal regimes. Thereafter, we will be in a position to take some of the teachings of Heraclitus and better understand how fire can be used by genocidal regimes.

3. Fire in Heraclitus' Philosophy

For Heraclitus, fire's most important relationship is the one that it has with Logos which is the guiding force or will of the cosmos or Universe. Consequently, Heraclitus' ontological analysis of the Universe has been characterised as materially monist with fire being the 'ultimate reality... [as] all things are just manifestations of fire' (Graham, 2019). This material monist view of Heraclitus' philosophy on fire has drawn criticism. For example, Daniel Graham writes:

In [Heraclitus'] alleged version of monism, fire is the ultimate reality. Yet fire (as the ancients recognized) is the least substantial and the most evanescent of elemental stuffs. It makes a better symbol of change than of permanence... [Heraclitus'] appeal to fire seems to draw on material monism in a way that points beyond the theory to an account in which the process of change is more real than the material substances that undergo change (Graham, 2019).

It is in this idea of the 'process of change' that we can start to appreciate Heraclitus' thoughts on fire being used for genocidal purposes. Dennis Sweet writes:

In the natural world fire represents change inasmuch as it radically alters the things upon it feeds. Yet it also represents something unchangeable amid change. For while the shapes and the appearances of a fire are always changing, the fire retains its unity over time (Sweet, 1995, p.58).

The textual evidence for Sweet's contention and the process of change is found in the following Fragment of Heraclitus:

κόσμον (τόνδε), τὸν αὐτὸν ἀπάντων, οὔτε τις θεῶν, οὔτε ἀνθρώπων ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' ἦν ἀεὶ καὶ ἔστιν καὶ ἔσται πῦρ ἀεὶζῶον, ἀπτόμενον μέτρα καὶ ἀποσθεννύμενον μέτρα

The order, the same for all, was made neither by gods nor by humans, but it was always and is and will be fire ever-living – being lighted in measures and going out in measures (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 30, p.15).

The ordering, the same for all, no god nor man has made, but it ever was and is and will be: fire everliving, kindled in measures and in measures going out (Heraclitus/1983 (C. Kahn, Trans.), Fragment 37, p.45).

That which always was,/and is, and will be everliving fire,/the same for all, the cosmos,/made neither by god nor man,/replenishes in measures/as it burns away (Heraclitus/2003 (B. Haxton, Trans.), Fragment 20, p. 15).

Here, we can see that fire has multiple capabilities and capacities. Fire can disappear by burning away and yet reappear through ‘measures’ such as replenishment or even tension and strife itself², as heat, glow, movement, and friction can all be means whereby fire can spark into life. To where does it appear and from where does it re-appear? The word ‘order’ or cosmos is the ultimate unity and structural arrangement of the Universe itself. Fire can “go out” and merge with the Universe and its nature can be a part of being-itself. Fire through its light, kindling, and glow can appear, dis-appear, and re-appear with the Universe’s Being which provides a platform for fire to engage with life through action, movement, and, importantly for this article, as a weapon for the State.

The way in which fire can engage with life from the Universe’s Being is important to the construction of a legal system in the way it can be a judge and manifest as ‘lightning’ and the overseeing sun. It is the ‘jointure’ of fire (Heidegger, 2019, p.37), through lightning, where we can understand how regimes dispense their “justice” upon a group of people. In this way, Heraclitus writes: ‘Justice will seize the fabricators of lies and those who testify to them’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 28, p.15).

This section shall now examine in further depth how the ways in which fire is visualised by Heraclitus. First, there shall be an exploration of the lightning bolt. Heraclitus uses the lightning bolt to symbolise the authoritative ruler to dispense justice upon the ‘fabricators of lies and those who testify to them.’ Second, building upon the transformative quality of fire, we shall explore how the lightning bolt can be used to *transform* the world itself. Here, the authoritarian ruler who controls the lightning bolt can use it to initiate and execute their will in the world. Finally, we shall analyse exactly how this will is executed. This will involve the ways in which fire can engage with the world and how genocidal regimes exact violence upon specific categories of people.

3.1 The Lightning Bolt – The Harnessing of Fire, the Legal System, and Dispensing Justice

The role of fire as lightning is integral to Heraclitus’ political and legal theory. The cosmological and cosmogonical process of fire permeates into his legal system. The law, for Heraclitus, is ‘an institution...[it] is neither man-made nor conventional: it is the expression in social terms of the cosmic order for which another name is Justice (Dike)’ (Kahn, 1983, p.15). Fire is the underpinning dynamic energy, which orders the ‘cosmic order as a pattern of Justice’ (Kahn, 1983, p.15).

So, when Heraclitus writes ‘[a]ll things are requital for fire, and fire for all things, as goods for gold and gold for goods’, there is an implication that if an individual’s actions run contrary to the universality of the cosmos then there is a corresponding punishment to ensure justice (Dike). The fulfilment of this punishment is symbolised in Fragment 64 DK:

τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰακίζει κεραυνός

‘A thunderbolt steers all these things’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 64, p.64).

‘The lightning bolt steers everything’ (Heraclitus/2011 (E. Brann, Trans.), Fragment 64, p.65).

Keraunos, the lightning bolt, in its classical sense ‘belongs to Zeus’ who ‘hurls it as [a] weapon and wields it as [a] sceptre’ (Brann, 2011, p.65). The Fragment appears in Hippolytus’ writings who purports that Heraclitus holds the lightning bolt to mean ‘the eternal fire’ which is the cause ‘of the management of the Universe’ (Hippolytus, *Refutatio*, IX). It is ‘Zeus’s lightning, the rule function of Fire [which] comes to the fore as a destroying and enlivening force that marshals the transformative phases of the elements’ (Brann, 2011, pp.67-68).

² This can be cross-referenced with the following Fragments: ‘The way up and down is one and the same’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 60, p.27) and ‘What is in opposition is in agreement, and the most beautiful harmony comes out of things in conflict (and all happens according to strife)’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 8, p.5).

The lightning bolt being wielded as a sceptre indicates that it is a weapon of Justice dispensed by the ruling authority to manage and control the Universe. In this sense, the lightning bolt is the physical manifestation of the weapon of Justice. If one were to harness fire through lightning then this could be an act of Justice. Therefore, if an authority were to use *any* instrument that would display the force, efficiency, and vigour of lightning then it is a “just” form of violence. This can have tragic consequences whereby genocidal regimes can justify hideous actions such as the live burnings in Cambodia, the shootings in the Holocaust, or using ‘bombs and explosives... against Muslim[s] and Croatian[s] to wound and cause material damage’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 746-747). In Section 4, I shall elaborate on such examples to demonstrate how the State’s harnessing of fire can potentially manifest themselves in genocidal actions.

3.2 The Lightning Bolt – Transformative Power

In lightning bolt Fragment, the term ‘steer’ is utilised but the Ancient Greek *oiakizein* can also mean ‘guides’ or ‘manages.’³ This may indicate that the lightning bolt is fire guiding changes throughout the Universe. Sweet writes: ‘Fire is also suggested in the image of the thunderbolt, which guides and manages the world... This brings to mind Zeus, the personification of the eternal cosmic order, who used thunderbolts to control his enemies’ (Sweet, 1995, p.60). Ultimately, the steering of the lightning bolt is reflective of the transformative power of fire hence Heraclitus writes: ‘The earth is melted/into the sea/by that same reckoning/whereby the sea/sinks into the earth’ (Heraclitus/2003 (B. Haxton, Trans.), Fragment 23, p.17). In Section 4, we will see how fire’s transformative power to radically shift states of being (Heraclitus/2003 (B. Haxton, Trans.), Fragment 55, p.35) may provide a lesson as to how tyrannical regimes can hide genocidal atrocities. The lightning bolt exemplifies this ‘regularity of exchange, from fuel to smoke...and...those changes, and the variegated bodies that result from them, are in a sense due to the “steering” of fire’ (Kirk, 2010, p.356). The lightning bolt is the eternal initiator of the transformative changes in the world, which can be, depending on the circumstances, life-affirming or life-destroying.

From this analysis, the next logical progression is to explore how ‘the cosmic fire’ actually goes about fulfilling the lightning bolt’s motivating and guiding influence in the world. We can see this in Fragment 66 DK where fire becomes a judge.

4. Appreciating Heraclitus’ Thoughts on Fire and their Application to the Genocidal Actions of States – Fragment 66 DK

In the available Fragments of Heraclitus, one can see that there is a conception of fire *becoming* a judge in-itself. This is encapsulated in Fragment 66 DK:

πάντα γάρ, φησί, τὸ πῦρ ἐπελθὼν κρινεῖ καὶ καταλήψεται

The varying translations of this Fragment can provide a deeper insight into what Heraclitus’ may have been trying to explain and what we can learn from them. The Fragment has been interpreted and translated in the following ways:

‘Fire will come upon and lay hold of all things’ (Diels-Kranz, Trans.).

‘Fire, having come upon them, will distinguish and seize all things’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 66, p.29).

‘Fire of all things/is the judge and ravisher’ (Heraclitus/2003 (B. Haxton, Trans.), Fragment 26, p. 19).

‘Fire coming on will discern and catch up with all things’ (Heraclitus/1983 (C. Kahn, Trans.), Fragment 121, p.83).

³ The link of the lightning bolt to the ruler can be seen through Ancient Greek rhetoric, as Kahn explains: ‘The metaphor of the helmsman guiding the ship of state is as old as Greek lyric poetry. And the cognate metaphor for cosmic governance is probably as old as Greek philosophy’ (Kahn, 1983, p.272).

‘[F]ire having come upon them will judge and overtake all things’ (Heraclitus/2010 (Hippolytus in Kirk, Trans.), Fragment 65, p.349).

‘[F]ire having come suddenly upon all things will bring them to trial and secure their conviction’ (Heraclitus/2010 (G.S. Kirk, Trans.), Fragment 65, p.360).

‘Coming upon everything, the Fire will discriminate (also, “judge”) and take down (also, “condemn”) everything’ (Heraclitus/2011 (E. Brann, Trans.), Fragment 66, p.62).

‘All things, fire, ceaselessly advancing, shall (joining them) set out and lift away’ (Heraclitus/2019 (M. Heidegger, Trans.), Fragment 66, p.123).

For Kahn, Fragment 66 DK ‘connects’ the lightning bolt with ‘the cosmic fire’ (Kahn, 1983, p.272). Additionally, Heidegger uses the term ‘joining.’ For Heidegger, there is a ‘jointure’, particularly a ‘lightening jointure’ between the lightning bolt and fire where ‘beings appear and gleam forth’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.123). It is beyond the scope of this article to explore Heidegger’s thoughts on the mechanics of how the lightning bolt connects to fire. For Heidegger, in the ‘jointure of the conjoining beings, the adornment in which, and from out of which, beings gleam’ (Heidegger, 2019, p.124). He continues:

[L]ighting places into the light (and thus also produces and provides) the dark and what is opposite to the lightening. We often speak about jewelry [sic] being “flashy” and say that a precious stone itself “flashes”, but we do not consider the possibility that the flash itself is the originary adornment and unfolds as the precious (Heidegger, 2019, p.124).

In this flashing, the lightning bolt is starting to stretch through this appearing and gleaming and joining itself to other beings. In Section 4.1, we will see that in this process fire starts to become a judge through its mechanical operation. Here, we can start to pragmatically understand how fire not only operates but how a State can harness it for genocidal actions from Heraclitus’ sayings.

4.1 Kahn’s Framework on Fragment 66 DK

Kahn semantically analyses Fragment 66 DK. In particular, Kahn examines three verbs to explain fire’s ‘control over “all things” (*Panta*)’ (Kahn, 1983, p.272). First, there is *epelthon* (it comes upon). Second, *krinei* (it will discern or decide or distinguish them). Finally, *katalepsetai* (it will seize or catch hold of them all). With *katalepsetai*, Kahn writes that this ‘should mean that they will literally catch fire’ (Kahn, 1983, p.273). Essentially, for Kahn, ‘justice, judgment, and punishment of some sort are represented’ (Kahn, 1983, p.272) in the Fragment. With *epelthon*, here fire comes upon ‘or “attacks” all things’ (Kahn, 1983, 272). Kahn refers to one use of *epelthein* in Herodotus’s writings to mean an ‘advance upon an enemy’ (Kahn, 1983, 272). In this context, fire is an actively destructive tool of war. In relation to *krinei* and *katalepsetai*, the following quote, albeit lengthy, presents Kahn’s thought on the two verbs:

The universal approach of fire [in *krinei* and *katalepsetai*] is depicted as hostile and threatening, but not exclusively so. For *krinein* may mean to select someone for special honours, to judge a contest in his favour, as well as to judge him guilty or subject to punishment... According to the merits of the case, the seizure of a thing by fire will entail either its punishment or its reward, its promotion upwards to enhanced life or downwards to elemental death (Kahn, 1983, p.273).

Even with G.S. Kirk’s reservations that the ‘diction [of Fragment 66 DK] is un-Heraclitean and typically Christian’ (Kirk, 2010, p.360), we can still see targeting is present in the Fragment. This targeting is important when we consider that genocidal regimes specifically target a particular group and is underpinning Article 6 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court 2010.

Moving forward, if we build on Kahn’s semantic analysis into Fragment 66 DK then we can see two further points of interest: First, *krinei* can be translated as ‘judge’ but it can also be mean ‘distinguish’, ‘separate’, ‘discriminate’,

or 'pick out.' Second, within comparative translations, there is a temporal dimension to fire's judgment. In Sweet's translation, fire is said to have been 'having come upon them'; whereas in Diels' translation, fire 'will come upon.' In the former, the fire is seen as having *burned* those who have been separated or picked out. In the latter, fire is a punishment *to burn* those who have been separated or picked out.

In both contexts, fire is not only an instrument used to destroy things but it was used in a judging capacity. This is where temporality plays an important role when examining fire. In the instance where fire *as having come upon*, fire has been used in order to achieve an objective. In the instance where fire *will come upon*, a certain act has already been carried out which is either confirmed or hidden through fire. With both, the judgement against a target has been made but there are temporal sequences of fire which govern different sets of behaviour.

From this, we can now further delve into how Heraclitus conceives fire and see how this can operate in genocidal regimes. In the following sub-sections, we will see that fire is an important tool in genocidal regimes. In doing so, we may learn about the various ways that tyrannical regimes may use fire. To explore this further I will turn to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) or the Cambodia Tribunal. In these tribunals, we can see evidence of Heraclitus' thoughts on the use of fire by the State in genocidal actions. For example, if one were to turn to the case-law of the ICTY then one can see that fire was a predominant feature of the Bosnian genocide. The Trial Chamber II of the ICTY in *Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin* held that the 'Serb Forces committed wanton destruction in those villages, through the burning of personal documents and the torching of houses' (*Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin*, 2013, 1286). In addition, due to the sheer use of fire, Colonel Basara issued an order stating 'that soldiers "prone to committing genocide" against people "unable to conduct an armed struggle," and soldiers prone to burning and destroying buildings not used by the enemy for military purposes, had to be immediately discharged' (*Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin*, 2013, 728).

Before examining this in further depth, I want to establish that I am not using these examples to demonstrate that Heraclitus' thoughts on fire operate in genocidal regimes. Instead, I am using examples from the ICTY, ICTR, and ECCC to illustrate and strengthen my suggestion that from Heraclitus' thought we can learn how fire can be systematically controlled and used for genocidal purposes. From this, we could develop an early-warning system to alert us of potential genocidal action. It is here where we can start to map Kahn's framework regarding Heraclitus' thought into how fire manifests its control over 'all things'. Thereafter, we will be in a position to analyse the temporal dimensions in Heraclitus' thought on fire and better understand how genocidal regimes manipulate it.

4.2 Fire as Having Come Upon

In Sweet's *fire as having come upon*, fire is seen as having *burned* those that have been separated or picked out. In this context, fire has burned something to achieve an objective. There are several ways in which one can see fire being used as *having come upon* a target population to achieve a certain objective. Fire can come upon belongings, property, and people to achieve a specific objective. This specific objective can range from forced migration to persecution to the very act of genocide itself.

4.2.1 Fire as Having Come Upon Belongings

The Trial Chamber II of the ICTY in *Prosecutor v. Tolimir* examined the destruction of personal belongings and identification papers by fire (*Prosecutor v. Tolimir*, 2012, 873). The case explored two incidences where Bosnian Serb forces grouped Muslim men and burned their identification cards and personal belongings. In one incident in Potočari, the Bosnian Serb forces burned identification cards and personal belongings and transported the Muslim men to Bratunac. The other incident, which occurred in Nova Kasaba, Bosnian Serb forces burned personal belongings and then killed the Bosnian Muslim men.

Župljanin notes that *Tolimir* held that although there was no ‘militarily justifiable reason for the burning of these belongings’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 873), the acts did not constitute to the ‘equal gravity’ of the crimes stipulated in Article 5 of the Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia 2009. This is because the burning of ID cards and personal belongings do not fall within Article 5’s jurisprudential ambit of the ‘destruction of the livelihood of a certain population’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 873-874). The burning of the personal belongings and ID cards ‘constituted an element of the implementation’ of the ‘greater plan to eliminate the existence of the Bosnian Muslim men from the region’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 874). Consequently, the acts of burning in these incidences did not constitute an act of persecution pursuant to Article 5(h) of the Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia 2009. This decision, however, does not rule out that burning of IDs and personal belongings can constitute an act of persecution. If fire is seen *as having come upon*, then the specific objective of destroying the livelihood of a certain population can be achieved. The Trial Chamber II of the ICTY heard an example where burning an individual’s car constituted destroying their livelihood as it was ‘an indispensable and vital asset to the owner’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 874).

In Heraclitean terms, this burning goes to the ‘root’⁴ of the livelihood of the population and amounts to persecution. Consequently, if there is an intention to ‘prevent a population from returning to their homes following their forcible transfer or deportation’ (Prosecutor v. Tolimir, 2012, 874) by burning their identification cards and personal belongings then it can constitute an act of persecution. Fire is used to burn belongings to achieve several objectives such as forced migration or persecution. From Sweet’s translation of Fragment 66 DK, Heraclitus’ fire *as having come upon* is akin to this act of persecution from genocidal regimes.

4.2.2 Fire as Having Come Upon Property

In the ICTY, it was heard that after the forced migration of the target population, Serbian ‘forces were... explicitly ordered to burn all the houses to prevent the owners from returning’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1435). Here, fire *has come upon* the target population to achieve the objective of permanently displacing a group of people as the homeowners were unable to return because homes were burned. Here, fire has *burned* the target population by destroying their homes and in doing so they are forced to migrate. Here, as Heraclitus writes, ‘Every animal is drive to pasture with a blow’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D.Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 11, p.7).⁵

Fire *as having come upon* to achieve the objective of forced migration is not an isolated occurrence. In Trnovo, property was burned, and, after the death of woman, the population fled to another village. Fire was used here to burn in order to migrate the people (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 747). Furthermore, *Župljanin* referenced examples where ‘detainees knew they could not go home because smoke could be seen in the direction of their houses; everything was thought to have been burned or looted. ST065 [the witness] returned to his house in 1999 finding it without a roof, doors, or windows—its walls blackened by fire’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 634). This is not unique to the Bosnian genocide for in the Cambodian genocide the homes of the villagers within the Khmer Rouge controlled territory had their homes ‘burned down to stop them returning’ (Case 002/01, 2013, 105). Here, fire has come upon to achieve the objective of forced migration which is achieved by destroying their homes.

4.2.3 Fire as Having Come Upon People

In addition, fire can be used to achieve specific objectives of hunting and killing people. In *Župljanin*, it was heard that in the town of Čarakovo, ‘the houses were burned down, and the soldiers pursued the inhabitants into the woods “as if it were some kind of a hunt”’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 557). In other

⁴ This can be cross-referenced to Heraclitus’ idea that the thunderbolt can strike to the ‘root’ of ‘everything’: ‘One thunderbolt strikes root through everything’ (Heraclitus/2003 (B. Haxton, Trans.), Fragment 28, p. 19).

⁵ Interestingly, the word ‘animal’ or *herpeton* can refer to animal on four feet and, as Dennis Sweet indicates, in the ‘Homeric sense it was used by the gods when referring to humans’ (Sweet, 1995, p.7). The animal, or human (animal), is driven from one land to another by a ‘blow.’ There are harrowing and tragic photographs from, for example, the Armenian, Bosnian, and Rwandan genocides, where people are seen moving from land on their hands and feet. They are the manifestation of Heraclitus’ idea that the human animals can be driven from land with a blow.

instances, the burning of homes led to the “hunt” and killing of ‘130 women, children, and elderly persons who were not able to get away’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1208). The use of fire to forcibly migrate a population can also be seen in the Cambodian genocide. The people of Kampong Cham in 1973 had their houses ‘set on fire’ by Khmer Rouge soldiers in order to transfer the people ‘to the forest’ (Case 002/01, 2013, 107). In this context, we can see the horrific reality of fire being used to kill people and achieve genocidal objectives. Here, fire *has come upon* the bodies of the people to execute them.

4.3 Fire Will Come Upon

In DK’s *fire will come upon*, fire is set in order to burn thus achieving an objective. In Section 4.1, we saw that this translation indicates that a certain act has already been carried out which is either confirmed or hidden through fire. In this context, there are *two* fires. The first fire, the primary fire, is a tangible burning (such as book and property burning) and the secondary fire is the indirect fire aiming to achieve another objective (such as the destruction of thought and conscience). With *fire will come upon*, the fire can hide further motivations of the actor beyond the primary fire. There are instances where a direct act using fire has occurred but this accompanied by a further indirect intentional use of fire. The sheer transformative force of the fire means that not only will property be destroyed but other qualities such as thought and conscience will be burned too.⁶

There are several ways in which this can occur. For example, fire *will come upon* buildings to burn the religious thoughts of the target people. Additionally, there can be instances where fire has been permitted to rage against a specific people but the fire was deliberately not extinguished in order to achieve another objective such as the destruction of religious thought.

4.3.1 Fire Will Come Upon Buildings and the Religious Thoughts of the Target Population

In *Nyiramahuko*, the ICTR heard evidence that a church was ‘set...on fire’ (The Prosecutor v. Pauline Nyiramahuko, 2015, 2985). This is Rwandan incident can be cross-referenced with *Župljanin* where a church was burned down in addition to businesses and homes which belonged to Muslims (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1203 and 1238). Furthermore, the Mosques in Drinsko (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1370), Dobrun (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1370), and Radžići (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1627) were set alight and burned down. In Drinsko, the Minaret was decapitated, which is especially pertinent as that is where the call to prayer occurs. Here, the burning paved the way for actions which pierced the root of the religious spirit of the target population.

In *Župljanin*, it was heard that Serbian Forces burnt the Hadži Paša (wooden) mosque in an ‘organised and premeditated’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1061) attack in the ‘predominately’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1063) Muslim town of Brčko in 1992. This ‘organised’ attack also extended to the deliberate orders to firefighters to not extinguish the fires (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1063) which were causing further destruction to the targeted population’s property whilst protecting the medical centre that was housing Serbian Forces’ soldiers (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1061) and ‘any Serb-owned homes surrounding it’ (Prosecutor v. Mićo Stanišić Stojan Župljanin, 2013, 1063). The burning of the houses and religious buildings was a direct use of fire but the prevention of subsequent burning potentially hides a deeper motivation for destruction of the livelihood, thought, conscience, religious beliefs of the target population.

⁶ One area that this article has not explored is in relation to fire’s use on dead bodies. From Heraclitus’ thoughts, we can potentially see how fire can have a transformative effect on the victim’s bodies. In the context of fire *will come upon*, there is another example of a secondary, indirect fire which can be seen in the burning of bodies to hide the evidence of mass killing. Heraclitus writes: ‘Fire penetrates the lump of myrrh, until the joining bodies die and rise again in smoke called incense’ (Heraclitus/2003 (B. Haxton, Trans.), Fragment 36, p.25). Fire not only transforms the living into the dead but the dead into ‘smoke.’ We can see examples of this in Nazi Germany with the haunting images of burning smoke rising from the burnings at Auschwitz and Treblinka. Unfortunately, it is beyond the remit of this article this dimension of Heraclitus’ thoughts on transformation. The reason for this is that it will take parameters of this article into Heraclitus’ thoughts on disgust and smell (see Fragments: ‘Corpses should be thrown out more than dung’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 96, p.41) and ‘Souls smell things in Hades’ (Heraclitus/1995 (D. Sweet, Trans.), Fragment 98, p.43).

The orders to fire-fighters here in the Bosnian genocide can also be seen in Nazi Germany prior to the Second World War. During Kristallnacht, fire was not a direct instrument of war but an indirect weapon conveying the Nazis' 'fury on Jews' (Mann, 2013, p.185) In the events of Kristallnacht, Jewish property was set alight but police personnel and fire-fighters were prevented from combating the flames until they threatened Aryan property. Once again, the barriers placed upon the fire-fighters was an indirect weapon used to destroy the Jewish people's homes and emphasise their separation from society.

It could be said that preventing the fire from being extinguished is a deliberate act of, as Heraclitus writes, striking to the 'root' of the people like the lightning bolt. There is not a confirmation of the act, as the property has already been set alight. Instead, the property is left to burn despite the potential for it being salvaged thus the true intention of destruction is hidden by preventing the fire-fighters from combating the flames. This destruction or the letting of property to burn is a hidden attack upon the thought and beliefs of the target population.

4.3.2 Fire Will Come Upon Buildings to Marginalise and Control the Target Population

Now, if one were to theoretically invert one of Heraclitus' Fragments then one may be able to ascertain a unique perspective as to how fire is used by leaders to hide various layers of motivation. Heraclitus writes: 'One must quench violence quicker than a blazing fire' (Heraclitus/1983 (C. Kahn, Trans.), Fragment 104, p.75). Kahn holds that this Fragment is 'negative' and where fire is 'a purely destructive force' (Kahn, 1983, 241). He continues to state that the Fragment 'may simply reflect the fact that Heraclitus is exploiting the familiar conceit 'to quench *hybris*' (Kahn, 1983, 241). This goes beyond 'the traditional warning against *hybris*' and reflects the 'a more distinctly Heraclitean thought' (Kahn, 1983, 241). Kahn elaborates:

As an enemy attack on the city wall threatens all the inhabitants of the city, so a house on fire threatens the whole neighbourhood with destruction. And just as the defence of the civic law is seen... to be as vital as the defence of the wall, so here the suppression of *hybris* – the suppression of that violence which disregards the law and endangers the community – is seen to be more urgent than the quenching of a fire raging out of control (Kahn, 1983, p.241).⁷

We can learn from Kahn's analysis that potential *hybris* behaviour must be extinguished *before* fire comes upon it. In the above Bosnian genocide and Nazi Germany examples, the mere behaviour, thought, and presence of the target population must be quenched before the fire is extinguished. It is the suppression and destruction of the *hybris* of the target population which will permit the extinguishment of the fire.

In these examples, however, there is an inversion of Heraclitus' Fragment. In the Bosnian and Nazi Germany examples, the fire stemmed from the explosions and shelling of the targets' property which was then deliberately left to burn. The fire was used to quash *hybris* rather than being an independent blazing situation which Heraclitus' Fragment suggests. So, herein lies an inversion analysis: there are *two* fires – the first is the "lightning bolt" through the shelling and torching of homes to quash the *hybris* of the target population and until that is complete, the secondary fire of the burning homes will not be extinguished.

4.3.3 Fire Will Come Upon Books and the Religious Thoughts of the Target Population

Further demonstration of the use of the fire striking to the 'root' of the thought and conscience of the people can be seen in book burning. In this context, there is a secondary fiery transformation. The first is the book burning with the subsequent secondary *to burn* the thoughts and beliefs of the selected people. The book burning, for example, leads the way for another fire that *will come upon* the mind of the people. In Cambodia, for example, there was the burning of books and libraries (Hinton, 1998; Jackson 2014, p.136). In Nazi Germany, there were public displays of book burning at universities. The use of primary fire, the book burning, is to not only destroy the ideas of a population; but also allow the fire *to burn* potential future thinkers as a deterrent.

⁷ Kahn is linking his analysis to the Fragments 'The people must fight for the law as for their city wall' (Heraclitus/1983 (C. Kahn, Trans.), Fragment 65, p.59) and 'Speaking with understanding they must hold fast to what is shared by all, as a city holds to its law, and even more firmly. For all human laws are nourished by a divine one. It prevails as it will and suffices for all and is more than enough' (Heraclitus/1983 (C. Kahn, Trans.), Fragment 30, p.43).

5. Conclusion

To conclude, I have suggested in this article that we can better learn about genocidal regimes by turning to the sayings of Heraclitus. Although there are significant issues surrounding the interpretation and translation of Heraclitus' writings, this does not mean that we should not attempt to learn from this brilliant thinker. Therefore, I advocated for a Heideggerian approach to Heraclitus' writings which, in conjunction to Kahn's analysis, can help us better understand how fire can be harnessed and wielded by humanity can lead to tragic consequences.

In doing so, I am not arguing that I have presented *the* proper reading of Heraclitus' thoughts. Rather, I have tried to approach the available Fragments in a way whereby we can learn from Heraclitus about the potentially genocidal dangers and consequences of fire. In other words, from Heraclitus' writings we can start to re-envision the actions of genocidal regimes through their use of fire. If we learn the lessons from this visionary, prophetic, and ancient thinker then we may further develop an early-warning system which could save millions of lives.

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