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## CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE IDEA OF ENMITY IN EARLY GREEK PLURALISTS AND SOPHISTS: FROM THE HEAVENLY TO THE EARTHLY

*The article examines the conceptualization of enmity in the works of early Greek pluralists and sophists, emphasizing its philosophical, social, and rhetorical dimensions. It is demonstrated that enmity in the thought of thinkers such as Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Antiphon, Gorgias, and Thrasymachus is not merely an expression of personal hostility but a structural component of cosmological, ethical, and political discourse.*

*Empedocles' cosmogonic model, in which **Strife i.e. Enmity** (**Νεῖκος**) and **Love** (**Φιλία**) shape the formation and dissolution of the cosmos, is analyzed in comparison with Anaxagoras' interpretation of separation and ordering through **Nous** (**νοῦς**, **Intellect**). It is argued that both thinkers reflect the ancient Greek understanding of opposition as a dynamic force governing reality. The study of sophistic texts highlights how enmity was adapted into legal and rhetorical argumentation, particularly in Antiphon's critique of law as being "hostile to nature" (*πολέμια τῇ φύσει*) and in Thrasymachus' reflections on power and inequality.*

*The research reveals that enmity in early Greek thought functioned both as a cosmic principle and a societal phenomenon, forming the foundation for later philosophical and political theories. The philological analysis of key terms such as **Νεῖκος**, *ἐχθρός*, *πολέμιος*, underscores the conceptual fluidity of enmity across different intellectual traditions. Ultimately, the study contributes to the understanding of how ancient thinkers viewed conflict not as an anomaly but as an essential mechanism of order, shaping ethical and political thought from the archaic to the classical periods.*

**Keywords:** enmity, early Greek philosophy, ancient Greek literature, sophists, pluralists, political philosophy, classical philology.

The concept of enmity remains highly relevant in the contemporary world, marked by numerous conflicts, wars, and confrontations at

interstate, ethnic, and ideological levels. Analyzing the early Greek conceptualization of enmity among pluralists and sophists allows for the identification of the philosophical roots of modern understandings of contradiction, struggle, and their role in societal development. A reconsideration of these ideas may contribute to a deeper comprehension of the causes and possible means of resolving conflicts by taking into account historical experience and philosophical approaches to the problem.

In the context of classical philology, the study of enmity in early Greek thinkers offers new opportunities for interpreting the texts of influential intellectuals of antiquity. Particularly significant is the examination of how the concept of struggle as the foundation of being evolved within philosophical systems and its role in shaping political, ethical, and rhetorical models of thought in the ancient world. This research enables the refinement of methodological approaches to the analysis of classical texts and reveals new dimensions of ancient philosophy in the framework of contemporary scholarly discourse.

The scholarly contributions of Western historians of philosophy and classical philologists W. Allan (Allan, 2020), R. Beekes (Beekes, 2010), M. Bonazzi (Bonazzi, 2020), P. Chantraine (Chantraine, 1999), C. Ferella (Ferella 2024), M. Fongaro (Fongaro, 2022), V. Hladký (Hladký, 2017), S. Kilgallon (Kilgallon, 2019), K. Lampe (Lampe, 2020), K. Stefou (Stefou, 2013), D. Wolfsdorf (Wolfsdorf, 2023). have formed the foundation of our research. However, it should be noted that their works lack a comparative analysis of the concept of enmity in early Greek philosophy.

Thus, the objective of this article is to investigate the conceptualization of enmity within the philosophical frameworks of early Greek pluralists and sophists from the perspectives of classical philology and the history of philosophy, with a particular focus on textual analysis and the historical-philosophical context.

Accordingly, the research aims to address the following tasks:

- 1) to examine how the concept of enmity reflects the socio-political realities of ancient Greece and contributes to the formation of ethical and rhetorical models;

2) to identify the philological features of terminology associated with the concepts of struggle and enmity and to conduct a textual analysis of key sources in which the idea of enmity is articulated by early Greek pluralists (Empedocles, Anaxagoras) and sophists;

3) to trace the historical-philosophical development of the idea of enmity and its connection with other key concepts of early Greek philosophy, such as harmony, cosmos, and order.

### ***Philosophical and philological dimensions of the idea of enmity in early Greek pluralists***

It is essential to note that the concept of enmity in early Greek philosophy reflects the complex socio-political realities of ancient Greece, characterized by internal contradictions and external conflicts between poleis. The study of terms related to struggle/dispute (ἔρις, μάχη) and enmity/hatred (νεῖκος, φθόνος) not only enables the reconstruction of philosophical ideas but also provides insight into the cultural and linguistic features that shaped their development. These and other lexical items were not merely descriptive of cosmogonic processes but also served as reflections of the political and social structures of the Greek world. They played a crucial role in shaping notions of power, justice, interpersonal relations, and ethical orientations.

In early Greek philosophy, the concepts of struggle and enmity occupy a central place, particularly within the philosophical frameworks of pluralists and sophists. Their approach to understanding these phenomena reflects both the broader socio-political context of antiquity and the evolution of philosophical terminology. Therefore, the textual analysis of key fragments from the works of Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and representatives of the sophistic tradition aims to uncover the specific usage of terms related to struggle and enmity, their function within philosophical constructs, and their interconnections with other concepts.

As is well known, Empedocles' philosophy is based on a cosmogonic model in which two opposing forces – Love (Φιλία) and Strife (Νεῖκος) – govern the formation, existence, and destruction of the world. It is evident that the primary foundation of the early Sicilian Greek thinker's reflections is likely *Theogony* by Hesiod.

Indeed, it is in this work that we encounter the personification of enmity – *Neikos*, who is described as the daughter of Night (*Teog.* 229), as well as the cosmogonic views of Xenophanes of Colophon (8 *R30 LM*). Notably, in the epic poet's work, the term *νεῖκος* appears in both a global and an individual sense, indicating its dual role in conceptualizing conflict both within the cosmos and in human affairs (Kilgallon, 2019, p. 14).

The etymological analysis of *νεῖκος* points to its roots in the notions of division and opposition, which are reinforced by the contextual use of related terms, such as *φθόρος* ("destructive force"). The term *νεῖκος* derives from the Proto-Indo-European verb *neyk-* ("to attack, to start violently"), which is cognate with Lithuanian *ap-nikti* ("to attack"), *su-nikti* ("to attack"), Latvian *nikns* ("bad, gloomy, vehement"), Albanian *nis*, and possibly Ukrainian *в-никнути* ("to penetrate, to infiltrate") and *про-никнути* ("to penetrate"). However, it should be noted that despite phonetic similarities, *νεῖκος* likely has no common etymological origin with the Greek term for "victory" (*Νίκη*) (Chantraine, 1999, p. 754–755; Beekes, 2010, p. 1022).

In the fragments of Empedocles' poem *On Nature*, *Νεῖκος* functions not merely as a negative force but as an essential component of the cyclical process of cosmic development. Thus, in the presocratic thinker's system, this term is used not only in the sense of "enmity" but also as "separation" or "division". This meaning arises from Empedocles' concept of the cyclical alternation of the phases of Love and Strife. In certain fragments (e.g., 31 *B 17 DK*), it is emphasized that Strife disrupts the bonds between the elements (*ριζώματα*), separating them and causing chaos. This characterization reflects not only cosmological struggle but also the conflicts among different social groups within the *polis*, where a balance between opposing interests was essential for stability. Empedocles' concept of harmony, achieved through the opposition of Love and Strife, resonates with the political reality of his time, in which alliances and competition between *poleis* fostered both development and conflict.

With reference to the divine nature of the two powers, scholars generally argue that we only have straightforward evidence for the divine nature of Love, who is frequently called by the names of

traditional goddesses such as Aphrodite, Cypris and Harmonia. Strife, on the other hand, is not explicitly mentioned as a deity in our extant fragments. Moreover, the gender of Strife's name in Greek (Νεῖκος) is neuter, which, as V. Hladký points out, "already on the level of grammar, makes it distinct from the other, more personal, masculine or feminine gods that appear in Empedocles" (Hladký, 2017, p. 4). Nonetheless, "we do have some Empedoclean verses in which Strife is referred to by the names Kotos and Eris (B 21.7 (= EMP D 77a.7 LM) and B 20.4 (= EMP D 73.305 LM)). Additionally, traditional gods such as Ares and Kydoimos (see B 128.1 (= EMP D 25.1 LM) with n.8 above) may also be taken as two names to indicate Strife, just like Cypris and Aphrodite are names for Love or, assuming they are rather 'manifestations of the cosmic super-god Strife', they can still be interpreted as signs of Strife's divine nature. Be that as it may, Love's and Strife's divinity is emphasized in B 59.1 (= EMP D 149.1 LM) where they are both referred to as δαίμονες" (Ferella 2024, p.201).

It is particularly important to highlight the role of metaphors in Empedocles' texts. For instance, in fragment *31 B 35 DK*, the struggle between Love and Strife is represented through images of dance, battle, and marriage. These metaphors reflect both physical and social processes, underscoring the broad semantic spectrum of these terms.

In the preserved fragments of Anaxagoras' reflections, the idea of separation and ordering through *Nous* ("νοῦς", Intellect) indicates the necessity of rational governance, mirroring tendencies toward centralization of power in ancient city-states. Although enmity is not personified in his thought, it remains an integral part of the cosmic process, in which conflict and movement serve as driving forces. This philosophical model draws analogies with the political realities of ancient Greece, where constant rivalry between *poleis*, as well as internal conflicts within them, required rational mechanisms for achieving order.

In Anaxagoras' philosophy, struggle and enmity do not take on personified forms as they do in Empedocles, yet terminology related to separation and opposition also plays a significant role. The central concept of *Nous* ("νοῦς", Intellect) imposes order upon chaos through an act that can be interpreted as a struggle of opposites. In fragment

59 B 12 DK (which Simplicius quotes in his commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*), Anaxagoras describes the process of separating elements from the primordial mixture (μύγμα) through "forces" that may be seen as analogous to Strife in Empedocles (Fongaro, 2022, p. 2).

A lexical analysis of Anaxagoras' texts highlights the key role of verbs denoting movement and separation (χωρίζω, διαριθμένω) (25 D, 25, 70 LM; 59 A62 DK). Although Anaxagoras does not use the terms *Neĩkos* or *Φθόνος*, his description of cosmic formation processes allows for parallels to be drawn with Empedocles' system. However, in Anaxagoras, struggle is more structured and rationalized, reflecting the general tendency of his philosophy toward explanation through causal principles (*αἰτία*).

A textual analysis of the fragments of Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and the sophists reveals that the terminology of struggle and enmity is marked not only by conceptual diversity but also by stylistic complexity. Empedocles employs metaphorical language to create vivid images of cosmic opposition, whereas Anaxagoras emphasizes an analytical description of processes. The sophists, in turn, extend the notion of struggle beyond nature, adapting it to social and political contexts.

An analysis of the lexicon in Presocratic fragments further reveals that the concepts of struggle and enmity share common features across different philosophical systems, particularly their association with movement, change, and opposites. At the same time, their semantic scope expands significantly depending on the general methodology and objectives of each thinker, laying the foundation for the further evolution of these ideas in philosophy.

A philological examination of the terminology of struggle and enmity among early Greek pluralists and sophists attests to its fundamental significance for ancient thought. Empedocles and Anaxagoras developed cosmogonic models in which these concepts function as primary driving forces. The sophists, in turn, provided them with social and ethical dimensions. The study of terms such as *Neĩkos*, *ἐχθρός*, *πολέμιος*, illustrates their transition from a natural to a social context, underscoring the significance of struggle and enmity as universal categories in ancient philosophy.

Finally, it is worth noting that the concept of enmity also found expression in Greek literature, particularly in tragedy. Sophocles and Euripides explored both internal and external conflicts, bringing ethical dilemmas to the forefront. For instance, in *Antigone*, Sophocles presents the struggle between personal loyalty and state laws, forcing the heroine to face a moral choice. Euripides, in *Medea*, portrays how internal enmity and wrath can dismantle social bonds, while simultaneously raising questions about the limits of justice and revenge.

Thus, the concept of enmity in ancient Greece not only reflected the realities of political and social life but also provided a foundation for the development of ethical and rhetorical models. Its universality allowed the integration of ideas of struggle into various spheres of life, from politics to morality, ensuring a harmonious progression through conflict and its resolution.

### ***The Sophists: a socio-political explication of the idea of enmity***

In the works of sophists such as Antiphon, Gorgias, Protagoras, Prodicus, and Thrasymachus, terminology related to struggle and hostility is frequently employed to explain social and political phenomena. Consequently, this group of early Greek thinkers made a significant contribution to political and ethical theory by integrating the concepts of conflict and enmity into their analysis of human nature and social relations.

However, it is particularly important to highlight Antiphon's reflections, as he is virtually the only sophist who examines the opposition between justice and nature as such. Criticism, which occurs in P. Oxy. 1364 and which seems to be Antiphon's principal concern is that conventional justice is "hostile" to nature. "The examination (σκέψις) is being conducted for the following reason: many of the things that are just according to convention (τῶν κατὰ νόμον δικαίων) are hostile (πολεμῖως ... κεῖται) to nature (τῇ φύσει)....The way in which Antiphon views conventional justice as hostile to nature is made most explicit in the following passage, also from...One would find that many of the things mentioned are hostile to nature (πολέμια τῇ φύσει), for there is present in them more pain (ἀλγύνεσθαι), when less is possible; less pleasure (ἥδεσθαι),

when more is possible; and suffering (κακῶς πάσχειν) when it is possible not to suffer" (37 D 38 LM).

So, conventional justice is hostile to nature insofar as it enjoins conduct that is more harmful to the agent or at least less beneficial than what the agent, unconstrained by convention, could achieve. It can be said that Antiphon occupies a marginal position between the pluralists and the sophists. On the one hand, he does not conceive of enmity as one of the fundamental principles of the world's existence, yet on the other, he does not examine this idea within the framework of political processes and phenomena of his time (Wolfsdorf, 2023, p. 308).

In this fragment, the semantics of the term "enemy" (πολέμιος) within the framework of classical philology acquires a distinctive philosophical dimension, as Antiphon applies it not to a personal or political adversary but rather to the antagonistic relationship between conventional justice (τὰ κατὰ νόμον δίκαια) and nature (φύσις). The phrase *πολεμίως κεῖται* (lit. "is set in a hostile manner") suggests not merely opposition but an intrinsic enmity, a structural conflict wherein justice as defined by human convention is positioned in direct opposition to the natural order. This usage of *πολέμιος* extends beyond its more traditional military or political connotations and enters the realm of philosophical critique, where the laws imposed by human societies are depicted as restrictive, artificial constructs that suppress the fundamental tendencies of nature.

The parallel construction in *πολέμια τῇ φύσει* reinforces this dichotomy, suggesting that conventional justice does not merely deviate from nature but actively works against it, imposing unnecessary suffering (κακῶς πάσχειν), increasing pain (ἀλγύνεσθαι), and diminishing pleasure (ἥδεσθαι). By employing the language of hostility and conflict, Antiphon casts human law not as a neutral regulatory mechanism but as a force of oppression that subjugates the individual's natural inclinations. This usage aligns with the broader Sophistic discourse on the tension between *νόμος* and *φύσις*, where the former is often portrayed as an artificial constraint that inhibits natural freedom. The deployment of *πολέμιος* in this context thus functions as a polemical strategy, amplifying the rhetorical force of Antiphon's argument by framing the conventional legal system as



not merely flawed but actively adversarial to human well-being and the natural order.

Another sophist, Thrasy Machus of Chalcedon, to some extent continues Antiphon's reflections, as he considers, in the preserved fragment praising Demosthenes' eloquence, ideas about human nature, the instability of society, and the influence of wealth and misfortune on human behavior, particularly concerning interpersonal animosity. Thus, we observe the following (85 B1 DK):

"...ἡ γὰρ ἀναίσθητος ἡ καρτερώτατος ἐστίν, ὅστις ἐξαμαρτάνειν ἑαυτὸν ἔτι παρέξει τοῖς βουλομένοις καὶ τῆς ἐτέρων ἐπιβουλῆς τε καὶ κακίας αὐτὸς ὑποσχέσει τὰς αἰτίας. ἄλλος γὰρ ἡμῖν ὁ παρελθὼν χρόνος καὶ ἀντὶ μὲν εἰρήνης ἐν πολέμῳ γενέσθαι καὶ διὰ κινδύνων εἰς τόνδε τὸν χρόνον, τὴν μὲν παρελθοῦσαν ἡμέραν ἀγαπῶσι, τὴν δ' ἐπιοῦσαν δεδιόσι, ἀντὶ δ' ὁμονοίας εἰς ἔχθραν καὶ ταραχὰς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀφικέσθαι. καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους τὸ πλεῖθος τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὑβρίζειν τε ποιεῖ καὶ στασιάζειν, ἡμεῖς δὲ μετὰ μὲν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐσωφρονοῦμεν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς κακοῖς ἐμάνημεν, ἃ τοὺς ἄλλους σωφρονίζειν εἴωθεν..."

"...For someone would have to be unfeeling or entirely uncomplaining, to still be willing to submit himself to men who wish to do wrong and to bear the responsibility himself for other men's conspiracy and wickedness. Enough for us the time that has passed, and to be not at peace but at war and in dangers until the present moment – for us who desire the day that has passed but fear the day that is coming – and to arrive not at concord but instead at hatred and troubles with one another. As for other men, the magnitude of the goods that are theirs leads them to commit acts of wanton outrage and of civil strife, while we ourselves remained temperate while we possessed our goods, but have gone mad in the evils that customarily make other men temperate..."

The sophist points out that past experience has already demonstrated the destructive impact of conflicts, yet humanity continues to return to the same state of discord. This is emphasized in the phrase, "for us who desire the day that has passed but fear the day

that is coming" (τὴν μὲν παρελθοῦσαν ἡμέραν ἀγαπῶσι, τὴν δ' ἐπιούσαν δεδιόσι), which highlights the cyclical nature of conflict and its psychological consequences. The description of the social condition, where people "instead of achieving concord, have arrived at hatred and troubles with one another" (ἀντὶ δ' ὁμονοίας εἰς ἔχθραν καὶ ταραχὰς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀφικέσθαι), underscores that hatred here does not emerge as a natural emotion but rather as the result of a social condition in which individuals fail to cultivate political wisdom.

Structurally, the text is based on contrasts and antitheses, such as "the magnitude of the goods that are theirs leads them to commit acts of wanton outrage and of civil strife" (τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὑβρίζειν τε ποιεῖ καὶ στασιάζειν). This rhetorical device reinforces the idea that hostility not only fragments society but also leads to a state of constant fear. The correlation between excess and social disintegration is clear: material prosperity does not necessarily bring stability but instead provokes arrogance and division.

The notion that even negative circumstances should contribute to moral refinement is highlighted in the phrase, "we ourselves remained temperate while we possessed our goods, but have gone mad in the evils that customarily make other men temperate" (ἐν δὲ τοῖς κακοῖς ἐμάνημεν, ἃ τοὺς ἄλλους σωφρονίζειν εἴωθεν). This paradoxical observation suggests that adversity should ideally instill wisdom, yet in this case, it has led to greater disorder. Here, hatred is not merely a social phenomenon but a deeper moral issue: the very factors that ought to foster temperance have instead exacerbated enmity.

Accordingly, this passage reflects the classical understanding of hatred as a complex social and moral phenomenon. It arises not only from individual flaws but also from social processes where the absence of wisdom, political maturity, and balance between prosperity and virtue contributes to its intensification. This aligns with the ancient tradition, in which hatred is often considered a destructive force leading to political disarray and instability, as described in the historical works of Thucydides and the philosophical reflections of Plato and Aristotle.

Conversely, Gorgias, in his rhetorical works, employs the metaphor of speech (λόγος) as a weapon, emphasizing that political struggle takes place not only on battlefields but also in the realm of

persuasion, argumentation, and interpersonal relations. The conceptualization of enmity receives special attention in his speech "Defense of Palamedes". This is particularly evident in the following fragments of this oration:

"(17) καὶ μὴν οὐδ' ἀσφαλείας<sup>1</sup> οὐνεκά τις ἂν ταῦτα πράξαι. πᾶσι γὰρ ὃ γε προδότης **πολέμιος**, τῷ νόμῳ, τῇ δίκῃ, τοῖς θεοῖς, τῷ πλήθει τῶν ἀνθρώπων· τὸν μὲν γὰρ νόμον παραβαίνει, τὴν δὲ δίκην καταλύει, τὸ δὲ πλήθος διαφθείρει, τὸ δὲ θεῖον ἀτιμάζει. τῷ δὲ τοιούτῳ <ό> βίος περὶ κινδύνων τῶν μεγίστων οὐκ<sup>3</sup> ἔχει ἀσφάλειαν. (18) ἀλλὰ δὴ φίλους ὠφελεῖν βουλόμενος ἢ **πολεμίους** βλάπτειν; καὶ γὰρ τούτων ἕνεκά τις ἂν ἀδικήσειεν. ἐμοὶ δὲ πᾶν τοῦναντίον ἐγένετο· τοὺς μὲν φίλους κακῶς ἐποίουν, τοὺς δὲ **ἐχθροὺς** ὠφέλουν. ἀγαθῶν μὲν οὐκ κτήσιν οὐδεμίαν εἶχεν ἢ πράξις· κακῶς δὲ παθεῖν οὐδὲ εἰς ἐπιθυμῶν πανουργεῖ... (21) οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις πιστῶς ἂν διεκείμην· πῶς γάρ, οἵτινες ἀπιστότατον ἔργον συνηπίσταντό μοι πεποιηκότι, τοὺς φίλους τοῖς **ἐχθροῖς** παραδεδωκότι; βίος δὲ οὐ βιωτὸς πίστεως ἐστερημένῳ. χρήματα μὲν γὰρ ἀποβαλόντα <ή>

"(17) And again: no one would have done these things for the sake of safety. For a traitor is an enemy to all, to the law, to justice, to the gods, to the crowd of men: for he transgresses the law, abolishes justice, destroys the crowd, dishonors divinity. For someone of this sort, life possesses no safety with regard to the greatest dangers. (18) But (scil. did I do this) wishing to benefit friends or harm enemies? For someone might commit an injustice for these reasons too. But for me exactly the opposite came about. For I inflicted evils on my friends and I helped my enemies. So the action did not involve the acquisition of any good things; and no one acts wickedly out of a desire to suffer evils... (21) And again: Not even among the barbarians would I be considered trustworthy. For how could I be, given that they knew (sunêpistanto) that I had committed the most untrustworthy (apistotaton) of deeds in betraying friends to enemies? But life is not livable for a man deprived of trustworthiness. For someone might be able to restore one who has lost his valuables,

τυραννίδος ἐκπεσόντα ἢ τὴν πατρίδα φυγόντα ἀναλάβοι τις ἄν' ὁ δὲ πίστιν ἀποβαλὼν οὐκ ἂν ἔτι κτήσαιτο... (25) κατηγορήσας δέ μου διὰ τῶν εἰρημένων λόγων δύο τὰ ἐναντιώτατα, σοφίαν καὶ μανίαν, ὥπερ οὐχ οἷόν τε τὸν αὐτὸν ἄνθρωπον ἔχειν. ὅπου μὲν γάρ με φῆς εἶναι τεχνηντά τε καὶ δεινὸν καὶ πόριμον, σοφίαν μου κατηγορεῖς, ὅπου δὲ λέγεις ὡς προϋδίδουν τὴν Ἑλλάδα, μανίαν· μανία γάρ ἐστιν ἔργοις ἐπιχειρεῖν ἀδυνάτοις, ἀσυμφόροις, αἰσχροῖς, ἀφ' ὧν τοὺς μὲν φίλους βλάψει, τοὺς δ' *ἐχθροὺς* ὠφελήσει, τὸν δὲ αὐτοῦ βίον ἐπονείδιστον καὶ σφαλερὸν καταστήσει. καίτοι πῶς χρὴ ἀνδρὶ τοιούτῳ πιστεύειν, ὅστις τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον λέγων πρὸς τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἄνδρας περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν τὰ ἐναντιώτατα λέγει;"

been deposed from tyranny, or been exiled from his fatherland; but someone who has lost trustworthiness could never acquire it again... (25) You have accused me, in the speeches I have mentioned, of two things that are completely contrary to one another, craftiness (sophia) and madness, of which it is not possible for the same man to possess both. For you accuse me of craftiness when you say that I am skilled, clever, and resourceful, but of madness when you say that I betrayed Greece. For it is madness to undertake deeds that are impossible, disadvantageous, shameful, ones by which one will harm one's friends, help one's enemies, and make one's own life reproachful and insecure. And how can one trust a man like that, one who, in saying the same speech to the same men, says completely contrary things about the same matters?"

In this passage from Antiphon, the term "enemy" (*πολέμιος*, *ἐχθρός*) acquires a complex semantic range that reflects not only political but also moral and metaphysical dimensions within the ancient worldview. The term *πολέμιος* is employed in the context of state and legal treason, as evident in the characterization of the traitor as an enemy to all – law, justice, the gods, and the human collective. Unlike *ἐχθρός*, which denotes personal enmity, *πολέμιος* signifies a structural opposition between the individual and the community, emphasizing antagonism at the level of the *polis* collective. Here, the

enemy is not merely an individual but a threat to legal and religious order, one who undermines not only human relationships but also the divine cosmos. The transgression of νόμος and δίκη is thus not merely a juridical offense but an ontological crime that leads to the exclusion of the individual as a dangerous element of the social fabric. At the same time, ἐχθρός in this context pertains to a more personal, individualized dimension of enmity, as particularly evident in the phrase τοὺς μὲν φίλους κακῶς ἐποιοῦν, τοὺς δὲ ἐχθροὺς ὠφελούν. Here, the expected ethical logic of goodwill toward φίλοι and hostility toward ἐχθροί is subverted, marking a moral perversion (Stefo, 2012, p. 58).

This interplay between opposing categories carries a significant rhetorical effect, highlighting the paradoxical nature of actions that contravene fundamental moral norms. Notably, "in the subsequent passage emphasizing the loss of trust (πίστις) as the ultimate form of social downfall, the notion of the enemy transcends individual opponents and extends to a condition of social alienation, where one is rendered foreign both to their own people and to others (βάρβαροι). This shift further redefines the meaning of the enemy, moving from a concrete adversary to a state of exclusion in which the restoration of trust is impossible. Ultimately, in the concluding section, where the polemic shifts towards accusations involving the paradoxical coexistence of σοφία and μανία, the enemy emerges not only as a political traitor but also as an embodiment of irrational and absurd actions – ones that harm φίλοι, benefit ἐχθροί, and bring disgrace upon oneself" (Lampe, 2020, p. 122). This construction aligns with a distinct ancient typology of the political criminal, where enmity is determined not only through personal or state treason but also through the violation of the equilibrium between reason, virtue, and social order.

### **Discussion and conclusions**

The analysis of enmity within early Greek pluralists and sophists reveals a complex interplay between philosophical, rhetorical, and socio-political dimensions. The concept of enmity, as reflected in the examined texts, is not merely a descriptor of interhuman conflict but a fundamental principle embedded within cosmological and ethical frameworks. The study of terms such as Νεῖκος, ἐχθρός, πολέμιος,

ἔρις, and μάχη illustrates how early thinkers sought to understand opposition as a dynamic force shaping both the natural world and human society.

Empedocles' dualistic framework, where Strife (Νεῖκος) and Love (Φιλία) govern cosmic cycles, presents enmity as an essential element in the perpetual transformation of reality. His cosmogonic model, influenced by Hesiod's Theogony, conceptualizes struggle as both destructive and generative. The etymological analysis of Νεῖκος further reinforces its association with division and opposition, while textual evidence from Empedocles underscores its function as a force of fragmentation in both cosmic and social structures.

In contrast, Anaxagoras' philosophy approaches enmity not through mythological personification but as an inherent feature of differentiation and organization within the cosmos. His concept of Νοῦς (Intellect) as the ordering force echoes a rationalized understanding of conflict, wherein separation and movement define the very nature of existence. Although he does not explicitly employ Νεῖκος, the mechanisms of cosmic separation and recombination mirror the role of enmity in structuring reality.

The sophists, particularly Antiphon, Gorgias, and Thrasymachus, extend the notion of enmity beyond natural philosophy into social and political discourse. Antiphon's critique of conventional justice as "hostile to nature" introduces an ontological dimension to legal and moral opposition, suggesting that societal laws inherently conflict with human nature. Thrasymachus' reflections, as preserved in later texts, demonstrate how power dynamics and economic disparities fuel interpersonal animosity, reinforcing the idea that enmity is not only an abstract principle but also a lived social reality.

The rhetorical strategies employed by the sophists further illustrate how enmity functions within persuasion and argumentation. Gorgias, in particular, conceptualizes λόγος (speech) as a weapon, framing political struggle as an arena of linguistic competition rather than mere physical confrontation. His Defense of Palamedes exemplifies this approach, portraying enmity as a product of manipulation, perception, and rhetorical skill rather than objective wrongdoing.

From a classical philological perspective, the textual and linguistic analysis of enmity across these philosophical traditions

reveals its profound role in shaping early Greek thought. The dual function of enmity – as both a cosmic necessity and a societal force – demonstrates the adaptability of this concept within different intellectual frameworks. Furthermore, the interrelation between linguistic structures and philosophical meanings highlights the significance of terminological precision in understanding ancient philosophical discourse.

Ultimately, the study of enmity in early Greek philosophy underscores its enduring relevance in contemporary discussions on conflict, justice, and social cohesion. By tracing its historical-philosophical evolution, we gain deeper insight into how ancient thinkers conceptualized opposition, not as a mere obstacle but as an integral component of reality – one that continues to inform modern interpretations of struggle, ethics, and political order.

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### **КОНЦЕПТУАЛІЗАЦІЯ ІДЕЇ ВОРОЖНЕЧІ У РАНЬОГРЕЦЬКИХ ПЛЮРАЛІСТІВ І СОФІСТІВ: ВІД НЕБЕСНОГО ДО ЗЕМНОГО**

У статті розглядається концептуалізація ворожнечі у творах ранніх грецьких плюралістів і софістів, наголошується на її філософському, соціальному та риторичному вимірах. Показано, що ворожнеча в думках таких мислителів, як Емпедокл, Анаксагор, Антифонт, Горгій і Фрасимах, є не просто вираженням особистої ворожості, а структурним компонентом космологічного, етичного та політичного дискурсу.

Космогонічна модель Емпедокла, в якій Ненависть (*Неїκος*) і Любов (*Філія*) формують формування та розчинення космосу, аналізується у порівнянні з тлумаченням Анаксагором поділу та впорядкування через *Nous* (νοῦς, Інтелект). Стверджується, що обидва мислителі відображають давньогрецьке розуміння опозиції як динамічної сили, що керує реальністю. Дослідження софістичних текстів підкреслює, як ворожнеча була адаптована до юридичної та риторичної



аргументації, зокрема, у критиці справедливості Антіфоном як "ворожого явища до природи" (πολέμια τῇ φύσει) і в роздумах Фрасімах про владу та нерівність.

Дослідження показує, що ворожнеча в ранньому грецькому уявленні функціонувала як космічний принцип і як суспільний феномен, формуючи основу для пізніших філософських і політичних теорій. Філологічний аналіз ключових термінів, таких як Νεῖκος, ἐχθρός, πόλεμος, підкреслює концептуальну плинність ворожнечі в різних інтелектуальних традиціях. Зрештою, дослідження сприяє розумінню того, як стародавні мислителі розглядали конфлікт не як аномалію, а як суттєвий механізм порядку, що формує етичну та політичну думку від архаїчного до класичного періодів.

**Ключові слова:** ворожнеча, ранньогрецька філософія, давньогрецька література, софісти, плюралісти, політична філософія, класична філологія.

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