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## **[Greek medecine in its relation to religion and magic - suite]**

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are divine, as had been said before. They are human, apparently because they have their origin in heredity, in the organs of the body. It is impossible to admit the divinity of a special disease, for they are all divine; at the same time all diseases are human because of the influence of the body. The two spheres of the divine and of the natural are then fundamentally separate, although their influence is combined in every action.<sup>36</sup>

A similar theory has to be presupposed for the book on Prognostics. At the outset the physician is advised "to learn the natures of such diseases, how much they exceed the strength of men's bodies, besides whether there is any divine influence in them and to learn how to forecast them."<sup>37</sup> Divine influence and human nature again are separated as distinct forces. The nature of man is not in itself divine but the divine is thought to become apparent in the body. In what way this must be understood was already discussed in antiquity; the interpretations varied widely.<sup>38</sup> It seems to me that it is the spontaneous reactions which are signified by the word "divine." In one of the Hippocratic books it is stated: "In fact it is especially knowledge of the gods that by medicine is woven into the stuff of the mind . . . Physicians have given place to the gods. For in medicine that which is powerful is not in excess. In fact,

<sup>36</sup> Jones, l. c., I, p. x, without reference but, I think, mindful of these passages, says: "The fifth century B.C. witnessed the supreme effort of the Greeks to cast aside this incubus in all spheres of thought. They came to realize that to attribute an event to the action of a god leaves us just where we were, and that to call normal phenomena natural and abnormal divine is to introduce an unscientific dualism, in that what is divine (because mysterious) in one generation may be natural (because understood) in the next, while, on the other hand, however fully we may understand a phenomenon, there must always be a mysterious and unexplained element in it. All phenomena are equally divine and equally natural." This statement, I think, is not in accordance with the meaning of the Hippocratic author, as I tried to explain it. Everything is understood, even though it be in the form of a divine causality. On the other hand, the main theme of the book is not the uniformity of Nature, every aspect of which is equally divine (Jones, l. c., II, p. 135). It also follows from my interpretation that there is a difference in the basic theory between the book on the Sacred Disease and the book on Water, Air, and Places (contrary to Jones, l. c., II, pp. 130/1). Furthermore the thesis of Gomperz that the Hippocratic physicians rejected the belief in supernatural forces can certainly not be proved by the statement of this treatise; cf. n. 31, above.

<sup>37</sup> Jones, l. c., II, pp. 6-8: γνῶναι οὖν χρή τῶν τοιοῦτων νοσημάτων τὰς φύσεις, ὅσους ὑπὲρ τὴν δυνάμιν εἰσιν τῶν σωμάτων ἅμα δὲ καὶ εἴ τι θεῖον ἔνεστιν ἐν τῇσι νοσήσοις. Following the edition of Kühlewein, Jones omits the words concerning the divine, but they are contained in all the manuscripts. Cf. also Hippocrates, ed. Littré, VII, 1851, p. 312.

<sup>38</sup> Galeni in Hippocratis Prognosticum, ed. I. Heeg, CMG, V, 9, 2, 1915, p. 205, 28 sq. Erotiani Vocum Hippocraticarum Collectio cum Fragmentis, rec. E. Nachmanson, 1918, p. 108, 10 sq.

though physicians take many things in hand, many diseases are also overcome for them spontaneously."<sup>39</sup> The physicians then make room for the gods in regard to the spontaneous reactions of the body, which are considered as an interference of divine character, since they cannot be mastered by the human being. This is a theory unfamiliar neither to the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. nor to the later periods. Aristotle says: "There are a few to whom it seems that chance is a cause, but that it is not evident to human intelligence, since it is something divine and marvelous."<sup>40</sup> It is in this sense that the statement in this Hippocratic book and in the others can best be interpreted. The spontaneous reactions, which are not the effects of human efforts and which can only be acknowledged as facts, are mentioned very often in the book on Prognostics as well as in the book on the Diseases of Women, the author of which states that the physician has first of all to consider the possible divine influence, then the nature of women, and many other things.<sup>41</sup> At any rate, many of the Hippocratic books, a greater number than identify God with nature, acknowledge the divine as a factor apart from nature, which is a power of its own.

No doubt in some treatises God is even entirely excluded from the bodily processes. For in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. there are many people who believe in the mechanism of the nature of plants, animals, and human beings: "Nature produces them out of a certain spontaneous cause and without any creative intelligence."<sup>42</sup> This, I think,

<sup>39</sup> Jones, l. c., II, p. 289: Καὶ γὰρ μάλιστα ἡ περὶ θεῶν εἰδήσις ἐν νόῳ αὐτῇ ἐμπλέκεται. οἱ δὲ ἰητροὶ θεοῖσι παρακεχωρήκασιν. οὐ γὰρ ἐν περιττὸν ἐν αὐτῇ τὸ δυναστεῖον. καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι πολλὰ μὲν μεταχειρόνται, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ κεκράτηται αὐτοῖσι δι' ἐκωντῶν.

<sup>40</sup> Aristotle, Physics, 196b, 5-7: εἰσὶ δὲ τινες οἷς δοκεῖ εἶναι αἰτία μὲν ἡ τύχη, ἀδηλος δὲ ἀνθρωπίνη διανοία ὡς θεῖον τι οὐσα καὶ δαιμονιώτερον. Cf. Aristotle, The Physics, with an English Translation by P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford (Loeb Class. Library), Vol. I, 1929, pp. 146-7 where the parallels are quoted. Chance in the Aristotelian discussion is identical with spontaneity, cf. l. c., p. 120.

<sup>41</sup> E. Littré, Oeuvres complètes d'Hippocrate, VII, 1851, p. 312: περὶ δὲ τῆς γυναικείας φύσεως καὶ νοσημάτων τάδε λέγω. μάλιστα μὲν τὸ θεῖον ἐν τοῖσι ἀνθρώποις αἰτίον εἶναι. ἔπειτα αἱ φύσεις τῶν γυναικῶν καὶ χροαί. Heidel, The Heroic Age of Science, p. 18, characterizes this statement as the sort of curt remark that "one might perhaps expect to find in an unbelieving modern who wished to avoid offending sensibilities he respected but did not share." He points to the fact that later the divine does not occur, and this would be indeed an objection, as is already remarked by Galen (l. c., p. 208, 4-8). If one adopts the explanation I propose this objection is no longer valid, and the statement, obviously important, can be given its full value. Cf. also Hippocrates, ed. Littré, IX, 1861, p. 26; 28.

<sup>42</sup> Plato, Sophistes 265c: τὴν φύσιν αὐτὰ γεννᾶν ἀπὸ τινος αἰτίας αὐτομάτης καὶ ἄνευ διανοίας φύσεως.

