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Auteur : Foucault, Michel

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seem to fight against God and to rebel at his punishment."⁶⁰ Superstitious as this man is, he will use only rites and purifications, in contrast to the atheist, who "when he is ill, takes into account and calls to mind the times when he has eaten too much or drunk too much wine, also irregularities in his daily life, or instances of over-fatigue or unaccustomed changes of air or locality."⁶¹

For the Romans, too, the use of purification—the explanation of diseases by demons or gods—is superstition. It is Pliny who says: "To believe that there are a number of gods derived from the virtues and vices of man . . . indicates still greater folly. Human nature, weak and frail as it is, mindful of its own infirmity, has made these divisions, so that every one might have recourse to that which he supposed himself to stand more particularly in need of. Hence we find different names employed by different nations; the inferior deities are arranged in classes, and diseases and plagues are deified, in consequence of our anxious wish to propitiate them. It was from this cause that a temple was dedicated to Fever, at the public expense, on the Palatine Hill."⁶² The Roman poet knows that "the mysteries of cruel magicians are abominated by the heavenly gods."⁶³ It is admitted that "our forefathers believed that purifications could remove the cause of every evil,"⁶⁴ the implication being that later, in the Roman Empire, at least the educated classes and all men who worship the Olympians reject such a be-

⁶⁰ Plutarch, On superstition, l. c., II, p. 475: τῷ δὲ δεισιδαίμονι καὶ σώματος ἀρρωστία πᾶσα καὶ . . . πληγαὶ θεοῦ καὶ προσβολαὶ δαίμονος λέγονται. ὅθεν οὐδὲ τολμᾷ βοηθεῖν οὐδὲ διαλύειν τὸ συμβεβηκὸς οὐδὲ θεραπεύειν οὐδ' ἀντιτάττεσθαι, μὴ δόξῃ θεομαχεῖν καὶ ἀντιτείνειν κολαζόμενος.

⁶¹ Plutarch, On superstition, l. c., II, p. 473: Νοσῶν θ' ὁ ἄθεος ἐκλογίζεται καὶ ἀναμνησκαται πλησμονὰς αὐτοῦ καὶ οἰνώσεις καὶ ἀταξίας περὶ διαίταν ἢ κόπους ὑπερβάλλοντας ἢ μεταβολὰς ἀέρων ἀήθεις καὶ τόπων. Plutarch in this passage is speaking of the atheist because he intends to contrast his behavior with that of the superstitious. But he presupposes the same attitude for the pious man.

⁶² The Natural History of Pliny, II, 15, Translated by J. Bostock and H. T. Riley, I, 1893, p. 21 (cf. Cicero, De natura deorum, III, 63 and De legibus, II, 28): In numeros quidem credere atque etiam ex vitiiis hominum . . . majorem ad socordiam accedit. Fragilis et laboriosa mortalitas in partes ista digessit infirmitatis suae memor, ut portionibus coleret quisque quo maxime indigeret. Itaque nomina alia aliis gentibus et numina in iisdem innumerabilia invenimus, inferis quoque in genera discriptis, morbisque et multis etiam pestibus, dum esse placatas trepido metu cupimus. Ideoque etiam publice Febris fanum in Palatio dicatum est.

⁶³ Lucan, The Civil War VI, 430–31: superis detestanda deis saevorum arcana magorum.

⁶⁴ Ovid, Fasti II, 35–37: Omne nefas omne mali purgamina causam credebant nostri: tollere posse senes.

lief. It is emphasized, however, that "it was in Greece that the custom originated." In the same way Plutarch claims an alien origin for magic, which, he says, the Greeks took over "from the barbarians, learning their evil knowledge."⁶⁵ Certainly, the demonic conceptions are influential in Rome as well as in Greece, but they are consciously suppressed. Both nations assert the foreign character of those beliefs, as usual making another people responsible for them; even if purifications are used, they do not belong to that ritual which is recognized as the old and genuine religion.⁶⁶ To be sure, one is not justified in holding as the most characteristic feature of their behavior feelings which are held in contempt by men themselves. What is thought to be superstitious by the ancients cannot be interpreted as their general attitude toward disease.⁶⁷

It stands to reason then that the Greek physicians understood illness as caused by sun and air and winds or by the nature of man, and that the average people accepted this explanation. Physicians and laymen, however, usually considered these factors as the expression of divine agencies; the merely natural interpretation was as rare and restricted as the superstitious belief in demons; both are exceptional cases, departures from the rule. It is not by chance that Asclepius is the god of doctors and of patients. He represents the rational theology in the Greek sense, in sharp opposition to every demonic religion, to magical rites and purifications, as the inscription on his temple in

⁶⁵ Ovid, l. c., 38: Graecia principium moris fuit. Plutarch, On Superstition, 166 ὡ βάρβαρ' ἐξευρόντες "Ἕλληνες κακά.

⁶⁶ Cf. J. Bernays, Theophrastos' Schrift über Frömmigkeit, Berlin 1866, p. 106. He stresses the fact that sacrifices for the sake of purifications, the latest in the development of Greek religion, are not on the same plane as the other sacrifices, even in the time of Theophrastos, who classifies the Orphic mysteries also among superstitious rites (in his characterization of the superstitious). Concerning earlier centuries and their dislike of purifications, cf. e.g., Plato, Republic, 364b, in regard to a later period cf. the Neo-Platonic polemic in the book of Porphyry, described by Bernays, l. c.

⁶⁷ The contention of the pious man that it is God who sends the disease, expressed already in the Homeric Epic (Cf. Odyssey, V, 394–97; IX, 409–11, also the pestilence in the first book of the Iliad is sent from God) must have been common to every period. But even in the epic no purifications are used, those which are mentioned concern only the usual preparation for prayers and sacrifices. (Iliad, I, 313, contrary to E. Rohde, Psyche⁹⁻¹⁰, II, 1921, p. 76, 1, who himself is more cautious in his judgment p. 71.) At any rate, the pious belief must be carefully differentiated from the theory that disease is a kind of pollution which has to be purified. These are two different attitudes. Already Hesiod says (Erga 102–4): νοῦσαι δὲ ἀνθρώποισιν ἐφ' ἡμέρῃ αἷ δ' ἐπὶ νυκτὶ αὐτόματι φοιτῶσι κακὰ θνητοῖσι φέρονται σιγῇ, ἐπεὶ φωνὴν ἐξείλετο μητίετα Ζεὺς.

