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

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## Présentation de la fiche

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rather than physicians; they were antiquaries.<sup>88</sup> These men, then, were an exception; they were isolated as were those who believed in the demonic character of diseases. And it is not venturous to assume that the same reasons by which the explanation of illness through demons was refused were responsible also for the attitude of the physicians in pharmacology.

But all the pharmacologists, nay almost all the physicians, believed in sympathetic remedies. They are to be found in Dioscurides as well as in Galen, in the books of Stoic physicians and even of Methodists. Is this not the reception of magic into medicine, and the first sign of decay? For, the Hippocratic books are free of those remedies, and it is only from the Hellenistic time on that they begin to be used. However, the sympathetic effect to the ancients is a natural phenomenon and proved by experiments, not by any magical theory. Even the Stoics understand it in this way and collect facts as proof of its reality; they do not rely on mere reasoning alone.89 Unconvincing as the material seems to the modern it did convince even the Skeptics in antiquity. The only thing in the Stoic discussion that the Academic philosopher finds to agree with is the demonstration of sympathetic relations in the universe. For these are certain, although they must be explained, as the Skeptic believes, not by a divine spirit but by the spontaneity of nature. 90 Thus, from a teleological aspect as well as from a mechanical one sympathy is a reality.

That really experience is the basis of the judgment concerning the sympathetic or antipathetic effect is shown by the opinion about amu-

Salen, Opera, ed. Kühn, XI, p. 795. Concerning Andreas cf. F. Susemihl, Gesch. d. Griech. Literatur in der Alexandrinerzeit, I, 1891, p. 817, 231; II, 1892, p. 421, 32. It is because of the rejection of those things by the medical profession that they are to be found only in the magical papyri which contain not the knowledge of physicians but prescriptions of folklore. What Galen relates about Andreas corresponds with Papyri Graecae Magicae, ed. K. Preisendanz, I, 1928, p. 168-69; cf. also Rohde, Psyche, l. c., II, p. 87, 3.

S Cf. E. Zeller, Die Philosophie d. Griech., III, 13, 1880, p. 169, 2: "Unter der Sympathie verstehen die Stoiker nicht den magischen Zusammenhang, welchen der neuere Sprachgebrauch mit diesem Wort bezeichnet, sondern das naturgemässe Zusammentreffen gewisser Vorgänge in den verschiedenen Teilen der Welt." Cf.

<sup>30</sup> Cicero, De natura deorum, III, 11, 28: "Itaque illa mihi placebat oratio de convenientia consensuque naturae, quam quasi cognatione continuata conspirare dicebas, illud non probabam quod negabas id accidere potuisse nisi ea uno divino spiritu contineretur. Illa vero cohaeret et permanet naturae viribus non deorum, estque in ea iste quasi consensus, quem συμπάθειαν Graeci vocant; sed ea quo sua sponte maior est eo minus divina ratione fieri existimanda est."

lets. Soranus, for instance, rejects the wearing of amulets because his experience does not confirm the good results which others claim to have observed. He once admits amulets because of their psychological influence. In the same way Galen accepts that alone which according to his experience has proved to be helpful and leaves all the other things to those who are able to prove them by their experience. Thus, physicians try very carefully to exclude every allusion to magic; they go no farther than their own experience leads. Nay, they are aware that the use of amulets is a very ambiguous means and almost beyond the realm of medicine. It is characteristic that even a physician of the sixth century A.D. prescribes amulets only in those cases in which "no remedy of the art still has power." But since the aim of medicine is to make healthy and to overcome diseases, "it is wonderful to win this struggle, and for that purpose to use everything which can possibly help," everything which is within human experience.

Yet, certain as it is that experience proves the sympathetic effect, this experience can be had only on the presupposition of a specific theory. One must at least believe that it is possible to connect two phenomena which happen at the same time. Otherwise the coincidence of facts will be understood as fortuitous and not as purposeful. It is for this reason that the Empiric physicians do not recognize sympathy, that only the experience of the Dogmatists and of a few Skeptics who do not cling too strictly to their views recognizes the reality of these effects. The belief in a teleological power of nature is presupposed by the belief in sympathy.

It is in accordance therewith that sympathetic influences are first mentioned in the writings of Theophrastus on natural philosophy. 95

Fichie

<sup>91</sup> Soranus, CMG, IV, 1927, p. 47, 17; 121, 26.

<sup>92</sup> Galen, Opera, ed. Kühn, XII, p. 573.

<sup>93</sup> Alexander v. Tralles, ed. Puschmann, II, p. 319: εἰ δὲ . . . μηδενὸς τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης ἰσχύοντος . . . καὶ τοῖς φυσικοῖς περιάπτοις οὐδὲν ἄτοπον κεχρῆσθαι χάριν τοῦ σῶσαι τὸν

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Ibid., II, p. 474-75: καλὸν γὰρ νικᾶν καὶ πάση μηχανῆ βοηθεῖν. Concerning the material preserved cf. L. Deubner, Greek charms and amulets, in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. by J. Hastings, III, 1910, pp. 433-439.

Fr. 172, 3); p. 133, sympathetic effects in the human body are described, comparable to those already known by the Hippocratic writers (cf. Jones, l. c., l, p. 351, On Nutriment, XXIII). In the ps-Aristotelian Problemata (Aristotel 886a 24 sq.) probably written in the time of Theophrastus, examples of sympathy are described too. E. Stemplinger, l. c., p. 7, names the Pythagoreans, Empedocles, and Plato as forerunners of Theophrastus. The conception of sympathy goes back certainly to the

