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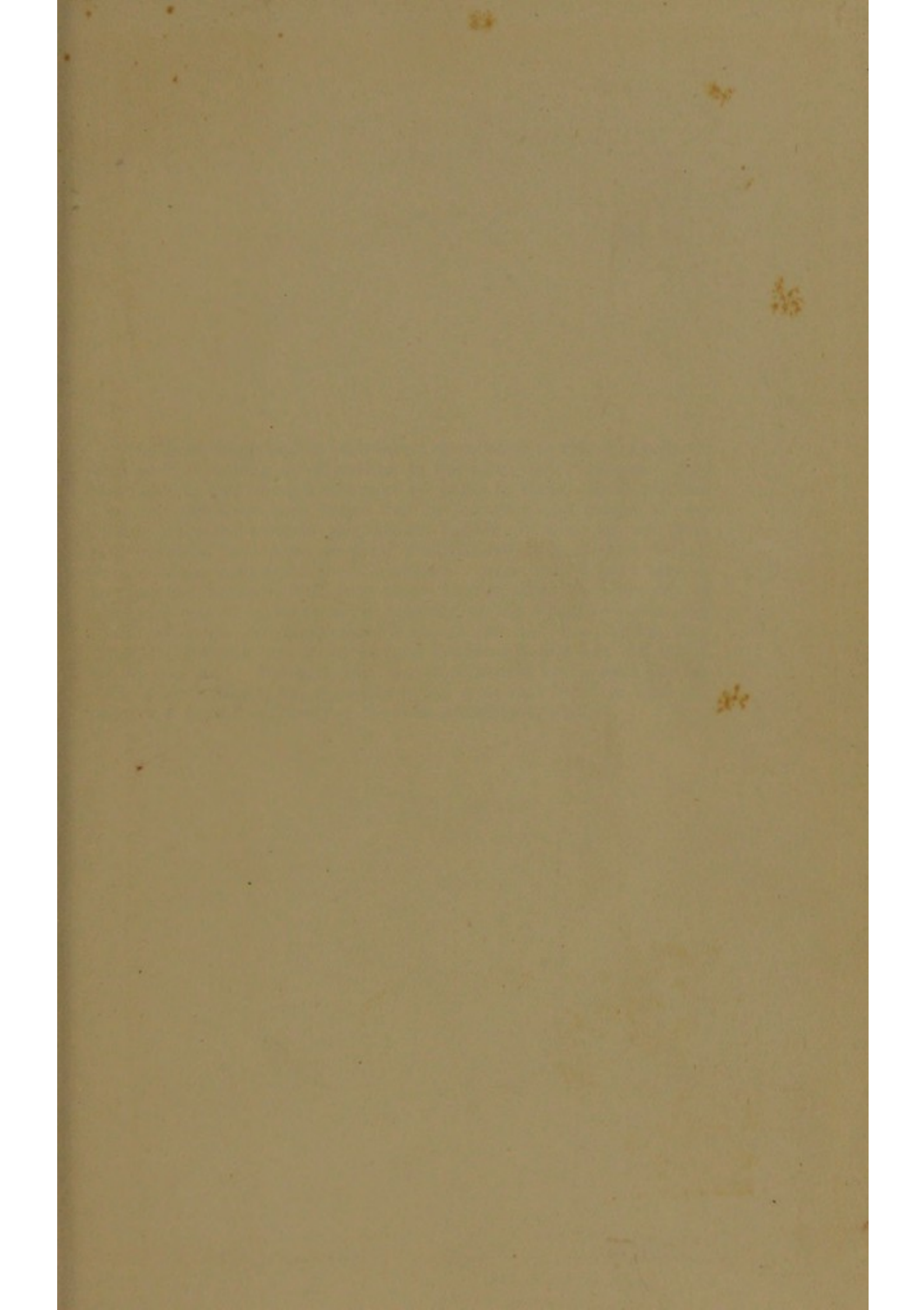
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“In these things and in such other, there be many folk that believe ; because it happeneth so often-time to fall after their fantasies. And also there be men enough that have no belief in them. And sith that Christian men have such belief, that be informed and taught all day by holy doctrine, wherein they should believe, it is no marvel then, that paynims, that have no good doctrine but only of their nature, believe more largely for their simplese. And truly I have seen of paynims and Saracens that men clepe Augurs, that, when we ride in arms in divers countries upon our enemies, by the flying of fowls they would tell us the prognostications of things that fell after ; and so they did full oftentimes, and proffered their heads to-wedde, but if it would fall as they said. But natheless, therefore should not a man put his belief in such things, but always have full trust and belief in God our Sovereign Lord.”—*Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, xviii.





GREEK DIVINATION







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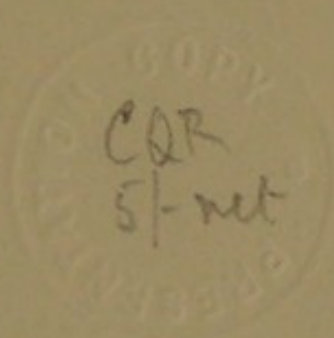
# GREEK DIVINATION

## A STUDY OF ITS METHODS AND PRINCIPLES

BY

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## PREFACE

To apologise too profoundly for the publication of a book is to insult the reader to whom it is offered, but at the same time I should like it to be clear, particularly as I have not hesitated to express my opinions with some downrightness, that no one is more conscious of the incompleteness and immaturities of this little essay than its author. The crudities which have been purged on reviewing it after two fallow years suggest the innumerable errors of judgment that may still remain. In excuse for these it may be urged that maturity of judgment comes only with experience and knowledge, and that the particular branch of investigation to which this study belongs presents data so manifold and so varied that their acquisition and assimilation must necessarily be a long process. But despite its defects its publication appeared worth the while. Some of the suggestions are, I think, new and worth consideration if



not acceptance by students of anthropology or Greek religion, and some of the material collected, even if the results deduced from it seem faulty, may, I hope, prove serviceable to inquirers in the same field.

I may perhaps venture to add that with very few subsequent additions the material was collected during my fourth year as a classical scholar of New College, Oxford, and the first year of my tenure of the Craven Fellowship, which was spent at Berlin. In these days, when much is talked of Reform and Research at Oxford, a specimen of what has been done by an ordinary scholar under existing conditions may be of some interest. And the objects of the reformers' zeal are sometimes driven to reflect on themselves and on that rather highly coloured simulacrum which represents them on the prospectus of Research and Reform. My experience, such as it has been, has taught me but one fixed conviction, and that a negative one. Research and specialised work should on no account be a feature of pre-graduate study. Personally I have not merely felt that the three years spent in attaining my degree were from the point of view of my particular investigations of absolutely vital assistance, but I have even on occasion regretted that the full four years'



course had not increased the weapons in my armoury before I began my quest. To those occupied with Reform at our older Universities I offer this datum, which is less an opinion than a recorded experience.

For the scope of the treatise, I had originally intended to attempt something more commensurate with its title. But the occupation of learning and teaching other things appears to offer in the immediate future no prospect of prolonged periods of attention to the subject, and a more ambitious work would in all probability get little under way. As it stands the essay is limited to the principles and the origins of the methods of divination practised in ancient Greece. It does not attempt to deal with oracles, though it has something to say of the methods practised at oracular shrines. It is primarily an analysis of method rather than an historical account, and the significance of oracles belongs in reality to a wider investigation of the history of Greek culture and the influence exerted on each other by religious and political institutions.

My debts to my teachers are many. The greatest I owe to Professor Gilbert Murray and Dr. L. R. Farnell of Oxford, and Miss Jane Harrison of Cambridge. Miss Harrison in



particular has shown unwearied kindness in suggestion, comment, criticism and encouragement, and the most patient tolerance of the sometimes fractious disagreement of a beginner. I regret that other occupations prevented my reading her *Themis* in time to acknowledge by reference to the printed page some of the many suggestions which I have derived from her conversation or correspondence. To Mr. R. R. Marett, too, I owe a debt of gratitude for help and direction in that science of which he is now the official representative at Oxford. In a lesser degree many other distinguished English anthropologists have laid me under an obligation which I hope has not lacked the inadequate acknowledgment of footnotes.

To the many learned men of the University of Berlin I have ventured to dedicate this book as an unworthy token of my appreciation of their great hospitality and kindness. No one who has been a foreign student at a German university can forget the generosity with which are heaped upon him every possible assistance in his work and every attention calculated to make his sojourn in a foreign land enjoyable. In Berlin University the stranger meets with an Homeric welcome. And in particular I must thank my friend Dr. K. Th. Preuss, Direktor

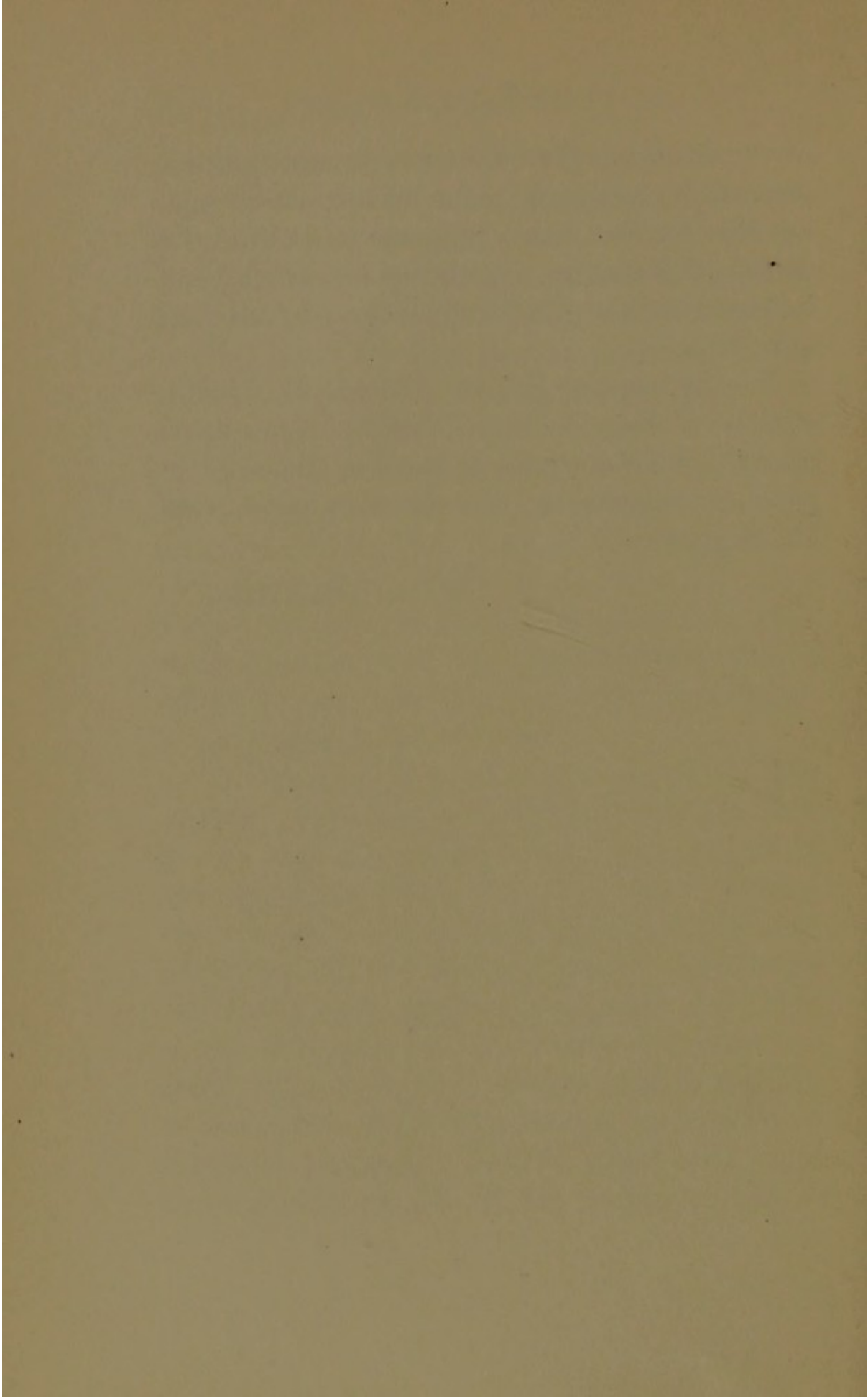


of the Museum für Völkerkunde, not only for pleasant hours spent under his hospitable roof, but also for the many suggestions both in the matter of literature and theory for which I am indebted to his great knowledge of American ethnology.

Finally, to my friend Mr. A. G. Heath, Fellow of New College, Oxford, who undertook the laborious task of reading the work in proof, my thanks are due for many corrections and suggestions.

W. R. HALLIDAY.

GLENTHORNE, 1912.



# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	I

## CHAPTER II

MAGIC . . . . .	10
-----------------	----

## CHAPTER III

RITUAL . . . . .	22
------------------	----

## CHAPTER IV

DIVINATION AND MAGIC—THE ACCEPTANCE OF OMENS . . . . .	40
---	----

## CHAPTER V

MANTEIS . . . . .	54
-------------------	----

## CHAPTER VI

THE ORDEAL . . . . .	99
----------------------	----



## CHAPTER VII

	PAGE
DIVINATION AT SACRED SPRINGS . . . . .	116

## CHAPTER VIII

LEKANOMANCY . . . . .	145
-----------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IX

OMENS AND SUB-RITES . . . . .	163
-------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER X

KLEROMANCY . . . . .	205
----------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XI

NECROMANCY . . . . .	235
----------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XII

AUGURY . . . . .	246
------------------	-----

CONCLUSION . . . . .	272
----------------------	-----

APPENDIX . . . . .	277
--------------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INDEX . . . . .	283
---------------------------------	-----

GENERAL INDEX . . . . .	293
-------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

IN the following pages the attempt has been made to give some account of the methods of divination employed by the ancient Greeks, together with an analysis of the underlying principles or presuppositions which, however unconsciously, moulded their forms and maintained their vitality. The dangers and difficulties of such an undertaking are obvious. Such analysis must always be philosophical rather than historical in the sense of presenting a series of facts in a strict sequence of chronology. The fossils with which the student of religion must work are stratified culturally not chronologically, and their co-ordination must always bear something of an arbitrary aspect.

Again, the last fifty years have revolutionised alike the study of "natural man" and that of



the origins of Greek civilisation. But in neither direction have the feet of science reached firm ground; we have fled the worse, but have not yet found the better. On the one hand, the results of Ethnology are as yet uncertain and insecure, and, despite the courageous attempt of M. Reinach, the time when a satisfactory sketch of the course of religious development can be written has not yet arrived. On the other hand, while a corner of the curtain which veils the prehistoric period of Aegean history has been raised, our knowledge alike of victors and of vanquished in that struggle between an ancient civilisation and the invasion of an alien stock is meagre indeed. We are still groping in a Dark Age; and the instruments at our disposal are faulty. We possess a mass of mythology; much of it of late tradition, and some of it to a considerable degree worked over.<sup>1</sup> In the light of survivals in cult, hints

<sup>1</sup> Apart from the fact that almost every Greek mythographer is biassed by some theory, whether it be an interest in astronomy, Euhemerism, etymology, rationalism, or philosophic allegory, that curious phenomenon of the exploitation of mythical history from political motives, a process partly deliberate and partly unconscious, shows us how much our material must already in antiquity have been modified and worked over. The great examples are, of course, the saga of the Dorian invasion and the Heraklidai, or the story of the colonisation of Ionia: cf. the use of mythical history in politics and diplomacy in Herodotos i. 82, vi. 138 foll., iv. 33 (with Pausanias i. 21. 2), iv. 179, v. 94, vii. 150, 159, 161; Diodoros iv. 23. 2-3.



of the popular byways of religious practice, and the observed phenomena in the religious beliefs of other races at various stages of culture, we are tempted to guess the nature of the causes which gave rise to these traditions. Employing these instruments, analysis can give us a broad outline of the course of a development, whose stages it is impossible to date, a genetic not an historical account. And even here there is always the danger that we may have wholly misinterpreted the nature of the fact to be explained, or, witness the discussions of the supposed vestiges of Totemism in ancient Greece, that we are explaining *obscurum per obscurius*.

It is these difficulties and deficiencies of data and method which lead some English scholars, distinguished for their knowledge of anthropology no less than for their classical learning, to plead for a reaction against the too hasty application of the theories of the ethnologists to the problems of Greek Religion. Despite, however, their warning and the difficulties of the quest, it appears to me to be of service to grope for greater understanding of that "Lower Stratum" of religious thought to which Miss Harrison first drew our attention. A new point of view has to be found, now



that the old spectacles prove to be misleading. When M. Bouché Leclerq wrote his great work on classical divination, the point of view from which the scholar started was that of regarding the Greek as springing upon the world full armed, like Athena from the head of Zeus, reason incarnate. Certain forms of divination he invented on quasi-inductive grounds, other methods he adopted wholesale from alien civilisations, and in particular all ideas and practices connected with inspiration were to be of foreign importation.<sup>1</sup> To-day it is impossible to work thus with the antithesis of rational Greece and the emotional Orient. The problems of origin and development have assumed a new importance, as we have learned how near lay Hellenic civilisation to the barbarism from which it emerged triumphant. And to recognise in the Greek a man of like passions with the rest of humanity is to appreciate, not to detract from, the splendour of his achievement.

It is, I believe, essential to the understanding of Greek religion to recognise the importance of what may be termed the "pre-Olympian"

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclerq, *Histoire de la Divination dans l'Antiquité*, iii. p. 88; Rohde, *Psyche*, 2, pp. 56-61. Dr. Farnell rightly protests against such a point of view, *Cults of the Greek States*, iv. pp. 190-191.



element. The dualism found in the traditions of the conflict of the early weather-making kings with the sovereignty of Zeus runs, if I understand the matter aright, through the whole history of Greek religion. In contradistinction to the earlier religious beliefs belonging to types prevalent in the Lower Culture, there emerge these "ideal types," the Olympian Gods of civilisation. It is easy for moderns to underestimate their value; it is easier for us to appreciate Euripides than Sophokles. Reason, art, and above all patriotism, flourished under their protection. A variety of causes tended to produce their supersession in all but name. The breakdown of the smaller patriotism, and the wider outlook of the reason which they had helped to foster on a universe of sentient fellow-creatures,<sup>1</sup> assisted in their decline. The passionate searching after fundamental and universal principles, characteristic of the Greek philosophic temperament, and the interested investigation of the religious no less than the political institutions of other civilisations, must have played a part. In

<sup>1</sup> The development of the conception of my duty towards my neighbour from that of my duty towards my fellow-citizen or my fellow-Hellene does not stop there. Porphyry, for example, goes as far as any modern humanitarian in preaching our duty towards animals.



some respects, again, the Olympian worship was too formal and political for the ordinary man in ordinary times; their temples, which served as national treasuries, and their ritual, which provided the relaxation of a public holiday,<sup>1</sup> were unable to satisfy his spiritual and personal aspirations. The reaction is as old as the popularity of Dionysos and the Mysteries; it reaches its highest and perhaps its lowest manifestations in the mysticism of Orphism and Neo-Platonism. The ritual of the Homeric trinity was unable to supply the religious needs of an essentially religious people,<sup>2</sup> and there resulted a cast back to the vital beliefs of the Lower Culture, which were capable of development and re-interpretation. Some traces of this movement we shall discuss later in the relation of the wonder-workers of late antiquity to the seers of mythical tradition, and in the history of the popularity of Augury. Fruits of it were revivals such as that of the worship of Zeus Kouros preserved in the Palaíkastro hymn.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thukydides ii. 38 and the complaint as to the number of these bank holidays, [Xen.] Πολ. Ἀθ. iii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Even the position of Apollo as recognised by Plato in the *Republic* is based rather on sentiment and political tradition than on the personal ties which bind God and worshipper in the more intimate and spiritual religions.

<sup>3</sup> See Bosanquet, Murray, and Miss Harrison in *B.S.A.* xv.



The movement is an epitome, under special racial conditions, of the general progress of religious belief, the interaction of ritual and meaning.

The study, then, of the primitive elements preserved in Greek tradition, and the attempt to sketch in outline the ideas which lie behind the religion of the Greece of history, need no apology. The beliefs embodied in what Miss Harrison has called the Lower Stratum must always have played a part in Hellenic life, and to the understanding of the development of Orphism and the religious philosophies they are of the first importance. In the special field of divination the recognition and analysis of these primitive ideas must modify the attitude with which the phenomena were formerly regarded. No longer content with the theory that divination comes into being in part as the revelation of God to man and in part as an arbitrary invention based upon a mistaken process of reasoning, we must endeavour to seek for its *raison d'être* behind the period of Olympian theology, and before the formation of an elaborate science. Approached in this way, I believe that methods of divination can be shown to fall into two great species. On the one hand, there is the



tendency for magic to shade into mere divination, for the magician to become the diviner, and for the spell to become a mere prediction. On the other hand, to the psychology of anxious moments and solemn occasions may be traced the growth of the sub-rite of divination and the observance of omens. It is in this second category that is to be found the origin of the so-called "inductive arts," and the general causes for their existence reveal the belief in their efficacy as a human weakness, not as an arbitrary and puerile folly.

The principle of organic development must implicitly direct the course of our inquiry. It is so obvious in its application that to state it seems almost *banal*. Its existence, however, has often been tacitly ignored by investigators who would not perhaps deny its truth. All development, to state it in brief, proceeds by an increasing individualisation. The genealogical tree spreads ever wider branches with each generation. The growth of departmentalism and specialisation is characteristic of all organic development. In the human race as a whole the degree of variation between individuals in physical or mental structure varies with the stages of culture from which the



examples are drawn. In the history of a particular art or science you may trace the genealogy of the poet and the doctor back to a common source or forward to the yet wider variations of their subdivisions. The process of organic development is an increasing differentiation of species within the genus and of individuals within the species. Roughly it is true to say that this process is characterised by the increasing articulation of what is latent or undeveloped in the preceding stages. In the earlier stages of religious development particularly the difficulty lies often far more in the description or definition in words of a particular phenomenon than in understanding its nature or feeling its force.



## CHAPTER II

### MAGIC

Nigromantia sciri libere potest, sed operari sine daemonum familiaritate nullatenus valet.<sup>1</sup>

THE view that the magic art developed as a quasi-science which misapplied the categories of cause and effect is now generally discredited. Mr. Marett in the articles reprinted in *The Threshold of Religion*, Mr. Hartland implicitly in his earlier work and explicitly in his addresses to the British Association in 1906 and the International Congress for the History of Religions in 1908, MM. Hubert et Mauss in the seventh volume of *L'Année Sociologique*, have delivered crushing blows. It is now recognised by the majority of ethnologists that magical action of necessity implies the setting in motion of some non-natural power, and that even in its most formal development it is

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Comparetti, *Virgil in the Middle Ages* (trans. Benecke), p. 291.



never the logical connection of cause and effect which makes its formulae or its rites efficacious, but the power of the magician, or that inherent in the rites or formulae in virtue of their abnormal character. For this power, which lends efficacy to the magic act, the Melanesian word *mana* has been adopted by ethnologists as a convenient term.

Among many of the lower races with whom we are acquainted, everything and everybody has this *mana*, and the difference between the magician and his fellows is one of degree rather than of kind.<sup>1</sup> The ordinary man can work magic, but the magician has stronger *mana* and can work more powerful magic. And this force can be acquired or increased. A Haida shaman, for instance, "may start with a comparatively feeble spirit and acquire stronger and stronger ones."<sup>2</sup> It is obvious that the proportion of power which belongs to the magician *per se*, and the amount which is due to spiritual inspiration or to acquisition, will vary in different stages of culture and theology, and is often indeed but ill-defined. "L'esprit que possède le sorcier, ou qui possède le sorcier se confond avec son âme et sa force magique :

<sup>1</sup> See Hartland, *Address to the British Association*, 1906, pp. 4-6.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton, *Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, v. 1, p. 38.



sorcier et esprit portent souvent le même nom."<sup>1</sup> For our purpose the distinction is immaterial. At the moment of magical action the magician puts into motion some non-natural power; and it is to the acquisition of this power that his initiatory ceremonies are directed. The shaman may have magic crystals or the magic shell forced into his body, or he may receive his power in the visitation of a trance or dream. He has often to learn the tricks of his trade like the initiates in the Midé wiwin, but such knowledge profits him nothing without the shooting with the *migis* or magic shell by which he is killed to be reborn to a new life of power.<sup>2</sup> And the power acquired by the magician may be lost. The end of the Kurnai Tankli's career is not without pathos. "From that time I could pull things out of people and throw the *kin* like light in the evening at people to hurt them. About three years ago I took to drinking and then lost all my *kin* and all my power, and have never been able to do anything since. I used to keep it in a bag of ring-tailed opossum skin in a hole in a tree. One night I dreamed my wife threw some *kruk* (*menses*) on me.

<sup>1</sup> Hubert et Mauss, *L'Année Sociologique*, vii. p. 87; cf. *ib.* p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Hoffman, "The Midé wiwin of the Objibwa," *Seventh Annual Report of the American Bureau of Ethnology*, p. 218 foll.



After that I could do nothing, and my *kin* went from my bag, I don't know where. I have slept under the tree where I left it, thinking my power might come back, but I have never found the *kin*, nor can I dream any more of it."<sup>1</sup> Indeed it will be found that everywhere a magical action, in its simplest form a mere act of volition on the part of a person with power,<sup>2</sup> finds its goal through the possession of *mana* by the agent or by the

<sup>1</sup> Howitt, *J.A.I.* xvi. p. 52. For the sources of power of Australian medicine-men see further Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 404-413; Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 522-529; MM. Hubert et Mauss, *L'Origine des Pouvoirs magiques dans les Sociétés Australiennes*, republished in 1909 in *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions*, p. 131 foll. For instances of the source of the magician's powers in other parts of the world, see Hartland's *Address to the British Association*, 1906, p. 11 foll. In the Trobriands, "sorcery, devil-working, whatever name you like to give it and whatsoever form it takes, means and implies 'the power of making dead,'" *Papua Reports*, 1907, p. 65. In Melanesia the wizard is a man who is *saka*, i.e. possessed of *mana*, Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 190. The shaman of the Cherokees is *ada wehi*, "the word used to designate one supposed to have supernatural powers and applied alike to human beings and to the spirits invoked in the formulas," Mooney, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokee," *A.R.A.B.E.* vii. p. 346. Instances might be multiplied indefinitely.

<sup>2</sup> Thus in Germany the *Alp* can be sent against an enemy by a simple act of volition, Grimm, *ap.* Croker, *Fairy Legends*, iii. p. 124. The German word used for casting a spell is *verwünschen*. So in Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, No. 97, "Das kleine Männchen aber war zornig geworden und hatte einen bösen Wunsch getan." Similarly among the Takelma "a powerful shaman might also reach his victim by merely 'wishing' him ill or (mentally) 'poisoning' him," Sapir, "Religious Ideas of the Takelma Indians," *Journal of American Folklore*, xx. p. 41.



instruments which he has power to wield. And it is important to note that even in the Middle Ages science was not accounted magical *qua* science but because of its supposed character.<sup>1</sup> It made possible the production of strange effects by evil, because unintelligible, means. The scientist must have sold his soul to the Devil or possess a familiar. One remembers the admission of Mr. Marsh of Dunstable, a good astrologer coupled by Aubrey with the famous Sir Richard Napier. "Mr. Marsh did seriously confess to a friend of mine that astrology was but the countenance, and that he did his business by the help of the Blessed Spirits with whom only them of great piety, humility, and charity could be acquainted, and such a one he was."<sup>2</sup>

All magic, then, consists of the bringing of *mana* into play, and where every one possesses *mana* in some degree, it is in a sense a battle of magic powers. The *orenda* of

<sup>1</sup> MM. Hubert et Mauss in *L'Année Sociologique*, vii., make some illuminating comments on the formal art of magic in the Middle Ages. On p. 100 they remark of the alchemists, "En tête de chaque chapitre de leurs manuels, on trouve des exposés de doctrine. Mais jamais la suite ne répond au commencement. L'idée philosophique est simplement préfixée, à la façon d'un en-tête, d'une rubrique."

<sup>2</sup> Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, p. 171. Similarly the accused in witchcraft trials often allege the source of their power to be the fairies or benevolent spirits. Scott, *Letters on Demonology*, v. ; *id.*, *Border Minstrelsy*, ii. pp. 293-305.



the successful Iroquois hunter is said to conquer the *orenda* of his quarry.<sup>1</sup> As I have tried to show elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> two principles are tacitly implied in magical conflict: (1) that every one has *mana*; (2) that in the conflict of *manas* victory goes to the stronger of the two or to the aggressor, i.e. to that party which asserts its personality the stronger. The machinery of magical rites consists in the bringing of personalities into contact with *mana* or with contagious qualities, which are after all but *mana* specialised. The wide area of personality, as it is conceived in the Lower Culture,<sup>3</sup> provides the modes of contact: seeing, touching, spitting on, speaking to, the

<sup>1</sup> Hewitt, *American Anthropologist*, 2nd series, iv. p. 38. "On voit partout chez les Hourons, des luttes d'orendas, comme on voit, en Mélanésie des luttes des manas," Hubert et Mauss, *op. cit.* p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> "The Force of Initiative in Magical Conflict," *Folklore*, xxi. p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> The rage for relics of famous persons in civilised communities should assist in the understanding of the wide area of personality which the savage accepts as a fact; it is a manifestation of the same state of mind. From this conception of personality as a complete whole composed of parts which have a vital connection with the unity which they compose, and are all instinct with the life or essence of the whole, two corollaries follow: (1) hurt done to any part affects the whole; (2) if one part can be preserved, the whole cannot be annihilated. Obviously the distinction between the two principles is not rigid, but roughly we may say that to the first belong the methods of "sympathetic" magic, to the second the belief in the External Soul and Life Token. The divine king hedged about with taboos is the External Soul of that complex unity, the society over which he rules.



use of hair, faeces, images or name, the giving of presents, and even the payment of money.<sup>1</sup> In every case, even down to the use of images and the so-called sympathetic magic, the ultimate motive is to effect a contact between the personality of which the instrument is a part and your own stronger *mana*, or a malevolent power, or some evil quality. It is not really a case of mistaking the categories of Similarity and Identity, or the putting in action of supposed "Laws of Contiguity." The psychology of the business is much less rational and is, after all, a matter of everyday experience. Laodameia was not the first or the last to find comfort in the image of an absent loved one.<sup>2</sup> "The profane use of images for witchcraft," says Mr. Hartland, "is exactly parallel

<sup>1</sup> See also Preuss on "Die Zauber der Körperöffnungen," *Globus*, 86, pp. 321-327. For the payment of money as a mode of contact cf. the offerings at holy wells and trees, Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. cap. xi. In the Solomon Islands mere knowledge of a *mana* song is useless for practical purposes. You must pay your instructor money and then *ipso facto* he will transmit the *mana* to you (Marett, *Threshold of Religion*, p. 137). It is much the same with the Midé priests (Hoffman, *op. cit.* p. 221), and Cherokee shamans "claim that pay is one of the agencies in the removal of disease," Mooney, *op. cit.* p. 337 foll. It figures in the relation of Devil and witch, Glanvil, *Sadducismus Triumphatus*, pp. 288, 295, 302, 307; Mackenzie in *The Witches of Renfrewshire*, p. 23; Dalyell, *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, p. 578.

<sup>2</sup> τούτου ἡ γυνὴ Λαοδάμεια καὶ μετὰ θάνατον ἦρα, καὶ ποιήσασα εἰδῶλον Πρωτεσιλάῳ παραπλήσιον τούτῳ προσωμίλει, Apollodoros, *Ebitome*, 3. 30.



to the sacred use of images of gods and saints." <sup>1</sup>

The simplest form of magical contact is that where the agent absorbs or acquires for his own the power or qualities of some person or thing. Australian black fellows will kill a man and eat his kidney fat in order to have his strength in addition to their own.<sup>2</sup> Borneans take the head of an enemy "in order to bring into subjection the spirit of the dead man."<sup>3</sup> The possession of tiger's whiskers gives to the fortunate owner the *mana* of the dreaded creature;<sup>4</sup> Achilles acquires his strength and bravery from being fed on the flesh of wild beasts.<sup>5</sup>

The most common class of magical practice, the malevolent attack on another party, does not differ in principle. In a great number of cases the ill-wisher effects a contact with his enemy's personality, and wreaks upon it the

<sup>1</sup> Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. p. 98. When the Greek boys scourged Pan's image (Theokritos vii. 106), or the ancients chained the statues of their deities (Pausanias iii. 5. 7, viii. 41. 6; Plutarch, *Roman Questions*, lxi.), or a Greek peasant puts silver foil on the eikon of the Panagia, they can hardly be said to be acting on a mistaken principle that *like causes like*.

<sup>2</sup> Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 373.

<sup>3</sup> Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. story of Haji Batu, Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Apollodoros iii. 13. 6. 3 ὁ δὲ λαβὼν αὐτὸν ἔτρεφε σπλάγχνοις λέοντων καὶ συῶν ἀγρίων καὶ ἄρκτων μυελοῖς, καὶ ὠνόμασεν Ἀχιλλέα . . . ὅτι τὰ χεῖλη μαστοῖς οὐ προσήνεγκε.



*mana* of his hatred. He burns a piece of his clothes, sticks nails into his footprint, or melts his waxen image. He makes a secret but direct attack upon his neighbour's personality. In Melanesia we are told that what is needed in witchcraft is "the bringing together of the man who is to be injured and the spirit who is to injure him."<sup>1</sup> Similarly the witch or wizard can unite his enemy with evil powers or qualities. He can effect a contact, for instance, between some one's personality and the blindness of a frog whose eyes he has previously pierced. The principle presupposed by the action is exactly the same as that which lies behind union with a beneficent or healing power. "In the temple of Rameses II. at Gurnah, Tûm, Safekht and Thoth are depicted as inscribing that monarch's name on the sacred tree of Heliopolis, by which act he was endowed with eternal life."<sup>2</sup> In 1895 people were known to travel considerable distances to visit a little girl, living in the Alor Gajah district of Malacca, who was reported to be *kramat* (i.e. instinct with *mana*), and to swallow a small quantity of her saliva in a cup of water.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Hartland has shown that behind the ritual of the sacred

<sup>1</sup> Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Clodd, *Tom Tit Tot*, p. 160 (quoting Wiedemann).

<sup>3</sup> Blagden in Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 673.



localities lies the idea of the union of the sick party with the potency of the water or tree.<sup>1</sup> And here it will be seen that we are on the border-line between magic and religion. Dr. Farnell has drawn attention to the fact that in later Greek philosophy and amongst the Early Christian Fathers the true intention of prayer is "not mere petition for some special blessing, but rather communion with God, to whom it is the spiritual approach," and compares it with the savage's communion, in which "the agent endeavours to charge himself with a potency drawn from a quasi-divine source."<sup>2</sup> In magic union or contact with power in religion communion with the divinity is the fundamental idea; sacrifice has ultimately as its *raison d'être* the bringing into contact of worshipper and God.<sup>3</sup>

Magic and religion are, therefore, seen to have their origin in the same conception of union with a mystical power. It is not so much their methods as their aims which differentiate them: magic, as MM. Hubert et Mauss and Mr. Marett claim, is anti-social; its power

<sup>1</sup> See Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, p. 174. The idea finds frequent expression in Herbert, Vaughan, and the religious poets.

<sup>3</sup> Hubert et Mauss, "Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice," *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions*, pp. 1-130.



is *arunquilha*. But the methods and rites of magic and religion are often identical in character, and the religion of one age becomes the magic of the next. In their earliest stages that power with which they are concerned is non-moral and powerful alike for good or evil. It is only gradually that *mana* becomes qualitatively differentiated, and the danger of union with the greatest powers becomes a moral test.<sup>1</sup>

In the superstitions of the higher culture there is room for a white magic; but that is only because the practices of white magic are survivals from earlier creeds, and as such they are usually banned by the church and regarded with suspicion by good ordinary folk.<sup>2</sup> In the Lower Culture the only line which divides magic from religion is that of the distinction between rites with a social or anti-social intent; in the higher culture orthodoxy marks the boundary. The methods of magic and religion have a common source in the ideas of union, sacrament, and the use of spiritual powers.

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Witness, for example, Lilly's laboured apology for his foolish if harmless astrological pretensions in the "Introduction to the Impartial Reader" prefixed to *England's Prophetical Merline* (cf. Philostr. *V. Apoll.* v. 12), or Mackenzie's interesting discussion of the legal aspect of the distinction claimed between a white and black magic, *Witches of Renfrewshire*, p. 21.



But one qualification can be added in an account necessarily curtailed to the smallest possible limits. While it may be claimed that the ideas we have suggested are the ultimate presuppositions behind all magical and religious action, it is impossible to deny that from these fundamental notions have been differentiated a number of very various developments, and that it is often in entire unconsciousness of the real essence of the rite that the performer acts. The instruments of union at healing-well or tree come to be thought of as thank-offerings or ex-votos. In witchcraft charms the blood-bond becomes mere blood-letting. The customs of the Alcheringa and the lore of sacred tradition are perpetually undergoing a reinterpretation at the hands of those who revere the practices of antiquity, and whose restless intellects supply new forms to the original meanings which age and unthinking reverence have effaced.



## CHAPTER III

### RITUAL

Tout rite est une espèce de langage. C'est donc qu'il traduit une idée.<sup>1</sup>

IN all arts, no less than in magic, there is a tendency, particularly strong where tradition demands conformity to a specific form, for the art to assume a paramount importance, for the artificer to succeed the artist, for priest to oust prophet, for formalism to supersede *mana*. It is this tendency which accounts for the fact that magic arts come into being, and magical words or actions tend to acquire a power *per se* independent of the personality which sets them in motion. Rightly to understand this process it is necessary to remember the *raison d'être* of all ritual, which is, in the long run, nothing more nor less than the attainment of a distinctive mode of expression. For the mode

<sup>1</sup> Hubert et Mauss, *L'Année Sociologique*, vii. p. 58.



of expression does matter infinitely to the force of the meaning, and ritual has really a *mana* of its own. Ordinary conversation teems with the magic of methods of expression ; intonation, gesture, tone of voice are all of the very highest importance. The recitation of poetry may make or mar the poem.<sup>1</sup> In the expression of our ordinary thoughts or emotions it is true that the modes of expression are in part unlearned and instinctive, and do not come by prayer and fasting ; but in proportion as the occasion is momentous or the emotion to be expressed important, the desire will arise to employ a mode of expression as distinctive as the occasion, and satisfactory alike to the demands of the crisis and the feelings of the agent.

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to compare the remarks of Robert de Brunne, the annalist, on the loss in value of True Thomas's romance of Sir Tristrem when its author was no longer alive to say it in the right way, with a modern poet's experience. De Brunne says—

I see in song, in sedgeying tale  
Of Ercildoune and of Kendale.  
Now thame says as they thame wrought,  
And in thare saying it seems nocht.  
That thou may here in Sir Tristrem  
Ouer gestes it has the steme,  
Ouer all that is or was :  
If men it said as made Thomas.

(Ellis, *Specimens of the Early English Poets*, i. p. 105.) In his introduction to the late Mr. Synge's play, *The Well of the Saints*, Mr. Yeats remarks, "Above all, he made word and phrase dance to a very strange rhythm which will always, till his plays have created their own tradition, be difficult to actors who have not learned it from his lips."



In many cases this is not the result of conscious thinking about the matter, but is the product of an inarticulate and subconscious feeling. And it is just this inarticulate and subconscious recognition of the necessity of finding a distinctive mode of expressing emotions concerned with the most awful and important aspects of life, which leads to the development in early magico-religion of incantation, spell, and ritual. When the first wizard chanted an incantation instead of saying it, he did not invent the chant on rational grounds, or suppose that for such and such reasons his new method would help the effectiveness of his action. His discovery can no more be analysed in terms of logic than that of the invention of articulate speech. The importance and impressiveness of his object led him unconsciously to the adoption of an impressive, abnormal method of expressing himself. The Australian black fellow points with his spear in the direction of his foe, chanting over it "Strike, kill." The spear, the words, and the gesture of pointing, as Mr. Marett would say, "help out the spell." As being a mode of expression they are logically distinguishable from that of which they are the mode of expression, i.e. the projection of the will, *mana*,



or power. But it is very important to note that neither in the mind of the worker of the magic nor in that of the victim of the spell is this distinction realised. In practice the mode of expression, the act of expressing, and the emotion expressed form a complex and unanalysed whole.

It is, further, quite a natural and instinctive impulse which demands that the more difficult and impressive the magic, the more distinctive and impressive must be the modes of expression. We are not surprised to learn from Spencer and Gillen that in dealing with illness "in serious cases the action is more dramatic and the medicine-man needs a clear space in which to perform."<sup>1</sup> When Clerk Saunders' ghost demands back its troth, Margaret does not verbally return it. Such an occasion needs a befitting procedure.

Then she has taen a crystal wand,  
And she has stroken her troth thereon :  
She has given it him out at the shot window  
Wi' many a sad sigh and heavy groan.

Any great occasion tends to gather ritual round it. For example, touching for the king's evil demands no ritual to give it efficacy beyond the contact of the sick man with the person in

<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 531.



whom the healing power resides.<sup>1</sup> But when the sovereigns of England exercised the power of the divine right of kings in the healing of the sick, they solemnised the occasion by the addition of ritual which in Elizabeth's day was quite an elaborate service.<sup>2</sup>

The object, then, of ritual is to enable the agent to express himself effectively, and all solemn occasions will normally and naturally create or utilise forms of ritual. If this is true, it follows that we cannot with Dr. Frazer look to the analysis of ritual acts to supply us with the efficacy of the magic which they express. It becomes necessary, therefore, to consider how the belief arises that a rite possesses a power *per se*, and why magical ritual should so often have assumed that mimetic form which

<sup>1</sup> See the account given by Greatraks of his power, Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 66; the claims of a Mr. James Moore Hickson, *Morning Leader*, June 4, 1909; the case of Arise Evans, who rubbed his fungous nose on the royal hand to the surprise of its owner but to the satisfaction of himself, Aubrey, *Miscellanies*, p. 133; cf. the examples, *ib.* p. 129 foll.

<sup>2</sup> "Nam reges Anglie etiam nunc tactu ac quibusdam hymnis non sine ceremoniis prius recitatis strumosos sanunt," Polydore Virgil, *Angliae Historia*, lib. viii. p. 143; cf. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, iv. 3. Elizabeth prepared herself for the occasion by religious exercises, and the patients were introduced. Then the liturgy was read, prayers said, and a discourse delivered on the last chapter of Mark; when reaching verse 14, relating to the incredulity of the disciples, she applied her bare hands to the part diseased. Further Scripture reading, signing the cross over the diseased part, and a gift of a gold coin as an amulet concluded the proceedings, Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 63 foll.



rendered plausible the formulation of Dr. Frazer's theory.

Now all ritual will tend to become more and more elaborate. The little cell of St. Francis is enshrined in the gross building of Sta. Maria degli Angeli. Even rituals consecrated by immemorial tradition suffer similar accretion of ornate pomp. Both in magic and religion two influences are at work which assist this elaboration. Firstly, as the area of experience and knowledge becomes enlarged, the wonderful must be sought further afield. In magic this influence often tells most strongly; in cases where magic is banned by orthodoxy, it is deprived of the solemn grandeur of the received religious ceremonies, and has to fall back on their parody, on the relics of a remoter antiquity, and a wild extravagance of strangeness. Secondly, even where priests and medicine-men are not conscious charlatans, or even so far lacking in sincerity as Mr. Sludge the medium,<sup>1</sup> there is always a tendency, where any kind of sacerdotal body arises, to exalt the dignity of the caste by a certain amount of charlatanry;

<sup>1</sup> See Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 412: "Granting all that can be said as to the intentional fraud of the medicine-men, and admitting that many of them are cheats and frauds, there remain some who really have a belief in their own powers as well as in those of other men."



the vulgar, they urge (where apology is offered), cannot scale the heights of reality where dwell those of esoteric knowledge. The juggling tricks learned by the Midé of the Objibwa are an example, but the phenomenon is familiar. Where charlatans gain credulity, the absurdly miraculous is of course at a premium.

Of magic rites MM. Hubert et Mauss remark, "Il est à noter que la plupart des circonstances à observer sont des circonstances anormales. Si banal que soit le rite magique on veut le fait rare."<sup>1</sup> Magic having the abnormal for its sphere of action, its rites start with a bias in this direction<sup>2</sup>; the influences we have suggested explain the extravagant abnormality of its later developments.

The apotheosis of the rite and the tendency

<sup>1</sup> Hubert et Mauss, *op. cit.* p. 47; cf. *ib.* p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Naturally the abnormal is magical. The abnormal attracts attention, and arouses awe and fear in the mind accustomed to routine. Hence the fear of strangers or white men (*Papua Reports*, 1908, p. 58; Codrington, *op. cit.* p. 192; Bogoras, *American Anthropologist*, 2nd series, iii. pp. 86, 97); the fear of or reverence for twins (Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, i. pp. 72 and 130; Crawley, *Mystic Rose*, p. 416; Miss Kingsley, *West African Studies*<sup>2</sup>, p. 455; Frazer in *Anthropological Essays*, p. 161, and the numerous classical instances). The West Indian kidney-bean washed up in the Orkneys (Scott, *Minstrelsy*, ii. p. 260), the Coco de Mer of the Seychelles cast up in the Indian Ocean (Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 6, note 3), are considered magical. Stones of peculiar shape or natural curiosities of any kind must have *mana* (Haddon, *Magic and Fetishism*, p. 73). Tigers, elephants, etc., with one foot smaller than the other must be ghost-tigers or elephants (Skeat, *op. cit.* pp. 71, 153, 163).



of power to shift from the agent or from the intention of the action to the formal rite will naturally assist this progress towards learned absurdity. And this apotheosis is not difficult to understand.

Heaven lies about us in our infancy.  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
About the growing boy.

Here the case of the individual holds good for that of the human race. As a wider field of experience opens out, heaven recedes farther from earth; culture and knowledge advance, wonders and miracles grow less numerous. Man looks back to the Age of Gold; the days when Enoch walked with God or deities wandered up and down the earth sharing the hospitality of man, have receded into the past. The king-god becomes the priest; the *mana* of the medicine-man, which moulded the future for his people, becomes the inspiration of the prophet or, in the last resort, the art of the diviner. The source of power shifts from earth to heaven. What the priest does and what he says in his official capacity as a mediator between heaven and earth will naturally become more important than his own power as a man, now that his private capacity has become differentiated from his office.



Tradition further sets the seal of sanctity on rites religious and magical, which have remained constant, though mutilated by ignorance, through a succession of generations of performers. In the use of public ceremonies especially the meaning of the rite tends soon to be forgotten. All public religious ceremonies tend to be unintelligently performed; the meaning of the rites is not examined, it is sufficient that their performance is known to be a good thing. "It was the custom of the Alcheringa," say the Australians of the sexual license at certain corroborees; "it prevents anything going wrong with the performance."<sup>1</sup>

This apotheosis of a rite by the force of tradition is the cause of two phenomena. On the one hand, it obtains for ritual a faith in its power *per se*, in that the rite has no other significance for the worshipper than a belief that its performance is in a general way beneficial and productive of good. On the other hand, it enables esotericism to provide for religious advance within the old creed. Repulsive features may be explained away; Plutarch can interpret the religion of Greece in terms of philosophy. In magic, too, apologists are able, when rites have become crystallised, to explain

<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 97.



their significance in new terms, and Aubrey and Lilly back their credulity with interpretations based on considerable, if mistaken, learning.

In many cases the associations of a rite oust its purpose. Paternosters and Aves may be recognised as possessing power, because they are part of traditional ritual which it is in some way good to perform. Their power is next extended in application to all spiritual and magical needs outside the ritual of which they form a part. The recital of an *Ave* will keep off ghosts; the negro sings a hymn and *duppies* flee. The case is really analogous to that of the wide area of personality in the Lower Culture. Anything associated with holiness or religion has power therefrom. A throwing stick of Mr. Howitt's which had been used in initiation ceremonies was thought peculiarly efficacious for magical purposes.<sup>1</sup> Similarly a cock that has been used in a charm is thought by the Sinhalese to be particularly suited for cock-fighting.<sup>2</sup> Being born on Christmas night gave a power to see spirits, or a peculiar *mana* in dealing with ghostly powers.<sup>3</sup> The psychology of the business may be seen in the sentimentalism

<sup>1</sup> *J.A.I.* xvi. p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Hildburgh, *J.A.I.* xxxviii. p. 163.

<sup>3</sup> Sir W. Scott, *Marmion*, iii. 22, with note. Gutch and Peacock, *County Folklore*, v., *Lincolnshire*, p. 48.



of Boswell at Iona. "While contemplating the venerable ruins, I reflected with much satisfaction that the solemn scenes of piety never lose their sanctity and influence, though the cares and follies of life may prevent us from visiting them or may even make us fancy that their effects are only 'as yesterday when it is past,' and never again to be perceived. I hoped that, ever after having been in this holy place, I should maintain an exemplary conduct."<sup>1</sup>

We have thus briefly indicated the kind of influences which assist the transference of power from the agent to the act and the formation of the rite of power, the belief in whose efficacy rests in the last resort on the force of tradition and on the associations of the rite; there remain to be investigated the causes which have made *mimesis* so frequent a phenomenon in magical and religious ritual, or, in other words, the value of assertion as spell. For it makes no difference whether we are speaking of words or acting. The word of power and the rite of power are *in pari materia*; a spoken statement and an acted statement are equally assertions of fact or desire. Gesture, indeed, forms a large part of the language of much of the Lower Culture, and we may remember the surprised

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (Croker), vol. iii. p. 32.



delight of Lukian's Philistine friend who was reluctantly taken to see a celebrated mime.

ἀνέκραγε γὰρ καὶ μεγάλη τῇ φωνῇ ἀνεφθέγγατο·  
'Ακούω, ἄνθρωπε, ἃ ποιεῖς, οὐχ ὁρῶ μόνον, ἀλλὰ  
μοι δοκεῖς ταῖς χερσὶν αὐταῖς λαλεῖν.<sup>1</sup>

Ludovico in the *Spanish Mandevile of Miracles* informs us that "as Algazar an ancient Philosopher of great authority affirmeth, the earnest imagination hath not onely force and power to imprint divers effects in him which imagineth, but also may worke effect in the things imagined, for so intently may a man imagine that it rayneth, that though the wether was fair, it may become cloudy and rayne indeed, and that the stones before him are bread, so great may be the vehemence of his imagination that they may turne into bread."<sup>2</sup> Here, in part (there are other elements also) lies the efficacy of Euphemism. You call the Fairies "Kindly Ones"; behind the conscious motive of putting them into a good temper, and the fear of effecting a connection with them by uttering their name, is further the comfort that you derive by persuading yourself to believe that they are kindly: the fact that you call them kindly makes them

<sup>1</sup> Lukian, *Περὶ ὀρχήσεως*, 63.

<sup>2</sup> *The Spanish Mandevile of Miracles*, fol. 10.



kindly. You always say "Good People" for Fairies, or "the Guid Man" for the Devil, and half pretend to yourself "They are not as black as they are painted and will I am sure be reasonable."<sup>1</sup> In the case of the English Fairies I am even disposed to believe that consistent Euphemism helped to determine their character. The force of assertion on the individual who makes it may be seen in the curious regulation of the Midé wiwin. "When a Midé feels himself failing in duty or vacillating in faith, he must renew professions by giving a feast and lecturing to his confrères, thus regaining his strength to resist evil-doing."<sup>2</sup>

"The wish is father to the thought," and magic is essentially the emphatic statement of a wish, behind which there is the power of fulfilment. If we return to the distinctive mode of expression and suppose that you are pointing your wand at the enemy, there are three modes of verbal expression which are of almost equal effectiveness. You can say "Strike, kill," "You will strike or kill," or "May you strike and kill." Confident assertion and command are very near akin. The linguistic usage of "will" and "shall" among

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the influence of "the word-magic of penitence" in Babylonian religion, Farnell, *Greece and Babylon*, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> Hoffman, *op. cit.* p. 176.



English-speaking peoples shows in its variation this close connection. "It shall rain" and "It will rain" are in the mouth of the rain-maker almost identical.

Examples or illustrations could be multiplied almost indefinitely; a few only must suffice us here. When the Luiseño dance the song of Temen Ganesh, the Song of Seasons, they say, "All these I have mentioned and Wanawut. I have mentioned all the names of the seasons and stars and Wanawut. I am proud of my songs. I have believed in my songs."<sup>1</sup>

The Ponca Sun Dance contains a narration of war tales with happy endings.<sup>2</sup> Analogous are the game ceremonies of the Australians and Americans, where emus, kangaroos, buffaloes, etc., are imitated in the dance, or fish represented struggling in the net.<sup>3</sup> Allied are all the narrative spells which survive down to those exorcisms of the Middle Ages or the charms of Folklore, where, for example, head-

<sup>1</sup> Du Bois, *University of California Publications: American Archeology and Ethnology*, viii. No. 3, pp. 105-106.

<sup>2</sup> Dorsey, *Field Columbia Museum*, Publication No. 102, Anthropological Series, vol. vii. No. 2, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> See examples in Preuss, *Globus*, 86, p. 388 foll. "Der angegebene Zweck ist, dass die Nahrung reichlicher wird, als sie ist. Wir haben hier aber nicht an einen Zauber zur natürlichen Vermehrung der Känguruhs zu denken, sondern der Nachdruck ist einfach auf das Vorhandensein der Beute gelegt, gleichgültig wie das zustande kommt, oder besser noch auf das Antreffen der Tiere."



ache may be cured by narrating how Jesus met Headache one day, and asked him where he was going, and forbade his purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly in spells or charms the verbal form is often that of a statement, past, present, or future. After the Terrapin broke his back he sung the medicine song, "I have sewed myself together, I have sewed myself together," upon which the pieces came together though the scars remain visible.<sup>2</sup>

To cure cripples the Cherokee shaman says, "Yû, O Red Woman, you have caused it. You have put the intruder under him. Ha! now you have come from the Sun Land. You have brought the small red seats with your feet resting upon them. Ha! now they have swiftly moved away from you. Relief is accomplished!"<sup>3</sup> The statement "Relief is

<sup>1</sup> Pradel, *Griechische und süditalienische Gebete, Beschwörungen und Rezepte des Mittelalters*, p. 267. For "die Zaubervünsche in Gestalt einer blossen Erzählung von Tatsachen" see Preuss, *Globus*, 87, pp. 396-397.

<sup>2</sup> Mooney, "Myths of the Cherokee," *Annual Report of the American Bureau of Ethnology*, xix. part i. p. 279.

<sup>3</sup> Mooney, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokee," *ibid.* vii. p. 349. So the lover says, "I am handsome, I am very handsome, I shall certainly never become blue," *ib.* p. 376. In another charm the shaman sings, "Listen! Ha! I am a great *ada wehi*. I never fail in anything. I surpass all others—I am a great *ada wehi*. Ha! It is a mere screech-owl that has frightened him. Ha! now I have put it away in the laurel thickets. There I compel it to remain," *ib.* p. 353. Cf. the text of the formulas, *ib.* pp. 351, 355, 381.



accomplished" is exactly on a par with the statement "It is thundering," made not in words but in the action of the rattling of Salmoneus' cauldrons. The magic spells of the Egyptian Book of the Dead are cast in this narrative form. The deceased, for example, is addressed with the statement, "Thou hast carried thy hands into the house of eternity, thou art made perfect in gold, thou dost shine brightly in sun metal, and thy fingers shine in the dwelling of Osiris, in the sanctuary of Horus himself." The object of the statement is that these good things shall happen to the dead man.<sup>1</sup> All the world over the burial service has the efficacy of assertion, and among the Greeks and Romans those who were falsely reported dead had to undergo a ceremonial rebirth before they could mix in ordinary life. The statement that they were dead made them dead.<sup>2</sup> Again, in working magic or

<sup>1</sup> Budge, *Egyptian Magic*, p. 188. See Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, i. 2, p. 224. In Chaldean magic the conjurations "begin by enumerating the various kinds of demons whom they are to subdue by their power, and then describe the effects of the charm. The desire to see them repulsed or to be delivered from them follows, and this is often expressed in the affirmative form," Lenormant, *Chaldean Magic*, p. 15; cf. *ib.* p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Roman Questions*, 5. Malays recite the burial service over the image of an enemy, Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 572. In Morocco the scribes read the funeral service over seven little stones, a knife, or a coin, in the name of the intended victim, Westermarck in *Anthropological*



reciting *mantras* the agent will state that he is some great spiritual power. It is not merely that you deceive the spirits into submission; by asserting or pretending that you are Solomon you identify yourself with him and wield his powers. That is why the name of power plays so important a rôle in magic.

It is, then, to the feeling which lies behind Euphemism, that by saying that something is you can persuade yourself that it really is, that must be traced the ultimate psychological motive for the popularity of *mimesis* in ritual. The dramatic imitation of the effect desired is nothing more nor less than its assertion by gesture, and of verbal assertion in spell and charm sufficient instances have been given to make clear their nature and efficacy. I may perhaps be allowed to conclude the chapter with the quotation of the pathetic opening of Grimm's story of *Das Bürle*. To understand it aright gives one the mental attitude with which to appreciate the ultimate appeal of mimetic ritual. "Es war ein Dorf, darin sassen lauter reiche Bauern und nur ein armer, den nannten sie das Bürle. Er hatte nicht einmal eine Kuh und noch weniger Geld eine zu

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*Essays*, p. 364. Canon law denounced those priests who should celebrate masses for the dead in the name of the living, Gratian, *Decretalia*, p. 11, *Causa*, xxvi., quoted Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 175.

kaufen : und er und seine Frau hätten so gern eine gehabt. Einmal sprach er zu ihr, 'hör, ich habe einen guten Gedanken, da ist unser Gevatter Schreiner, der soll uns ein Kalb aus Holz machen und braun anstreichen, dass es wie ein anderes aussieht, mit der Zeit wird's wohl gross und gibt eine Kuh.' Der Frau gefiel das auch, und der Gevatter Schreiner zimmerte und hobelte das Kalb zurecht, strich es an, wie sich's gehörte, und machte es so, dass es den Kopf herabsenkte, als frässe es."



## CHAPTER IV

### DIVINATION AND MAGIC—THE ACCEPTANCE OF OMENS

μάντι κακῶν, οὐ πώ ποτέ μοι τὸ κρήγυνον εἶπας·  
αἰεὶ τοι τὰ κάκ' ἐστὶ φίλα φρεσὶ μαντεύεσθαι—  
ἐσθλὸν δ' οὐδέ τί πω εἶπας ἔπος, οὐδ' ἐτέλεσσας.<sup>1</sup>

THE preceding chapter will have prepared us for the close and intimate relation between Divination and Magic. The witch, for example, who remarked to her victim, "I shall live to see thee rot on the Earth before I die and thy cows shall fall and die at my feet,"<sup>2</sup> was not so much predicting an event as casting a spell. In the Isle of Man fairies made "a mock christening when any woman was near her time, and according to what child male or female they brought, such should the woman

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad* i. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Smith, tried before Robert Hunt, March 8, 1664. Glanvil, *op. cit.* p. 309.



bring into the world.”<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to say whether the mock christening determines or merely foretells the sex of the child. Again, those magic ceremonies like that of the Vedda shaman who, possessed by the *Yaka*, makes good hunting for his people by enacting the tracking of game and prophesying success in hunting *sambur*,<sup>2</sup> are on the borderland between Magic and Divination. Speaking of the Hebrews, Mr. Davies remarks: “Indeed, divination is hardly the right word to use for what is so called at this stage, since it is really magic applied to future events. The future is not so much foretold as made or constituted by the art of the magician.”<sup>3</sup> In the case of Balaam the blessing is clearly magical, and in the story of Ahab’s consultation with the prophets it is hard to distinguish the divination from more positive magic. “Zedekiah,

<sup>1</sup> Ritson, *Fairy Tales*, No. xxii., quoting Waldron, *History of the Isle of Man*, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> Seligmann, *The Veddas*, pp. 230-247. The two following excellent instances of the narrow borderland between magic and divination I owe to Miss Freire Marreco: Burrows, *J.A.I.* N.S. i. p. 43; Tylor, *Early History of Mankind*, p. 118. It would not be difficult to multiply examples.

<sup>3</sup> Witton Davies, *Magic, Demonology, and Witchcraft among the Hebrews*, p. 4; cf. *ib.* p. 33. “Goldziher has shown that among the Arabs as among the Jews the magical word of blessing and of cursing played a prominent part in war; the poet by cursing the enemy rendered a service not second to that of the warrior himself. The word uttered was, in fact, a potent fetish.”



the son of Chenaanah, made him horns of iron and said: With these shalt thou push the Syrians." And Micaiah, the son of Imlah, is held responsible for prophesying evil to the king.<sup>1</sup> The passages betray in the narrative the confusion between the act of making the future and that of predicting it. Indeed, a large part of divination is derived directly from magic, and to the end it retains for its object, in the illogical minds of its supporters, the modification of the future course of events. For the object of divination is never the idle curiosity which prompts the society lady to interview the Bond Street palmist. The inquirer desires to know what the future has in store in order that he may turn it to account, make sure of the good things, or in case of necessity cheat the Devil. Your fatalist needs no divination. The belief in the possibility of effecting this purpose of the questioner, and the introduction of conditionality into an order of Nature which the act of his questioning presupposes fore-ordained, is of course illogical. "*Si enim nihil fieri potest, nihil accidere, nihil evenire, nisi quod ab omni aeternitate certum fuerit esse futurum rato tempore, quae potest esse fortuna?*"

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xxii., 2 Chronicles xviii.; cf. the Homeric passage which heads the chapter. For the responsibility of manteis see below, p. 96.



qua sublata qui locus est divinationi?"<sup>1</sup> This illogicality is characteristic of divination to the end. Lilly, for example, in his "Apology to the Impartial and Understanding Reader," defends his art on the ground of the benefits which a knowledge of the future confer. "Now if I say, in such a year of his age, by reason that one of those 5 Hylegiacalls, which is the significator, comes to the □ or ♂ or ♀ of a malefical promittor, and that this intimates a sicknesse proceeding from the depravation of this or that humour, and name it especially that is vitiated, and say in time consult with the phisition, and prevent the disease, and be sure to evacuate that predominating humour principally, what hurt is in this manner of direction; whereby (*longe ante*) he is delivered of the peccant humour before it could radicate, and from a pestilent fever or a long lasting quartan ague, so that when the significator and the promittor meete, the native is crazy two or three dayes and no more, scarce that, whereas otherwayes his life might have been endangered, and he a long time sick."<sup>2</sup>

Divination, then, even after it has parted company with magic, has still the object of

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De div.* ii. 7. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Lilly, *England's Propheticall Merline.*



enabling the client to modify in his interest the course of events. To the end suspicion detects in it the taint of magic, and the diviner is suspected of controlling the future by his act. We may recall the attitude of the Roman Emperors towards astrology. If the stars merely reveal the future, what harm could the astrologer effect? Yet to prophesy the Emperor's death was a capital offence. Hadrian is said to have blocked up the Kastalian spring, because he had learned his imperial destiny from its prophetic water, and feared that others might consult it for a similar purpose.<sup>1</sup> This fear that the act of prophecy may cause its fulfilment belongs to the psychology of Euphemism, and is the heritage from that belief which we examined in the last chapter, that assertion may have the force of spell.

It remains to trace the influence of this belief on an important phenomenon of classical divination, viz. the acceptance of omens, and to note the magical properties of *χρησμοί*, and their relation to words of power. To understand the matter aright we must return for a moment to the conflict of *manas* implied in magical action. In a paper, to which reference has already been made, I endeavoured to

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *Pausanias*, v. p. 256; Amm. Marc. xxii. 12. 8.



demonstrate that in magical conflict victory goes to that party which has the greater *mana*, or which takes the initiative and makes itself the aggressor.<sup>1</sup> The evidence is too voluminous for repetition here, but I will endeavour to illustrate my meaning. We have already noted that by eating a dead man's fat you may acquire his *mana* in addition to your own. In the Cherokee story "the Rabbit would not tell his name, for he was afraid that, if Flint knew that, he would try to kill him by sorcery, and he knew that Flint's medicine would likely be stronger than his: for Flint had killed more animals."<sup>2</sup> If an enemy can get hold of part of your personality and master it, he has you in his power, but if you of deliberate intention force him or cause him to come unwittingly in contact with your personality, the victory is on your side. This, as I have tried to show, explains the instances of what Mr. Crawley has called rites of "inoculation."<sup>3</sup> The warlocks of Gujarat afford a good example of the principle: if a warlock can cause a spirit to accept part of his flesh, the spirit becomes

<sup>1</sup> *Folklore*, xxi. p. 147 foll.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Davis, "Some Cherokee Stories," No. x., *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, iii. p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Crawley, *The Mystic Rose*, p. 235; cf. *ib.* pp. 81, 236, 308, 371.



his slave for a year.<sup>1</sup> Similar is the principle of those love-charms where to insert portions of your personality into the loved one's food gives the agent power over the eater.<sup>2</sup> Just as European peasants drink the witch's blood to destroy her witchcraft,<sup>3</sup> the Lushais eat the witch's liver with the same result.<sup>4</sup> It is the same principle that victory goes to the aggressor which prompts the superstition that it is advisable to see wolves before they see you.<sup>5</sup> And it is just the same where speaking is the mode of contact. It is dangerous to reply to questions put to you by suspicious persons, and the best thing to do is often to answer with another question, and so entrap the foe into putting himself into your power.<sup>6</sup>

In the same psychological category with

<sup>1</sup> Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Fahz, *De poetarum Romanorum doctrina magica*, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> See Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. pp. 272-273: "It united her with her victim."

<sup>4</sup> For this information I am indebted to Mr. T. C. Hodson.

<sup>5</sup> Virgil, *Eclogues*, ix. 53; Plato, *Republic*, 336 D; Theokritos xiv. 22; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* viii. 22 (34); "Der Alten Weiber Philosophie," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 312; cf. the ghost dogs of the Malays, Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 183, note 2.

<sup>6</sup> Baboons must not be answered when they address a Bushman on his way to the hunting-ground, Lloyd, *Bushman Reports*, p. 19; cf. the Devil's lure of the Masai, Hollis, *The Masai*, pp. 265-266. For the danger of answering the Devil in the St. Andrew's Eve charm in the Rhine province, *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 60; cf. Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, No. 123, and the examples I have given, *Folklore*, *loc. cit.* pp. 157-158.



those phenomena must be placed the classical belief in the force of the acceptance of omens. The Delphic god, for example, instructed the Spartans how to entrap the Persian king. They sent a herald to demand justice for the murder of Leonidas, and after hearing the complaint Xerxes turned to Mardonios, who was standing by him, and uttered the words, *τοιγάρ σφι Μαρδόνιος ὅδε δίκας δώσει τοιαύτας οἷας ἐκείνοισι πρέπει*. The envoy accepted the word and departed; Mardonios' fate was sealed.<sup>1</sup> The obvious points will be noticed that (1) the spoken word may produce an effect, not indeed irrespective of its meaning, but other than the meaning or intention of the person who carelessly uttered them; (2) the act of acceptance makes them irrevocable, and that in the sense which best accords with the interest of the person who accepts them. Indeed, it is almost not too much to say that he forces his own meaning on the omen. Take the story of the king of Makedon and the Temenid brothers. When they demand the payment of their wages, the king, *θεοβλαβῆς γενόμενος*, points to the sunlight streaming through the smoke-hole, and offers them this as the only reward that he will give. His word might

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos viii. 115 ὁ μὲν δὴ δεξάμενος τὸ ῥηθὲν ἀπαλλάσσετο.



have fallen to the ground had not Perdikkas been of quicker intelligence than his brothers. ὁ μὲν δὴ Γαυάνης τε καὶ ὁ Ἀέροπος οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἔστασαν ἐκπεπληγμένοι, ὥς ἤκουσαν ταῦτα· ὁ δὲ παῖς, ἐτύγχανε γὰρ ἔχων μάχαιραν, εἶπας τάδε, “δεκόμεθα, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τὰ διδοῖς,” περιγράφει τῇ μαχαίρῃ ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος τοῦ οἴκου τὸν ἥλιον, περιγράφας δὲ ἐς τὸν κόλπον τρὶς ἀρυσάμενος τοῦ ἡλίου, ἀπαλλάσσετο αὐτός τε καὶ οἱ μετ’ ἐκείνου. It is no use, then, the king pursuing him; Perdikkas has accepted the sun, the kingdom must inevitably be his.<sup>1</sup> The acceptance of an omen clinches the matter and makes the fatal utterance or the lucky sign irrevocable. Peisistratos is marching on Athens from Marathon, and his mantis, Amphilytos the Akarnanian, makes medicine for his success. θείῃ πομπῇ χρεώμενος the seer uttered the lines—

ἔρριπται δ’ ὁ βόλος, τὸ δὲ δίκτυον ἐκπεπέτασται,  
θύννοι δ’ οἰμήσουσι σεληναίης διὰ νυκτός.

Peisistratos immediately ratifies the omen by accepting it: συλλαβὼν τὸ χρηστήριον καὶ φὰς δέκεσθαι τὸ χρησθὲν ἐπήγε τὴν στρατιήν.<sup>2</sup> So Leutychides formally accepts the omen of the

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos viii. 137. For the command of the sun or the possession of sun mascots as conditions of sovereignty, cf. the Thracian Regalia, Atreus’ Lamb, the Golden Dog of Pandareos, the Golden Fleece.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos i. 63.



name Hegesistratos,<sup>1</sup> and Alexander turns into an omen the mild reproof of the Pythia for insisting on a reply irrespective of the official calendar of days when the oracle might be consulted.<sup>2</sup>

Conversely the technical word for the aversion of an omen, whatever may have been the actual procedure, implies refusal. Thus Hipparchos in vain attempted to avert the dream which warned him of his coming death: μετὰ δὲ ἀπειπάμενος τὴν ὄψιν ἔπεμπε τὴν πομπὴν ἐν τῇ δὴ τελευτᾷ.<sup>3</sup> The procedure is exactly parallel to the aversion of a curse. In Morocco, for example, if a man says, "This is 'ar on you," and you are not prepared to grant the request, you reply, "May the 'ar recoil on you."<sup>4</sup>

In Roman belief the acceptance or refusal of omens played, if anything, a more important part.<sup>5</sup> Hercules accepts the omen of Carmenta's prophecy as to his coming apotheosis.<sup>6</sup> Scipio

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos ix. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Alexander* 14 ἡ δὲ ὥσπερ ἐξηττημένη τῆς σπουδῆς εἶπεν, 'Ανίκητος εἶ, ὦ παῖ. τοῦτο ἀκούσας Ἀλέξανδρος οὐκέτι ἔφη χρήζειν ἐτέρου μαντεύματος, ἀλλ' ἔχειν ὃν ἐβούλετο παρ' αὐτῆς χρησμόν. Alexander accepts an omen before Issos, Lukian, *De lapsu salut.* 8. 734; cf. Cyrus in Xenophon, *Anabasis*, i. 8. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Herodotos v. 56.

<sup>4</sup> Westermarck in *Anthropological Essays*, p. 361.

<sup>5</sup> See Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* iv. p. 137.

<sup>6</sup> Livy i. 7. 11.



approaching Africa in a fog accepts the omen of a promontory's name.<sup>1</sup> L. Paulus starting for the Persian War turns his daughter's tears at the death of her puppy named Persa into an omen of victory.<sup>2</sup> Aeneas refuses the omen of Acestes' arrow catching fire.<sup>3</sup> For this procedure the technical terms were *improbare*, *exsecrari*, *refutare*, or *abominari omen*. And the belief that when an unlucky omen occurs you can turn it *in bonam partem* by prompt repartee<sup>4</sup> leads the writers on the military art to write chapters *de dissolvendo metu, quem milites ex adversis conceperint*.<sup>5</sup>

Now evidently if the act of asserting something possesses the efficacy which we have attributed to it, every word spoken is potentially a word of power and is liable to produce an effect. The emphasis in superstition, which is always illogical and liable to inconsistency,

<sup>1</sup> Livy xxix. 27. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 46. 103. For further examples of the acceptance of omens cf. Plutarch, *Parallela*, 306 B, C; Livy ix. 14. 7-8, v. 55. 1-2; *Aeneid* xii. 258, with Servius; Aelius Spartianus, *Didius Julianus*, 7, *Scrip. Hist. Aug.* (Teubner) i. p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> *Aeneid* v. 530. "Non secundum augurum disciplinam dixit ad se non pertinere. Nam nostri arbitrii est visa omnia vel improbare vel recipere," Servius, *ad loc.*

<sup>4</sup> Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* iv. p. 144, e.g. the story in Amm. Marc. xxi. 2. 1. When Julianus' shield broke off leaving the handle only in his hand he shouts to his terrified soldiers, "Nemo" inquit "vereatur; habeo firmiter quod tenebam."

<sup>5</sup> Frontinus, *Strat.* i. 12.



is laid now on the power implicit in the word, now on the act of uttering or accepting it. It is not here the place to trace the development of the word of power, the potent name, and the cabalistic spell, but it is of some importance for our purpose to notice that there is a tendency to think of oracular utterances as possessing the potential efficacy of words or names of power. If the act of blessing, as in the case of Balaam, is an act of magic rather than of divination, the prophecies of gods or seers tend to be regarded as talismans or spells. *Χρησμοί* have the potential efficacy of charms; if the enemy obtain knowledge of them, he is enabled to set them in action, and the prophecy will be fulfilled. That is why, like all books containing magical lore, *χρησμοί* must be carefully guarded by their owners. Thus in Egypt the great Book of Magic is carefully guarded by Rameses III. in the royal library.<sup>1</sup> In classical antiquity it seems to have been the practice to keep the State oracles in secret security, in the same way and from the same kind of motives as the secret preservation of the divine name.<sup>2</sup> It is

<sup>1</sup> Budge, *op. cit.* p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Servius, *Aen.* ii. 351, and *Georgic* i. 498; Plutarch, *Roman Questions*, lxi.; Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, p. 185 foll.; Conybeare, *Congress of Religions*, ii. p. 358, give the classical examples of the concealment of the names of deities in Greece and Italy.



only on capturing the Acropolis that the Spartans learned the contents of the oracles there jealously preserved from alien knowledge, oracles which were of evil import for Athens' future.<sup>1</sup> At Sparta knowledge of the oracles was confined to the Pythioi and the kings.<sup>2</sup> At Thebes χρησμοί were jealously guarded by the royal house, if we can accept as evidence Pausanias' version of the Oidipous story.<sup>3</sup> λέγεται δὲ καὶ ὡς νόθη Λαῖου θυγάτηρ εἴη, καὶ ὡς τὸν χρησμὸν τὸν Κάδμω δοθέντα ἐκ Δελφῶν διδάξειεν αὐτὴν κατὰ εὐνοίαν ὁ Λαῖος· ἐπίστασθαι δὲ πλὴν τοὺς βασιλέας οὐδένα ἄλλον τὸ μάντευμα. Ulysses claims that it was the capture of Helenus which rendered possible the fall of Troy.

quam sum Dardanio, quem cepi, vate potitus  
quam responsa deum Troianaque fata retexi.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos v. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos vi. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias ix. 26. 3. In the various versions of the Oidipous story, mention is often made of the "oracles of Laïos." While it is possible that the φθίνοντα Λαῖου παλαίφατα θέσφατα of Soph. *O. T.* 906 may mean "oracles about" or "given to Laïos," it is not easy to see what meaning can be attached to this interpretation in Herod. v. 43. Possibly Λαῖου χρησμοί might mean oracles of Laïos in a sense analogous to oracles of Bakis (for king-seers see below, p. 67; Oidipous has divine associations), but more probably the Theban kings, like the Peisistratids, possessed a collection of χρησμοί which were jealously guarded in rigid secrecy.

<sup>4</sup> Ovid, *Metam.* xiii. 335-336; cf. Apollod. *Epit.* 5. 9 εἰπόντος δὲ Κάλχαντος "Ἐλενον εἰδέναι τοὺς ῥυομένους τὴν πόλιν χρησμούς, ἐνεδρεύσας αὐτὸν Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ χειρωσάμενος ἐπὶ τὸ στρατόπεδον ἤγαγε, καὶ ἀναγκάζομενος ὁ Ἐλενος λέγει πῶς ἂν αἰρεθείη ἡ Ἰλῖος; cf. betrayal of Sparta



The Romans were unable to take Veii until they learned from a refugee the oracle which foretold that the city would fall when the waters of the lake had been drained away.<sup>1</sup>

This attitude towards State oracles, which possess an efficacy conditional on the knowledge and the actions of the interested party, and the analogous belief that omens must be formally accepted by the recipient if they are to produce the beneficent effect which he desires, show clearly that the art of divination cannot be limited to the mere statement of a fore-ordained fact. Prophecy or omens are potential forces; it is as much the business of the mantis to direct the future and to turn it to account, as to tell his client what is going to happen.

ἔσθλόν δ' οὐδέ τί πω εἶπας ἔπος, οὐδ' ἐτέλεσσας.

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to the Heraklids by Krios, son of Theokles, a soothsayer, Paus. iii. 13. 3.

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 44. 100.



## CHAPTER V

### MANTEIS

Divination is in the lips of the King : his mouth shall not transgress in judgment.<sup>1</sup>

θεὸς εἴ τις ὑπολάβοι γενέσθαι ἱερεὺς ἂν γένοιτο ἢ μάντις·  
τῆς γὰρ αὐτῆς τοῖς θεοῖς τιμῆς καὶ οὗτοι τυγχάνουσιν.<sup>2</sup>

THE preceding chapter may have suggested some doubts with regard to the ordinary and accepted classification of manteis into two distinct kinds, the inductive and the intuitive, as M. Bouché Leclercq has called them. The distinction, it is true, has been inherited from antiquity. "Duo sunt enim divinandi genera, quorum alterum artis est, alterum naturae."<sup>3</sup> Of these the art according to Quintus Cicero is based on a scientific observation of recurring coincidences.<sup>4</sup> Pausanias, Plato, and the author

<sup>1</sup> Proverbs xvi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Artemidoros, *Oneirokritica*, iii. 13. 169.

<sup>3</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Cicero, *op. cit.* i. 7. 12, "quare omittat urguere Carneades, quod faciebat etiam Panaetius requirens, Iuppiterne cornificem a laeva, corvum



of the *Life of Homer* emphasise the same distinction.<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq has made it the basis of his investigation of the character and position of the mantis.

This distinction has, of course, a measure of truth, but it has led to misunderstanding. The corollary that has been drawn from it that the two methods of divining were in origin distinct, and that the one was based on religion and inspiration, the other on a rationally invented pseudo-science, is wholly untrue and belongs to the age which sought the origin of Greek institutions in the invention of an ideal Hellene, who was the slave of reason alone. The distinction rather, as it is drawn by Plato, belongs to a specific stage of development. The art of divination emerges much in the same way as the art of magic; in each case the ivy kills the tree. Even in the case of omens we have seen that the duty of the seer is more than mere observation and scientific deduction. His is not simply a craft which any one can learn, or a formal science of a quasi-mathematical kind. Of the mantis is demanded not only knowledge

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ab dextra canere iussisset. Observata sunt haec tempore immenso et (in significatione) eventis animadversa et notata."

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias i. 34. 4; Plato, *Phaidros*, 244; [Plutarch], *Vit. Hom.* 212.



but a wise and understanding heart, or at least something of the genius of successful opportunism. εἵπερ ἐγὼ μάντις εἰμὶ καὶ κατὰ γνώμαν ἴδρις, sings the Chorus in one of Sophokles' plays.<sup>1</sup> The Roman augur of Plutarch's day, it is true, has passed beyond this stage. To the question why it is that an augur can never be deprived of office, Plutarch suggests the answer that just as a musician cannot be deprived of the knowledge of his art, so it is impossible to rob an augur of the knowledge which he has acquired.<sup>2</sup> This represents the last infirmity of the development of divination and the apotheosis of ritual. The period which recognised the two different kinds, the intuitive and the inductive, represents the transition stage which preceded it. Roughly, the history of the development is as follows. If the bulk of divinatory processes are derived from magic, the mantis is no less the direct descendant of the medicine-man. With the

<sup>1</sup> Sophokles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, 1088. A familiar figure is the prophet who is ignorant of his own fate, "Aëthionque sagax quondam ventura videre, | tunc ave deceptus falsa" (Ovid, *Met.* v. 146). But it is perhaps worth noticing that Homer, and following him Virgil and Apollonios Rhodios, express themselves as though μαντοσύνη was in some way a power. It is not so much that the prophet is ignorant of his fate but that his μαντοσύνη is not strong enough to avert it. 'Αλλ' οὐκ οἰωνοῖσιν ἐρύσατο κῆρα μέλαιναν (Ennomos, *Iliad* ii. 859); ἀλλὰ μιν οὔτε | μαντοσύνησι ἐσάωσαν (Idmon, Ap. Rhod. *Arg.* ii. 816); "sed non augurio potuit depellere pestem" (Rhamnes, *Aeneid* ix. 328).

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Roman Questions*, 99.



growing complexity of civilisation there takes place a specialisation of function and a differentiation of species. The primitive shaman unites in himself the germs of faculties which are later developed by a continuous evolution. Poet, prophet, doctor, diviner, wizard, are all specific developments which gradually separate farther and farther from each other and develop along their own lines, each in turn exhibiting more and more specific developments within itself. The mantis is the direct descendant of the medicine-man, shorn by the emergence of these other sciences, arts, and religious beliefs of much of his pristine splendour. In the course of this evolution all those influences, which tend in the case of formal magic to aid the growth of formalism and the transference of power from the practitioner to his art, will be at work. Already the development of divinatory processes from the sub-rite<sup>1</sup> predisposes them to the associations of ritual and the encroachments of formalism. Thus the maker of the future passes into the prophet, the *ἐμφυτος μαντική* of an earlier age becomes the inspiration of a god or the knowledge of an art, and in the long run the "curious art" wins the day. The antithesis between inductive and intuitive

<sup>1</sup> See below, chap. ix. †



methods of divination must not be pressed too hard : it must be viewed historically. Bouché Leclercq noticed the fact that the age of the intuitive seers seemed to precede that of the inductive, but he did not draw the moral.

The mantis, Homer tells us, is the worker for the public weal ; he is everywhere a welcome guest.

τίς γὰρ δὴ ξείνον καλεῖ ἄλλοθεν αὐτὸς ἐπελθὼν  
ἄλλον γ', εἰ μὴ τῶν οἱ δημοεργοὶ ἔασιν,  
μάντιν ἢ ἰητῆρα κακῶν ἢ τέκτονα δούρων,  
ἢ καὶ θέσπιν ἀοιδόν, ὃ κεν τέρπῃσιν ἀείδων ;  
οὗτοι γὰρ κλητοὶ γε βροτῶν ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν.<sup>1</sup>

The passage is an interesting one. Besides the carpenter who builds your houses and ships, who are the other *δημοεργοί* associated with the mantis ? They have close affinities with him and are in a sense complementary.

Let us take first the "god-inspired singer." "To Prophets," says a seventeenth-century authority, "there be several attributes given, some called prophetæ, some vates, others videntes. Vates was a title promiscuously conferred on prophets and poets as belonging to them both. . . . Of the vatical or prophetic poets amongst the Greeks were Orpheus, Linus, Homer, Hesiod, etc., and amongst the Latins

<sup>1</sup> Homer, *Odyssey* xvii. 382.



Publius Virgilius Maro, and others.”<sup>1</sup> And so we find that Hesiod claims the same power as that of Kalchas—

εἰρεῦσαι τά τ' ἔόντα, τά τ' ἐσσόμενα, πρό τ' ἔόντα.<sup>2</sup>

The Muses have given him the wizard's magic wand.<sup>3</sup>

In all magic, music, song, and poetry play an important part. Professor Jevons has illustrated in his interesting lecture on Graeco-Italian Magic the significance of ἐπωδή and *incantatio*, and the *magicae cantamina Musae*.<sup>4</sup> The oracles of Apollo were given in verse in the earliest times, however inferior the quality of the divine poetry. The god of Delphi, in fact, possesses all the attributes of the medicine-man, song, divination, healing, the unseen darts which strike down his opponents,<sup>5</sup> and even the wand of laurel.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Heywood, *Life of Merlin*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Iliad* i. 70, and Hesiod, *Theog.* 38.

<sup>3</sup> καὶ μοι σκῆπτρον ἔδον δάφνης ἐριθηλέος ὄζον | δρέψασθαι θηητόν, *Theog.* 30; for the significance of the ῥάβδος see Jevons, *Anthropology and the Classics*, p. 100.

<sup>4</sup> Jevons, *op. cit.* p. 94 foll.

<sup>5</sup> Per me quod eritque fuitque  
Estque patet; per me concordant carmina nervis.  
Certa quidem nostra est; nostra tamen una sagitta  
Certior, in vacuo quae vulnera pectore fecit.  
Inventum medicina meum est, opiferque per orbem  
Dicor et herbarum subiecta potentia nobis.

Ovid, *Met.* i. 517-522.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the vases of the cleansing of Orestes.



Again, Hesiod with his claim to omniscience and his rustic folklore carries us on to Bakis, Musaïos, and those poet-prophets who find their parallels in the apocryphal seers of England and Scotland, in Ambrosius Merlin and True Thomas of Ercildoune. There is the same nebulous personality, the same long-lived popularity, and the same exploitation of their fame by subsequent ages.<sup>1</sup>

There remains the *ἰητήρ κακῶν*. Magic and medicine go naturally hand in hand. In early societies all maladies are magical. Amongst the Australian tribes or the peoples of West Africa no one dies a natural death. If a man is not killed in war his death is due to magic. Some evilly-disposed person has projected his *mana*, which has eaten away the victim's entrails. Miss Kingsley gives a case of a mortal Prometheus whose viscera were eaten away by a bird projected into his entrails by an enemy.<sup>2</sup>

With the growth of civilisation medical science arises, and assigns some of these ills to natural rather than to spiritual causes. There

<sup>1</sup> With Bakis and Musaïos in the Persian wars (Herod. viii. 20, 77, 96, ix. 43) compare True Thomas's prophecy to Black Agnes of Dunbar (Scott, *Border Minstrelsy*, iv. p. 130), or Merlin's prophecies as given in Heywood's verification. The form is analogous to that parodied by Aristophanes, *Knights*, 123, 1003; *Birds*, 962 foll.; *Peace*, 1052 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Kingsley, *West African Studies*,<sup>2</sup> pp. 210, 216.



is again a development involving a specialisation of function, and instead of the wizard who cures all ills, we have a doctor of the body and a doctor of the soul. Epimenides the Kretan is called in to purify Athens from her moral sickness, and in serious crises States turn for help to Apollo; but normal difficulties are settled by the politician or statesman. So Melampus is doctor and wizard. He heals the daughters of Proitos by a combination of spiritual and material purgation.<sup>1</sup> Then come the Asklepiadai with their simples and charms, and in the *τρυφῶσα πόλις*, as Plato complains, developed specialisation in the art of medicine.<sup>2</sup>

The three *δημιοεργοί* of Homer, then, are found to be complementary to one another. Let us notice another point. If we take the case of the *ἰητὴρ κακῶν* or that of the diviner we see that the development of civilisation and the consequent complexity result in a countless host of special functionaries. Melampus was an *ἰητὴρ κακῶν* in the full sense of the word; the growth of the medical science marks a first specialisation. That science subdivided in course of time into its various special depart-

<sup>1</sup> Paus. v. 5. 8-10, on the smell of the river Anigros; Paus. x. 36. 7, with Frazer's note.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 405 foll.



ments, the surgeon, the trainer, the physician. The science of spiritual medicine also comes to embrace a host of special functionaries.<sup>1</sup> Similarly in divination there is an analogous development to be seen in the multiplication of χρησμολόγοι, diviners of the πίνακες ἀγυρτικοί,<sup>2</sup> πύθωνες, ἐγγαστριμύθοι.<sup>3</sup> At the lower end of the scale there is a countless and multiplying host of specialists in divination and quackery.<sup>4</sup> May we not discern above the triple division of Homer the dim but majestic form of the medicine-man? This devolution, which we suggest to have taken place, is no inconceivable hypothesis. The process may be seen at work in the Lower Culture. Thus Howitt remarks of the Kurnai: "A peculiar feature in the Kurnai magic is the separation of the functions of the seer and the bard from those of the doctor and the wizard."<sup>5</sup> Of the Australian tribes in general he says: "Some men devote themselves to one branch, some to another of the art of magic, and thus arise what would be called amongst us specialists."<sup>6</sup> The same

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. ἐγχευτρίστραι, Frazer, *Pausanias*, iii. p. 277.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Aristides*, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 414 E.

<sup>4</sup> See Cicero, *De div.* i. 58. 132; Cato, *De agric.* v. 4; Artemidoros, *On.* iii. 69, 156.

<sup>5</sup> Howitt, *J.A.I.* xvi. p. 44.

<sup>6</sup> *ib.* p. 24; cf. also pp. 32-36.



tendency to specialisation is reported among the Cherokees,<sup>1</sup> and among the Malays Pawang and Bomor are adopting each a special province.<sup>2</sup>

Let us return to the *ἱητήρ κακῶν*. Who are primarily capable of cleansing from spiritual evil? There is, of course, the mantis. A Melampodid cleansed Alkathoos of Megara of the murder of his son.<sup>3</sup> Apollo, according to one legend, was himself forced to go to the seers of Krete to be cleansed of blood-guiltiness.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, there are kings, for example Croesus: *παρελθὼν δὲ οὗτος (Ἄδρηστος) ἐς τὰ Κροίσου οἰκία κατὰ νόμους τοὺς ἐπιχωρίους καθαρσίῳ ἐδέετο κυρῆσαι, Κροῖσος δὲ μιν ἐκάθηρε.*<sup>5</sup> Thirdly, there is the god of Delphi himself, the Apollo that cleansed Orestes. Herakles, we are told, on being refused purification by King Neleus applied successfully to Delphi; on another occasion *καθαίρεται μὲν ὑπὸ Θεσπίου, παραγενόμενος*

<sup>1</sup> Mooney, *Annual Report of American Bureau of Ethnology*, vii. 309. Similar specialisation among Cherokee story-tellers, Mooney, *ib.* xix. pt. i. p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 56. Further examples among the Pima shamans, Russell, *Annual Report of American Bureau of Ethnology*, xxvi. p. 257. In British New Guinea, Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 643; North Africa, Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, pp. 28, 30.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias i. 43. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Pausanias ii. 30. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Herodotos i. 35. For further examples cf. Apollod. ii. 30, 57, 72, 76, 112; iii. 163, 164.



δὲ εἰς Δελφοὺς πυνθάνεται τοῦ θεοῦ ποῦ κατοικήσει.  
The Pythia, for the first time addressing him as Herakles, orders him to expiate his crime in servitude to Eurystheus.<sup>1</sup>

Again, therefore, we have three figures connected by an identity of function; their inter-relation is a matter of some importance. It is clear that the oracle performs on a larger scale many of the functions of a Salmoneus. The god and an organised priesthood have taken over the superintendence of the welfare of the tribe and its individual members, exercised formerly by the medicine-man, who was himself the "Cloud-compelling Zeus" and king of his people. The position and functions of the Pythia, or rather perhaps of those "Holy Ones" who were the real power behind the tripod,<sup>2</sup> were in many respects not unlike those of Samuel, the last of the Jewish judges. The purely political exploitation of Delphi in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. obscures the issue. Until the Peloponnesian War, when Athens endeavoured to obtain a divine sanction

<sup>1</sup> Apollodoros ii. 72. Note the encroachment of the god; the cleansing by Thespios is not sufficiently efficacious. A similar tendency for the god to oust the medicine-man is to be seen in variants of the Polyidos story where Apollo takes the place of the Kouretes (Hygin. *Fab.* 136), or Asklepios that of Polyidos (Hygin. *Poet. Astr.* ii. 14).

<sup>2</sup> The position of the *Hosioi* is well stated by Dr. Farnell, *Cults*, iv. pp. 193-195.



to counterbalance the hostility of Delphi, Dodona seems to have played no part in politics. The problems which were referred to the god are personal and often trivial, or matters affecting the spiritual welfare of the community. Just as Saul applied to the man of God to know what had become of his father's asses, "Agis asks of Zeus Naos and of Dione about his coverlets and pillows, whether he has lost them or whether some one has stolen them." Herakleides asks if he will have more children besides his daughter Aigle. The Corcyreans inquire what sacrifices and vows to which gods and heroes will enable them to live together in harmony.<sup>1</sup>

And primarily the oracle at Delphi fulfilled the same function, even after it took to politics. The cynic ascribed the decline of oracles to the wickedness of the questioners and the trivial questions which they asked.<sup>2</sup> In Plutarch's day men inquired *εἰ νικήσουσιν, εἰ γαμήσουσιν, εἰ συμφέρει πλεῖν, εἰ γεωργεῖν, εἰ ἀποδημεῖν*.<sup>3</sup> But Plutarch is wrong in thinking that the god in the good old days had no inquiries of a personal nature to answer. The childless man habitually repaired to Delphi. The god was asked the

<sup>1</sup> For these inscriptions see Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* ii. p. 319 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. *De defectu orac.* 413.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. *De EI apud Delphos*, 5. 386 c; cf. *De Pyth. orac.* 26. 407 D.



same kind of questions as that of the Corcyreans—questions relating to the common weal. τὰ δὲ μέγιστα πόλεων μαντεύματα φορᾶς καρπῶν πέρι καὶ βοτῶν ἐπιγονῆς καὶ σωμάτων ὑγείας.<sup>1</sup>

These are just the kind of affairs for which a Salmoneus was responsible. The spiritual welfare of the State, the wellbeing of men, herds, and crops, have passed into a higher and more august control than that of the magic-worker of the tribe. It is not surprising to find that the conception of its function is elevated by the character of the new and more spiritual agent.

Since the publication of Dr. Frazer's great work, the early history of kingship in Greece, as elsewhere, has attracted the attention of scholars. Mr. Cook<sup>2</sup> in a series of papers packed with erudition has made out a formidable list of "divine kings"—Salmoneus, Minos, Lykaon, Rhodope and Haimos, Alkyon and Keux, Periphas, and the like—who have left their mark in the traditions and mythology of Greece and Rome. Not many, perhaps, will care to follow Mr. Cook in all the detail of his theories of the relation of Zeus, Juppiter, and the Oak to prehistoric medicine-kings; at the same time it

<sup>1</sup> Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 28. 408 c.

<sup>2</sup> A. B. Cook, *Classical Review*, xvii. ; *Folklore*, xv.



is impossible to deny the cogency of his main contention that traces remain in classical mythology of a past belief in the magic-worker, who is the head of the tribe. But one reservation it is as well to bear in mind : it is as impossible to give a date to the existence of the fact which these survivals in myth indicate, as it is in analogous cases of survival in Teutonic or European Folktale, where there is no external evidence to give the clue or confirm the fact.<sup>1</sup>

If we believe Mr. Cook's main contention to be sound, and hold at the same time that the seer is a descendant of the magician, it will not surprise us to find, as is indeed the case, that the connection of *μαντοσύνη* and royalty is close, and that it is closer the farther back you trace the history of divination. It is no mere chance that makes the Homeric king the bearer of a magic wand, a *σκηπτούχος βασιλεύς* ; Agamemnon's sceptre no less than Hesiod's is of divine origin.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the kings of the legendary

<sup>1</sup> The earliest historical picture that we have of Achæan society represents the king as possessing certain religious functions, but not the monopoly of religious powers. There is a tendency towards friction between Agamemnon and Kalchas perhaps comparable to the relations between Saul and Samuel. See 1 Samuel viii. 4, xii. 12, xiii. 8-14.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad* ii. 101. Agamemnon's sceptre was worshipped at Chaeronea, Pausanias ix. 40. 11 ; cf. Servius on the *lituus* of Picus : "Lituus est incurvum augurum baculum quo utebantur ad designanda caeli spatia. Nam manu non licebat . . . vel lituum id est regis baculum, in quo potestas esset dirimendarum litium," Servius, *Aeneid* vii. 187.



past were manteis, and they possessed the other functions of that office no less than the power of cleansing from the stain of bloodshed: "Omnino apud veteres, qui rerum potiebantur, iidem auguria tenebant: ut enim sapere, sic divinare regale ducebant. Testis est nostra civitas, in qua et reges augures et postea privati eodem sacerdotio praediti rem publicam religionum auctoritate rexerunt."<sup>1</sup> Strabo adds his testimony to the same effect: ταῦτα γὰρ ὅπως ποτὲ ἀληθείας ἔχει, παρά γε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐπεπίστευτο καὶ ἐνενόμιστο, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ μάντις ἐτιμῶντο ὥστε καὶ βασιλείας ἀξιοῦσθαι, ὡς τὰ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν ἡμῖν ἐκφέροντες παραγγέλματα καὶ ἐπανορθώματα καὶ ζῶντες καὶ ἀποθάνοντες.<sup>2</sup> And making every allowance for the influence of Euhemerism,<sup>3</sup> the testimony of mythology points the same way. Rhamnes "rex idem, et regi Turno gratissimus augur,"<sup>4</sup> like Picus,<sup>5</sup> king and seer; Anios, the Melchisedek of Delos, father of Andros, seer, ruler, and eponym of the island<sup>6</sup>; Helenos, son of Priam and king

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo xvi. 2. 39, 762.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. the story which makes Proteus king in Thrace and afterwards in Egypt. Philargyrius and Servius *ad Vergil, Georgic* iv. 387; Euripides, *Helena*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Aeneid* ix. 327.

<sup>5</sup> Ovid, *Met.* xiv. 320.

<sup>6</sup> "Hunc Anius, quo rege homines, antistite Phoebus  
Rite colebatur, temploque domoque recepit,"  
Ovid, *Met.* xiii. 632, 647; Konon, *Narr.* 41.



of Epiros<sup>1</sup>; Phineus, the old blind victim of the Harpies<sup>2</sup>; Mounichos, son of Dryas, king of the Molossi, and his son Alkandros<sup>3</sup>: all these are examples. Teneros, whose manteion stood by the Ismenos, was king of Thebes.<sup>4</sup> Merops, whose two sons were slain at Troy despite their father's warning,<sup>5</sup> and Ennomos, leader of the Mysians,<sup>6</sup> were seers. When Faunus, son of Picus, practised his magic arts and mantic powers in Egypt, he went clad in royal robes.<sup>7</sup> Thamyris ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἦκε κιθαρωδίας ὥς καὶ βασιλέα σφῶν, καίπερ ἐπηλύτην ὄντα Σκύθας ποιήσασθαι.<sup>8</sup> Melampus made the price of his healing the daughter of Proitos, marriage with a princess and a part of the kingdom of Argos.<sup>9</sup> From Melampus were descended Amphiaraos and Amphilochos.<sup>10</sup> Polyidos' father has the significant name of Koiranos. Cicero evidently thinks of Polyidos

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Met.* xiii. 720; Vergil, *Aen.* iii. 294.

<sup>2</sup> Apollodoros i. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Anton. Lib. xiv.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Lykophron 1211.

<sup>5</sup> *Iliad* ii. 831, xi. 329.

<sup>6</sup> *Iliad* ii. 858.

<sup>7</sup> This touch of right feeling in the myth of a Christian chronographer is, I believe, a fair piece of evidence. *Exc. Graec. Barb. Chron. Min.* (Frick.) p. 239.

<sup>8</sup> Konon, *Narr.* vii.

<sup>9</sup> Herodotos ix. 34; Servius, *Eclogue* vi. 45. Similarly Manto becomes the wife of Rhakios or of a prince of Italy.

<sup>10</sup> Pausanias vi. 17. 6; Cicero, *De div.* i. 40. 88; cf. the parentage of seers discussed below. Alkandros, Galeotes, Theonoë, Medea, Ampyx, Mopsos, are of royal family.



himself as king in Korinth; the scholiast on Homer says that he was king in Argos.<sup>1</sup>

And like Salmoneus or Atreus, the manteis are connected with the weather or the sun. Thus before the birth of Branchos, his mother dreamed "per fauces suas introisse solem, et exisse per ventrem."<sup>2</sup> According to one story it was in the temple of the sun, where Apollo was χρησμολόγος, that the snakes licked the ears of Kassandra and Helenos.<sup>3</sup> The parentage of Medea and Circe shows the children of the sun as magicians and prophets. Prometheus, who stole the fire from heaven, taught men the arts of prophecy.<sup>4</sup> We are reminded of those dim mythical figures, Telchines, Kouretes, and Idaean Dactyls, or the Hyperboreans, Trophonios, and Agamedes. These magicians of a remote prehistoric era, the discoverers of metal, the inventors of cults, had power to spoil their neighbours' crops, or to summon rain and hail.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 40 foll. ; Schol. Hom. *Il.* v. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Scrip. Rer. Myth.* ed. Bode, 1834, p. 28, *Mythog.* i. 81 ; Konon, *Narr.* xxxiii.

<sup>3</sup> Tzetzes, *Arg. ad Lykophron.*

<sup>4</sup> Aischylos, *Prometheus Vincetus*, 484 seq.

<sup>5</sup> For confusion of Telchines, Kouretes, Idaean Dactyls, etc., with each other see Strabo x. 7, 466, x. 19, 472 ; Paus. v. 7. 6. They were metallurgists, Strabo x. 3, 473, xiv. 7, 653 ; Diod. v. 55, xvii. 7 ; Schol. Ap. Rhod. i. 1129 ; Steph. Byz. s.v. Αἰδηψος ; *Marmor Parium*, i. 22. The names Paionios, Iasios, Akesidas are evidence of their power as *λητῆρες κακῶν*, Paus. v. 7. 6, 14. 7 ; Diodoros v. 64. The Dactyls are



In Italy Fauni were powers of fertility and prophecy.<sup>1</sup>

It would be interesting if we could discover any traces in mythology of antagonism on the part of the Olympians towards the seers of the prehistoric and heroic ages. It is perhaps worth noticing that these gods, whom the orthodoxy of a later time credits with the inspiration of prophets, by no means always approve of the use of their gift. The daughter of Cheiron was turned into a mare as a punish-

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connected with fertility, Paus. v. 7. 6, ix. 19. 5. The Kouretes were born of the rain, Ovid, *Met.* iv. 282. Kouretes and Telchines come from Krete and Rhodes, homes of sun ritual; the parallel between Kouretes and Salii is familiar. The Telchines are magicians with the evil eye, have power to bring down rain or hail, and to destroy their neighbours' crops; their knowledge of the future warned them to flee the Flood, Ovid, *Met.* vii. 366; Eustath. *Iliad* 941. 2, and *Odyssey* 1391. 12; Diodoros v. 55-56; Strabo xiv. 7, 653-654; Bode, *Mythog.* ii. 185. The Dactyls were Orpheus' masters, Diod. v. 64. They cleansed Pythagoras with a thunderstone, Porph. *Vit. Pythag.* 17. The Kouretes were prophets, Apollod. iii. 3. 1; s.v. *Κουρήτων στόμα* in Hesychius and Suidas; Zenob. iv. 61. Epimenides was said to be one of them, Diog. Laert. i. 114. In connection with Teiresias' change of sex, it is interesting to notice the possibility of their having worn female garments, Strabo x. 8, 466. The characteristics of Trophonios assimilate him to the same type of magician (Bouché Leclercq iii. p. 322). The connection of Agamedes, Medea, Agamede has been noticed by Usener, *Götternamen*, p. 163. It would seem that the vague figures of these prehistoric powers preserve the memory of just such all-potent medicine-men as those whose existence we have postulated as ancestors of the feeble mantis. Further references are given in Roscher ii. 1611-1613, and Hubert's article "Magia," Daremberg et Saglio p. 1494 foll.

<sup>1</sup> Servius, *Georgic* i. 10. *Faunus* is derived from *fando*, or *fauni* are so called "quod frugibus faveant."



ment for revealing the future of Asklepios.<sup>1</sup> Orphe and Lyco, daughters of Dion, king of Laconia, were turned into rocks because they disobeyed the conditions under which Apollo gave them knowledge of the future, "ne prodi-trices numinum esse vellent; neve quaererent, quod esset nefas scire."<sup>2</sup> Jupiter punished Tantalos because, admitted to the council of the gods, he revealed their secrets to men.<sup>3</sup> Some said that Teiresias was blinded by the gods because he revealed to men what they willed to remain hidden.<sup>4</sup> Phineus, according to one version, was blinded by the gods because he foretold to men what was to come to pass. In a variant of the tale, his crime was the specific act of telling the sons of Phrixos the way from Kolchis to Greece.<sup>5</sup> Amphilochos was slain by Apollo at Soloi.<sup>6</sup>

But however this may be, the instances of the king-seer which have been quoted are sufficient to show that the farther back the history of the mantis is traced, the more exalted is his position, and the greater his dignity and power. The augurs, those charlatans of a developed

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Met.* ii. 637 foll.; Hygin. *Poet. Astron.* ii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Servius, *Eclogue* viii. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Hyginus, *Fab.* lxxxii. (ed. Schmidt, p. 82).

<sup>4</sup> Apollodoros iii. 69.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* i. 120.

<sup>6</sup> Strabo xiv. 17, 676. His authority is Hesiod.







parallels in the living belief of the Lower Culture. Among the Creek Indians we are told that shamans not uncommonly held contests to determine their superiority, and the Creeks and the Osage had contests between their shamans.<sup>1</sup> Among the Shuswap, if two shamans with equally powerful guardian spirits tried to bewitch each other, both died at the same time, one shortly after the other.<sup>2</sup>

With the development of religion and priesthood it is obvious that the medicine-man's *mana* must suffer from the new theology. The language of the priest in the opening of the *Oidipous Tyrannos* illustrates the development that naturally takes place. Mopsos and Oidipous win their victories over their rivals by their own superior qualities, their *mana*. Oidipous in the play has a less exalted status; he is not able to help his people in virtue of his magic power, but by means of assistance human or divine.

ἵκετεύομέν σε πάντες οἷδε πρόστροποι  
ἀλκὴν τιν' εὐρεῖν ἡμίν, εἴτε του θεῶν  
φήμην ἀκούσας εἴτ' ἀπ' ἀνδρὸς οἷσθά πον.<sup>3</sup>

a struggle between Amphilochos and Mopsos for sovereignty, Schol. Lykophron 440, 1047; Apollodoros, *Epit.* 6, 19.

<sup>1</sup> Speck, *Memoirs American Anthropological Association*, ii. 2, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Teit, *Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, ii. 7, p. 613.

<sup>3</sup> Sophokles, *O. T.* 41. Ten lines before the priest has emphasised the fact that Oidipous is only a man. But I cannot believe that



*Mana* degenerates into inspiration. The Kalchas of Hesiod had *mana*; the Kalchas of Homer has still a virtue of his own, but it is now the gift of a god :

οἰωνοπόλων ὅχ' ἄριστος  
ὅς ῥ' ἔδη τά τ' ἔοντα, τά τ' ἐσόμενα, πρό τ' ἔοντα  
καὶ νήεσσ' ἠγήσατ' Ἀχαιῶν Ἴλιον εἴσω  
ἦν διὰ μαντοσύνην, τήν οἱ πόρε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the earlier manteis are inspired. Pausanias, in stating that the mantis is master of an expository and formal art, makes an important reservation: χωρὶς δὲ πλὴν ὅσους ἐξ Ἀπόλλωνος μανῆναι λέγουσι τὸ ἀρχαῖον, μάντεών γ' οὐδεὶς χρησμολόγος ἦν, ἀγαθοὶ δὲ ὀνείρατα ἐξηγήσασθαι καὶ διαγνῶναι πτήσεις ὀρνίθων καὶ σπλάγχνα ἱερείων.<sup>2</sup>

The early prophets are inspired, the later profess a formal art. The seers of Homer are understood, even where it is not definitely stated, to hold their gift from God. Theoklymenos stands by himself among the Greek seers in the possession of the "second sight." Monro notices in the passage the Celtic parallel, and indeed his utterance to the suitors might be found in duplicate in almost any collection of

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Sophokles was alluding to a prehistoric belief in medicine-men of whom he probably knew nothing.

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad* i. 169-72.

<sup>2</sup> Pausanias i. 34. 4.



evidence for the second sight of the Scotch Highlanders.<sup>1</sup> Helenos,<sup>2</sup> Kassandra,<sup>3</sup> Ophioneus,<sup>4</sup> Evenios,<sup>5</sup> and even Iamos,<sup>6</sup> are examples of the inspired prophet. Teiresias, we know, was skilled in the observation of birds, but his ghost at any rate is able to tell Odysseus the future without their aid.<sup>7</sup>

The poetical side of the magic-worker follows just the same order of development. The medicine-man becomes the *θέσπιν ἀοιδόν*; Hesiod has his mantic lore from the Muses; Bakis is *νυμφόληπτος*. Phemios in the *Odyssey* represents the transition to an art:

*αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δ' ἐμοὶ ἐν φρεσὶν οἶμας  
παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν.*

Monro makes the significant comment: "*αὐτοδίδακτος* is a word which implies that the art of the *ἀοιδός* was becoming or had become a regular profession, in which teaching might take the place of inspiration."<sup>8</sup> And poetry does become an art. The inspiration of the early poets is a link which snaps with the ever-widening separation of poetry and prophecy.

<sup>1</sup> *Odyssey* xx. 350; see Monro's note *ad loc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad* vii. 44.

<sup>3</sup> Homer does not mention her prophetic powers, but Greek tradition is otherwise unanimous.

<sup>4</sup> Pausanias iv. 10. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Herod. ix. 94.

<sup>7</sup> *Odyssey* xi. 90 foll.

<sup>6</sup> Pindar, *Ol.* vi. 65.

<sup>8</sup> *Odyssey* xxii. 347.



The relation, say, of Pindar to the Muses and Apollo is not the same as that of Hesiod on the one hand or that of Aristophanes on the other.

Before we leave the dim figures of the mythical seers, and turn to the less romantic manteis of historical times, it is worth inquiring if traces can be discerned in the traditions which have survived of the supposed source of their powers. Among most savage peoples there are several ways of acquiring the power necessary to become a prophet or magician. Take the Pima Indians, for example. There a shaman may have the power of hereditary right, or he may acquire it by dreams and trances, or he may have magical objects of power shot into him by a magician; or if a man be bitten by a snake near the heart or hand and does not die of it, he becomes a shaman.<sup>1</sup> And there is evidence, I believe, that the classical seers of the mythical period hold their office in virtue of being a certain kind of person or of having undergone certain rites.

First of all, there are, of course, the blind prophets. "The vatical poet" Homer is the old blind man of Chios. Evenios, Teiresias, Phineus, Ophioneus are blind. In the case of

<sup>1</sup> Russell, *Annual Report American Bureau Ethnology*, xxvi. p. 257 foll.



Phormio of Erythrai we find temporary *μαντοσύνη* conterminous with a temporary blindness.<sup>1</sup> In other cases, too, it is recognised that mantic power and the affliction are connected. Sometimes, as we have seen, blindness was inflicted by the gods, angry at the revelation of their secrets; often the gift of prophecy is made as compensation for the curse of blindness.

At pater omnipotens (neque enim licet inrita cuiquam  
Facta dei fecisse deo) pro lumine adempto  
Scire futura dedit poenamque levavit honore.<sup>2</sup>

Blind prophets are familiar figures in a certain stage of culture all the world over. Their appearance is due to obvious causes which reflect the kind of social state in which they take a prominent part. On the one hand, there is the economic fact that the blindness unfits its victim for any of the more active manual pursuits—for hunting, warfare, agriculture, or craftsmanship. On the other hand, the physiological effects of blindness fit a man for the office of prophet. The belief that the blind man has the eye of the soul abnormally developed seems

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias vii. 5. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ovid, *Met.* iii. 336. This is Hesiod's version of the blindness of Teiresias, Hesiod (Rzach), *Frag.* 162. In Pherekydes' version (Apollodoros iii. 6, 7. 3, Kallimachos, *Λουτρά Παλλάδος*) Teiresias saw Athena naked, who thereupon blinded him. Chariklo besought her on behalf of her son, and the goddess, unable to undo her act, gave him knowledge of bird language.



founded on fact, in so far as blind men thrown back on their own resources often possess a power of imagination which perforce differs from the normal. Their misfortune makes them of necessity inhabitants of another world from that of the ordinary man. Hence, just as the shaman chooses a neurotic or epileptic youth for his pupil, so the blind man falls naturally into that profession for which his peculiar mental condition qualifies him, and into which alone his economic position allows him to enter.

Heredity, too, seems to have counted for something. When all allowances are made for poetic imagery and the interested mythology of Apolline orthodoxy, there remains even so a marked tendency of tradition to make the seer the son of a god, a nymph, or a mantis. On the Melampodidai no stress must be laid. There is all the force of that tendency to form a guild of seers maintaining the continuity of a body of lore, which can be seen at work in the parallel case of the Homeridai and the Bakidai. Further, all prophets will tend to incorporate themselves or to be incorporated in such recognised guilds. Thus a Deiphon finds it to his interest to be a son of Evenios.<sup>1</sup> On the other

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos ix. 95.



hand, the Melampodidai will see to it that, where possible, every prophet of renown shall be called a son of Melampus. But let us take some of the representative seers of Greek tradition. Mopsos the Argonaut is the son of Ampyx and the nymph Chloris,<sup>1</sup> or of Apollo and Himantis.<sup>2</sup> Ampyx himself is a seer and son of Elatos, "the fir-tree man."<sup>3</sup> Mopsos of Mallos is the son of Apollo or of Rhakios and Manto, herself a prophetess and the daughter of Teiresias.<sup>4</sup> The mother of Parnassos, the inventor of divination by birds, is the nymph Kleodora; his father was Kleopompos or Poseidon.<sup>5</sup> Idmon, one of the Argonaut seers, was the son of Apollo or Abas and the nymph Kyrene.<sup>6</sup> Teiresias was the son of Eueres and a nymph Chariklo.<sup>7</sup> Phineus is the son of Poseidon.<sup>8</sup> Podaleirios was a brother of Machaon and son of Apollo and Koronis.<sup>9</sup> The father of Kalchas was a mantis,

<sup>1</sup> Hesiod, *Scut.* 181; Hygin. *Fab.* xiv. (Schmidt, p. 45).

<sup>2</sup> "Hic vates Phoebique fides non vana parentis | Mopsus," Val. Flaccus i. 384.

<sup>3</sup> Hygin. *Fab.* cxxviii. (Schmidt, p. 111).

<sup>4</sup> Paus. vii. 3. 2; Strabo xiv. 5, 675.

<sup>5</sup> Paus. x. 6. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Hygin. *Fab.* xiv. (Schmidt, p. 46), or son of Apollo and Asteria, daughter of Koronos, and father of Thestor, Schol. Ap. Rhod. i. 139.

<sup>7</sup> Apollodoros iii. 70.

<sup>8</sup> Apollodoros i. 120.

<sup>9</sup> Hygin. *Fab.* xcvi. (Schmidt, p. 90).



Thestor,<sup>1</sup> whose other son, Theoklymenos, was likewise a seer.<sup>2</sup> Amphilochos is the son of Amphiaraios, the king seer, whose father was Oikles or Apollo.<sup>3</sup> Andros is the son of the priest-king Anios.<sup>4</sup> Proteus was the father of the seer Telemos.<sup>5</sup> Theonoë, daughter of Psamathe and Proteus, king of Egypt, has mantic power προγόνου λαβοῦσα Νηρέως τιμὰς πάρα.<sup>6</sup> Galeotes was the son of Apollo and a Hyperborean princess.<sup>7</sup>

The fact that the great manteis are in the majority of cases the sons of a god, nymph, king or prophet, is some confirmation of our proposition that in the earlier period mantic power is really ἔμφυτος, and that it is not to know a formal art but to be a certain kind of man that makes the seer. The god, it may be noted, in almost every case is Apollo or Poseidon, a great begetter of magical children.

In cases of inspiration, the gift of prophecy may be acquired by any of the modes of contact<sup>8</sup> which effect union between the prophet

<sup>1</sup> Hyginus, *Fab.* cxc. (Schmidt, p. 121).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* cxxviii. (Schmidt, p. 111).

<sup>4</sup> Ovid, *Met.* xiii. 647.

<sup>6</sup> Euripides, *Helena*, 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* cxxviii.

<sup>5</sup> Hygin. *Fab.* cxxviii.

<sup>7</sup> Steph. Byz. s.v. Γαλεῶται.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. the power of prophecy may be conferred (Kassandra) or taken away (Glaukos and Polyidos) by spitting; cf. the touching of Semele's pregnant body, note 1, p. 82.



and the god. The eating of laurel, the drinking of bulls' blood or the divine water must be dealt with in another place. But here it may be noticed that the wives, equally with the sons or daughters of the god, may receive power conferred in the union of the sexual act; *Kassandra* and the *Sibyl* are obvious instances,<sup>1</sup> and the case of *Branchos* and *Apollo Philesios* may be recalled.<sup>2</sup> At the oracle at *Patara* the priestess of *Apollo* gave oracles only at such periods as her divine husband was resident with her.<sup>3</sup>

Another feature of the prophets of the mystical age is their connection with snakes. *Iamos*, the seer, when exposed by his mother, was guarded by two snakes:

δύο δὲ γλαυκῶπες αὐτὸν  
δαιμόνων βουλαῖσιν ἐθρέψαντο δράκοντες ἀμεμφεῖ  
ἰὼ μελισσᾶν καδόμενοι.<sup>4</sup>

On a coin of *Mallos* of the time of *Valerian* is figured a snake, "perhaps at once the attribute

<sup>1</sup> See *Dieterich, Eine Mithrasliturgie*, p. 134. *Ἀλσχύλος* ἔγκυνον αὐτὴν (*Semele*) παρειαγήγαγεν οὖσαν καὶ ἐνθεαζομένην ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐφαπτομένας τῆς γαστρὸς αὐτῆς ἐνθεαζομένας, *Schol. Ap. Rhod.* i. 636.

<sup>2</sup> "Hic quum in silvis Apollinem osculatus esset, comprehensus est ab eo, et accepta corona virgaque vaticinari coepit," *Bode, Mythog.* i. 81; cf. *Strabo* xiv. i. 5, 634; *Lactantius Placidus ad Stat. Theb.* iii. 479.

<sup>3</sup> *Herodotos* i. 182.

<sup>4</sup> *Pindar, Ol.* vi. 76.



of Mopsus the seer and Mopsus the dead hero."<sup>1</sup> Mopsos the Argonaut was killed by a snake in Libya.<sup>2</sup> Kassandra and Helenos were as infants exposed in the sanctuary of Thymbraean Apollo; serpents licked the children's ears, with the result that they were able to understand the language of birds.<sup>3</sup> Melampus saved the young of two dead snakes; these, when they arrived at maturity, coiled themselves one on each shoulder as he lay asleep, and purified his ears with their tongues. When he awoke, he found that he could understand the language of birds, and began his career as a prophet.<sup>4</sup> When Polyidos was immured in the tomb with the body of Glaukos, he saw a snake on the body and killed it; thereupon another snake came and laid a herb on the dead body of the first with the result that it revived. Polyidos then, profiting by this object lesson, restored Glaukos to life.<sup>5</sup> "On the road from Thebes to Glisas is a place enclosed by unhewn stones. The Thebans call it the Snake's Head. This snake, whatever it was, popped its head out of its hole, and

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* iii. p. 345; cf. coins of Oropos.

<sup>2</sup> Ap. Rhod. iv. 1502.

<sup>3</sup> Tzetzes, *Arg. ad Lykophron*.

<sup>4</sup> Apollodoros i. 96.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* iii. 3. 1; Schol. Lykophr. 812; Hygin. *Fab.* cxxxvi.; a variant of story in Hygin. *Poet. Astr.* ii. 14.



Teiresias falling in with it chopped off its head with his sword.”<sup>1</sup> The commonest version of the story of how Teiresias became a prophet narrates that on Mount Kithairon or Mount Kyllene he saw two snakes coupling. He killed one, and there resulted a temporary change of sex, which lasted until he killed the other. This curious experience qualified him to satisfy the indelicate curiosity of Zeus and Hera. The goddess, angered by his answer, blinded him; Zeus gave him prophetic power.<sup>2</sup>

The snake has everywhere been an object of awe and reverence. The deadliness of its bite and its uncanny appearance have marked it out for fearful adoration.<sup>3</sup> The savage has the same instinctive feeling of repulsion as the good lady of Alexandria: τὸν ψυχρὸν ὄφιν τὰ μάλιστα δεδοίκω | ἐκ παιδός.<sup>4</sup> It has everywhere been associated with the underworld, with the dead, and with ancestors. Zulus and Malagasy identify serpents with ancestral ghosts, and Miss Harrison has pointed out the chthonic significance of the serpent in Greece. The

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias ix. 19. 3 (trans. Frazer).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 71; Hesiod (Rzach), *Frag.* 162; Ovid, *Met.* iii. 324; Schol. Ambros. Hom. κ 494; Schol. Marc. Lykophr. 683.

<sup>3</sup> Marett, *Threshold of Religion*, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Theokritos xv. 58. “Naturale est odium ut canum et leporum, luporum et pecudum, hominum et serpentium,” Fab. Planc. Fulgentius, *Mit.* i. 6; cf. *Iliad* iii. 33-35.



fact that the snake lives in holes in the ground,<sup>1</sup> its habit of frequenting graves<sup>2</sup> and entering houses,<sup>3</sup> assist its association with Mother Earth,<sup>4</sup> the underworld, and the dead. It is possible that the phenomena of decomposition may have pointed savage thought the same way. The worm and the snake are easily confused; in English the words denoting them have been used as convertible terms.<sup>5</sup> And there is the belief that the spinal marrow turns at the decomposition of the body into a serpent.<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, to find that in all ages the serpent has been associated with magic power, and often plays a part in the initiation of other than Greek seers. In the

<sup>1</sup> γῆς γάρ ἐστι καὶ αὐτὸς παῖς καὶ τὰς διατριβὰς ἐν τῇ γῇ ποιεῖται, Artemid. *On.* ii. 13. 103. Cf. the epiphanies of gods in snake form where the snake disappears into the ground, Paus. iii. 23. 7, vi. 20. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Polyidos' experience, Apoll. iii. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Cicero, *De div.* ii. 31. 66, "de ipso Roscio potest illud quidem falsum ut circumligatus fuerit angui, sed ut in cunis fuerit anguis, non tam est mirum, in Solonio praesertim, ubi ad focum angues nundinari solent"; cf. Lithuanians, Usener, *Götternamen*, pp. 86 and 91; s.vv. *Aspelnie* and *Gyvâté*; Modern and Ancient Greeks, Lawson, *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*, p. 259 with references.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Python at Delphi. Zeus seduced Persephone in the form of a serpent, Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* ii.; Ovid, *Met.* vi. 114. The earth-born giants have snakes instead of feet, Paus. viii. 29. 3; Apollodorus i. 34.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *Hamlet* iv. 3, and *Antony and Cleopatra* v. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Ovid, *Met.* xv. 389; Plutarch, *Kleomenes* 39; Aelian, *De nat. an.* i. 51; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* x. 56, 86; Sir Thomas Browne, *Musaeum Clausum Tract.* xiii.; Jews, Hanauer, *Folklore of the Holy Land*, p. 283.



Banks Islands the magician's tongue is pierced by the *mae* snake,<sup>1</sup> and in the initiation of Australian medicine-men snakes are prominent.<sup>2</sup> In the course of the initiation of Wirajuri Kangaroo, on leaving the dead man and emerging from the grave, his father pointed to a tiger snake, saying, "That is your *Budjan*." There was a string, one of those which doctors bring up, on the tail of the snake. The father said, "Come, follow," and took hold. The snake took them to Daramulun's abode in the great Currajong tree.<sup>3</sup> A Cornish "wise man" in the last century appeared at an assignation in the form of a large black snake.<sup>4</sup>

It is just possible that the connection of the mythical seers with snakes is based ultimately on some such features of the medicine-man's career as that of the Australian shaman, who has a snake for his *Budjan*, or who becomes a lace lizard or a kangaroo<sup>5</sup> by taking part in dreams in corroborees of those creatures. In one of Artemidoros' examples of dreams coming true, a woman dreamed that she bore a snake, and

<sup>1</sup> Hubert et Mauss, *L'Année sociologique*, vii. p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Mauss, *L'Origine des pouvoirs magiques etc.*, pp. 33, 35, 42-43.

<sup>3</sup> Howitt, *J.A.I.* xvi. pp. 49-50.

<sup>4</sup> Hunt, *Drolls and Romances of the West of England*, 2nd series, p. 205.

<sup>5</sup> Howitt, *J.A.I.* xvi. pp. 24, 44.



her son became a mantis.<sup>1</sup> It will be recalled how many of the "divine kings" of myth like Kekrops<sup>2</sup> were of snake form. And further, these snake kings were sometimes the slayers of snakes. Kychreus appeared in snake form at the battle of Salamis to help the patriot Greeks.<sup>3</sup> He was the hero who rescued that island from the ravages of a snake which he slew.<sup>4</sup> And Teiresias was not the only Theban who killed a snake. The story of Kadmos as told by Ovid is instructive. Kadmos pins the snake to an oak with his spear point (an incident which cannot but recall the hanged god), when a mysterious voice makes itself heard:

quid, Agenore nate, peremptum  
serpentem spectas? Et tu spectabere serpens.<sup>5</sup>

There is also that strange story of how Diomedes slew the Kolchian dragon in Southern Italy, and, elated by the honours consequently

<sup>1</sup> Artemidoros, *Oneirokritica*, iv. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Apollodoros iii. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias i. 36. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Apollodoros iii. 161; Schol. Lykophr. 451. Strabo gives a different version again. ἀφ' οὗ δὲ καὶ Κυχρεΐδης ὄφεις, ὃν φησιν Ἡσίοδος τραφέντα ὑπὸ Κυχρέως ἐξελαθῆναι ὑπὸ Εὐρυλόχου λυμαινόμενον τὴν νῆσον, ὑποδέξασθαι δὲ αὐτὸν τὴν Δήμητρα εἰς Ἑλευσίνα καὶ γενέσθαι ταύτης ἀμφίπολον, Strabo ix. 1. 9, 393.

<sup>5</sup> Ovid, *Met.* iii. 90-98. Following Dieterich, *Mutter Erde*, pp. 47, 78, 109, Pfister thinks that the snake form of Erechtheus, Kadmos, Kychreus, etc., has a phallic significance, Pfister, *Der Reliquienkult im Altertum*, i. p. 10, and note 19.



paid to him, made statues of himself from the fragments of the divine walls of Troy, and scattered them broadcast through the land.<sup>1</sup>

But it must be confessed that in most of these snake stories about early seers we are dealing with *Märchen*. If Melampus and others learn the gift of bird speech from the licking of serpents,<sup>2</sup> Siegfried understands the swallows as soon as his tongue touches Fafnir's heart.<sup>3</sup> And the story of Polyidos and the snake which brings the healing herb is an old favourite. It is repeated in classical *Märchen*; it is to be found in modern Greek stories, and in the folktales of most European countries.<sup>4</sup> Snakes have a knowledge of herbs of magical healing powers,<sup>5</sup> and in classical Greece it is with

<sup>1</sup> Timaeus in Tzetzes *ad* Lykophron. 615; *F.H.G.* i. p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> Porphyry, *De abst.* iii. 4; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* x. 49. 76, 136.

<sup>3</sup> Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology* (Stallybrass), ii. p. 672; cf. Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, No. 17; the Serb tale in Preller, *Gr. Myth.*<sup>3</sup> ii. p. 473. Apollonios of Tyana learned bird-talk from the Arabs who know the language of birds, a faculty which is obtained by eating the heart or liver of snakes, Philostratos, *Vit. Apoll.* i. 20, cf. *ib.* iii. 9. The connection between snakes and birds is very curious. Pliny, *loc. cit.*, speaks of "aves quarum sanguine serpens gignatur, quam quisquis ederit, intellecturus sit alitum colloquia." The Zuñi, on the other side of the Atlantic, know of eggs which crack and from them issue worms which become birds, Cushing, *Ann. Rep. Am. Bur. Ethn.* xiii. p. 385. Cf. Sir John Mandeville on the birth of the phoenix, chap. vii. p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Cicero, *De div.* ii. 66. 135; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxv. 2 (5), 4; Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, No. 16, with notes; Frazer, *Pausanias*, iii. p. 65.

<sup>5</sup> See Nikander, *Theriaka*, 31 foll. and Scholia.



medicine that they are chiefly connected. Though associated with Apollo they are more nearly the servants of Asklepios.<sup>1</sup> There is little evidence in Greece for divination by snakes. Among the Jews the word which meant "divining by serpents" came to mean divination,<sup>2</sup> but among the Greeks it is *οἰωνός* which comes to mean omen in a general sense. The "bird language" is more important than the snakes who conferred it. It is true that M. Bouché Leclercq states that "Gaia avait pour interprète le monstrueux Python";<sup>3</sup> the references which he gives<sup>4</sup> do not bear him out, though there is one passage in Hyginus, a bad authority, which supports his point of view.<sup>5</sup> Of the oracle of Trophonios Dr. Frazer says, "It is even said that the oracles were delivered by the serpent or the serpents in the caves."<sup>6</sup> Suidas speaks of a place *ὅπου ὄφεις ἦν ὁ μαντευόμενος ᾧ οἱ κατοικοῦντες πλακοῦντας ἔβαλλον*,<sup>7</sup> and in Epiros there was a grove

<sup>1</sup> Paus. ii. 10. 3, iii. 23. 7; Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 733; and the inscriptions from Epidauros, Frazer, *Pausanias*, iii. p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Witton Davies, *op. cit.* p. 82; for importance of snakes among the Arabs, *ib.* p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* ii. p. 254.

<sup>4</sup> Euripides, *Iph. Taur.* 1250; Argum. Pindar. *Pyth.* 4.

<sup>5</sup> "Python, Terrae filius, draco ingens. Hic ante Apollinem ex oraculo in monte Parnasso responsa dare solitus est," Hyginus, *Fab.* iii. (Schmidt, p. 17).

<sup>6</sup> Frazer, *Pausanias*, v. p. 201.

<sup>7</sup> Suidas, s.v. *μελιτοῦντα*.



sacred to Apollo where prophetic snakes were kept and fed, omens being taken from the degree of appetite which they displayed.<sup>1</sup>

But to return to the initiation of seers, there are two small points worthy of notice. The first is Teiresias' change of sex, which, like the effeminacy of Telines, Gelo's ancestor,<sup>2</sup> and the *θήλεα νοῦσος* of the Skythians, I am inclined to connect with that strange phenomenon of the diviner masquerading as a woman which is not unknown in the Lower Culture.<sup>3</sup> The Aitolians explained the name Kouretes as derived from the female garb they wore.<sup>4</sup>

The second point is the acquisition of power in a dream. Kassandra and Helenos, Melampus and Iamos received their power through the agency of snakes while they were asleep. At Phlius "behind the market-place is a house named by the Phliasians the house of divination. According to them, Amphiaraus coming to this house and sleeping the night in it began for the first time to divine. Up to that time,

<sup>1</sup> Aelian, *De cultu deorum*, 34.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos vii. 153.

<sup>3</sup> Bogoras, *op. cit.* pp. 98-99; Hoffman, *op. cit.* p. 153; Frazer, *Adonis, Attis and Osiris*, pp. 225, 428, and Appendix IV.; *B.S.A.* xvii. p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> Strabo x. 8, 466; cf. Phylarchos in Athenaios xii. 37, 528 c; *F.H.G.* i. p. 339; and the Aischylos fragment (*Frag.* 313, Sidgwick, quoted by Athenaios, *loc. cit.*, and Eustathius 1292. 35), *χλιδῶν τε πλόκαμος, ὥστε παρθένοις ἀβραῖς* | *ὅθεν καλεῖν Κουρήτα λαὸν ᾔνεσαν*.



according to their story, he had been an ordinary person and no diviner. From that time the building has been always shut up."<sup>1</sup>

We are reminded of the sleep of Epimenides, the Kretan prophet and magician, who, like any savage medicine-man, could send out his soul from his body, whenever occasion arose, and call it back again.<sup>2</sup> As a boy he went into a cave, and slept for a period variously given as 60, 57, 50, or 40 years.<sup>3</sup> And this sleep is connected with his powers. Pausanias says that "he entered a cave and did not wake until forty years had come and gone, and afterwards he made verses and purified cities, Athens among the rest."<sup>4</sup> Maximus of Tyre explains the story as an allegory which derives its point from the fact that Epimenides' sleep was a prelude to a new life: ἀφίκετό ποτε Ἀθήναζε Κρήης ἀνὴρ, ὄνομα Ἐπιμενίδης κομίζων λόγον, οὕτως ῥηθέντα, πιστεύεσθαι χαλεπόν. ἐν τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Δικταίου τῷ ἄντρῳ κείμενος ὕπνῳ βαθεῖ ἔτη συχνά, ὅναρ ἔφη ἐντυχεῖν αὐτὸς θεοῖς καὶ θεῶν λόγοις καὶ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ δικῇ.<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to re-

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias ii. 13. 7 (trans. Frazer).

<sup>2</sup> Hesychios, s.v. Ἐπιμενίδης. οὗ λόγος ὡς ἐξίει ἡ ψυχὴ ὅσον ἤθελε καιρὸν καὶ πάλιν εἰσῆει ἐν τῷ σώματι.

<sup>3</sup> Hesychios, *loc. cit.*; Theopompos, *Frag.* 69, *F.H.G.* i. p. 288; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 52 (53). 175; Plutarch, *An seni sit ger. resp.* i. 12; Paus. i. 14. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Paus. *loc. cit.* (trans. Frazer).

<sup>5</sup> Maxim. Tyr. *Dissert.* xvi. ἐι αἱ μαθήσεις ἀναμνήσεις, 1. Frazer



member that after being cleansed with a thunderstone by the Idaean Dactyls, lying prostrate on the sea-shore at dawn, and at night on a river bank, girt with the wool of a black lamb, Pythagoras spent thrice nine days in the Idaean cave.<sup>1</sup>

The mantis of historical times, according to Pausanias, does not deliver prophecies; Herodotos' phrase in speaking of Melampus' power is *μαντικήν τε ἐώντῳ συστήσαι*.<sup>2</sup> There is, in fact, little room for the prophet when Apolline orthodoxy is established. The gods may still reveal to mortals in dreams isolated future events, but "the madness from Apollo" does not descend on any but the authorised mouth-pieces of his priesthood. *Mana* and the power of prophecy have developed along other channels, and left to the mantis a specialisation in the subordinate formal art of divination. The very tendency to the formation of schools of seers assists the development of an art and an increasing respect for paraphernalia. This influence may be observed in the case of the

gives variants of the story of *The Long Sleep* (Frazer, Paus. ii. pp. 121-123). I believe none the less that the connection between Epimenides' sleep and his career as a magician is a real one, and that perhaps two motives have been amalgamated in the story as we have it, (a) the long sleep story and (b) the reminiscence of initiation in dreams; cf. the story of the Apostles' *Long Sleep*, Grimm, *Kinderlegenden*, 2.

<sup>1</sup> Porphyry, *Vit. Pyth.* 17.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos ii. 49.



Malay Pawang, whose powers have several times been mentioned. The office is usually hereditary, but "sometimes it is endowed with certain 'properties' handed down by one Pawang to his successor, known as the *kaběsaran* or, as it were, regalia."<sup>1</sup> In Greece this seems to have been the case with the prophetic book, in whose history the episode of Onomakritos marks the final stage. Professor Murray has elucidated the genesis and development of the traditional book. The Bakidai parallel the Homeridai. We may almost certainly conjecture that the predecessors of Onomakritos handed on their collection of Bakis or Musaïos, enriched by the new prophecies of each generation. Onomakritos paid for increasing the canon in the ordinary way by banishment.<sup>2</sup> He lived at the court of a rapidly developed and civilised society under a monarch who, however superstitious himself, had a very definite idea of the relation of religion and prophecy to politics, and was determined to keep the weapon strictly under his own control and authority.<sup>3</sup> The fate of Onomakritos

<sup>1</sup> Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos vii. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Like Kleomenes I. of Sparta, the Peisistratids undoubtedly paid great attention to the use of oracles, prophecies, etc., as political weapons; cf. the return of Peisistratos escorted by Athena (Herod. i. 60). Peisistratos was called Bakis by the comic poets (Schol. Aristoph.



shows that as in the case of the Homeric poems a canon has been formed. There is no longer a living and growing volume of prophetic lore passing through the alterations and additions of generations of prophets themselves inspired. Interpretation now becomes forgery and the dishonest trickery of charlatans. And so we find the practice still lingering on in the Aristophanic Hierokles, who endeavours to hinder the celebration of peace by oracles of Bakis invented for the occasion, but is foiled by the equal powers of impromptu shown by Trygaios in inventing Homeric oracles.<sup>1</sup>

It is not our purpose here to examine the rules and principles of the formal art, but rather to note the vestiges of his former power which remain to the mantis. That the acceptance of omens has magical associations we have already seen. Even an Iamid, a member of that body whose methods are typical of the inductive as opposed to the intuitive seer, is still in virtue of his own qualities in touch with the supernatural. He knows and sees things which other people cannot. Theokles warns Aristomenes, because he can see the Dioscuri sitting on the tree.<sup>2</sup>

Friedl. 1071); Hippias was famed for his knowledge of oracles (Herodotos v. 93).

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. *Peace* 1050 et seq.; cf. the episode in *Birds* 959 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Pausanias iv. 16. 5.



And a small point is worth noticing. The mantis of historical times is seldom one of the civilised citizens of the big Greek states. He does not come from Athens or Korinth but almost invariably from the West, endowed with the magical virtues of the less civilised races in the eyes of their neighbours. The Elean seers are, of course, the most famous, the stock of Melampus with its two branches of Iamids and Klytids. These practised their avocations all over Greece; we hear of them, for example, in Kroton,<sup>1</sup> Phokis,<sup>2</sup> Sparta,<sup>3</sup> Zakynthos,<sup>4</sup> Argos,<sup>5</sup> Thebes,<sup>6</sup> and Megara.<sup>7</sup> Akarnania,<sup>8</sup> Dodona,<sup>9</sup> Leukas,<sup>10</sup> and Krete furnish seers to the great states of Greece.

It is in the most conservative of spheres that the mantis retains his prestige in military matters. There can be little doubt that in earlier days his business was to work medicine to secure victory for his patrons.<sup>11</sup> The Heraklids at Naupaktos met with disaster because they killed a mantis. They urged that

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos v. 44.    <sup>2</sup> *Ib.* viii. 27.    <sup>3</sup> *Ib.* ix. 37.    <sup>4</sup> *Ib.* ix. 33.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* ix. 34.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* i. 52.

<sup>7</sup> Pausanias i. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Herodotos i. 62, vii. 219, 221.

<sup>9</sup> Pausanias i. 36. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Herodotos ix. 38. Cyrus the Younger has an Ambrakiote seer, Xen. *An.* i. 7. 18.

<sup>11</sup> Among the Haida every war party must be accompanied by a shaman whose duty it is to find a propitious time for making the attack, but "especially to war with and kill the souls of the enemy." Swanton, *Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, v. 1, pp. 40, 51.



they thought that he had been sent to work magic on them by the Peloponnesians.<sup>1</sup> Tisamenos the Elean was secured by Sparta because the oracle said that he would win five victories.<sup>2</sup> He was apparently himself good medicine. But it is not too much to say that the mantis is normally responsible for victory. It has often been observed how the omens almost always suggest, as at Plataia or in the Argolis campaign of Kleomenes I., the adoption of the right strategic move. The fact is usually explained by regarding the observation of omens as a mere form utilised by the agnostic general to inspire or restrain his superstitious soldiers. Perhaps it is as much due to the fact that the mantis was expected to work success for his clients. The exercise of his art must have called for no little sagacity. The Spartans killed Epimenides the Kretan *διότι σφίσιν οὐκ αἴσια ἐμαντεύετο* when they were at war with his kinsmen of Knossos.<sup>3</sup> A bronze statue to the seer Agias was erected in the market-place at Sparta. "They say that the predictions which this

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Theokrit. v. 83; *F.H.G.* i. p. 307; Apollod. ii. 174 *ἐφάνη γὰρ αὐτοῖς μάντις χρησμούς λέγων καὶ ἐνθεάζων, ὃν ἐνόμισαν μάγον εἶναι ἐπὶ λύμῃ τοῦ στρατοῦ πρὸς Πελοποννησίων ἀπεσταλμένον.* This prophet is Karnos, one of the Peloponnesian doubles of Apollo. Konon calls him *φάσμα Ἀπόλλωνος*, Konon, *Narr.* xxvi. For Karneus, Karnos, Karnean Apollo and Krios, Paus. iii. 13. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos ix. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias ii. 21. 3.



Agias delivered to Lysander were the means of capturing the whole Athenian fleet at Aegospotami, all but ten galleys which escaped to Corcyra."<sup>1</sup> Hierokles seems to have been rewarded on the conquest of Euboia in 445 B.C. by a grant of land at Oreos.<sup>2</sup> Teiresias in Euripides' *Phoinissai* claims to have secured the victory for Athens over Eleusis and displays his reward, a golden crown, the first-fruits of the spoil.<sup>3</sup> After the age of the tyrants, to whose person was always invariably attached a number of seers, the mantis seems to retain dignity only in his military capacity. Aristophanes does not think much of the profession. The devolution of the medicine-man is completed in the swarm of fortune-telling quacks who cater for popular superstition, the Old Moores of antiquity. In the age in which the Roman Empire fused the superstitions of its motley subjects into one chaotic whole, we find the mantis giving place to the astrologer, and the adventurer from foreign lands equipped with uncouth jargon which passes for the mystic

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias iii. 11. 5 (trans. Frazer).

<sup>2</sup> Hicks and Hill, 40, with Aristoph. *Peace* 1043.

<sup>3</sup> Euripides, *Phoinissai* 854:

κάκεϊ γὰρ ἦν τις πόλεμος Εὐμόλπου δορός,  
οὐ καλλινίκους Κεκροπίδας ἔθηκ' ἐγώ·  
καὶ τόνδε χρυσοῦν στέφανον, ὥς ὀρᾷς, ἔχω  
λαβὼν ἀπαρχὰς πολεμίων σκυλευμάτων.



language of Egypt or Palestine. Formalism finds its apotheosis in the Egyptian books of magic and the word of power.<sup>1</sup> But if we cast our eyes backward through the mists of antiquity the mantis looms a more imposing figure. The farther back you trace his history, the smaller is the part played by his art, and the more important his personality, power, or *mana*. Prophecy in his case at any rate begins in magic, and ends degenerate in a formal art.

<sup>1</sup> Lukian, *Philopseudes* 11 31, 35.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE ORDEAL

*Malum virus.* Bene ad discretionem epitheton addidit. Nam virus et bonum et malum est; sicut venenum: nam idem est. Venit autem a Graeco: nam illi φάρμακον medium habent, id est bonum et malum.<sup>1</sup>

To understand the principle underlying the development of the Ordeal we must hark back to the primitive conception of *mana* or magical power. Contact with this *mana* is not lightly to be undertaken, and "medicine" is dangerous to handle. A Cherokee hunter, who had helped the Red Man of the Lightning in his combat with a monster, was in gratitude presented with a scale of the beast as an infallible talisman to cause him to kill game. But he was told that when he went back to camp he must hang up the medicine on a tree outside, because it was "very strong and dangerous." Even so he

<sup>1</sup> Servius, *Georgic* i. 129.



would find his brother lying almost dead, on account of the mere proximity of this potent talisman, and was given directions how to cure him.<sup>1</sup> It is dangerous to approach supreme holiness. Eurypylos, son of Euaimon, who opened the chest and looked on the image of Dionysos, went out of his mind.<sup>2</sup> The glance of persons highly charged with *mana* is often fatal to the weaker vessels on whom it lights,<sup>3</sup> and the belief lingers on in the common superstition of the folk that priests especially have the evil eye. The fatal character of this contact with great power is due, as I have tried to show in the paper already mentioned,<sup>4</sup> to the disproportionate degree of *mana* possessed by the two personalities brought together. "Medicine" of any kind can only be handled with safety by those who are in themselves sufficiently powerful, or who have obtained sufficient power by the performance of some ritual action. Much of the ritual of sacrifice is

<sup>1</sup> Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, No. 52, pp. 300-301. The Koita of Papua have certain charm stones which are "so highly charged with magical power that it is not considered safe for them to be touched with the hand, even by the man who is about to bring their power into play," Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Pausanias vii. 19. 7.

<sup>3</sup> See the examples of the Samoan high-priest or Rabbi Juda quoted by Mr. Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, iii. p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> *Folklore*, xxi. p. 150.



ultimately devised to provide a safe approach to the majesty of the deity.

This magical power, then, is primarily neither moral nor intentionally either benevolent or malevolent. In so far as it is fatal to persons who approach it without precaution, it is fatal simply because it is so overwhelmingly powerful. It is a later distinction that divides "medicine" into good and bad, and recognises the *φάρμακα πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ μεμιγμένα, πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά*.<sup>1</sup> Just as in Greek *φάρμακον* and in Latin *virus* originally cover both good and bad medicine, so in Bechuanaland *molemo* includes both poisons and remedies.<sup>2</sup> In the case of gods themselves, it is but gradually that the conception of their morality appears beside the conception of their power, and one of the most important stages here is the development of the dualism which distinguishes benevolent or malevolent spirits.

The safe contact with *mana*, whether it be

<sup>1</sup> Homer, *Odyssey* iv. 230.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer in *Anth. Essays*, p. 161, n. 4. Similarly the medicine-men of Greek tradition, the Idaean Dactyls, were divided into workers of spells and workers of charms, *ἀριστεροὶ μὲν, ὡς φησι Φερεκύδης, οἱ γόητες αὐτῶν · οἱ δὲ ἀναλύοντες δεξιόι, ὡς Ἑλλάνικος*, Schol. Ap. Rhod. i. 1129. The Gorgon's blood is powerful to heal or kill, Euripides, *Ion* 1010-1015; Apollodoros iii. 10. 3, 9. Compare the superstition with regard to lizards' livers: *Τίμαιος δὲ καὶ Νεοκλῆς ὁ ἰατρὸς λέγουσι τὰς φρύνας δύο ἡπάτα ἔχειν · καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀποκτείνειν, τὸ δὲ ἐκείνου πεφυκέναι ἀντίπαλον, σώζειν γάρ*, Aelian, *H.A.* xvii. 15; *F.H.G.* i. p. 232.



that of a god or a magical poison, depends on the power of the person approaching it, a power which in many cases necessitates the previous fulfilment of certain ritual conditions. It may be death for boys who have not passed through the ceremonies of initiation, which bestow the full powers of the initiate, to look on the magic paraphernalia of the men. Contact with great power is a test of quality or of certain conditions having been fulfilled; *mana* finds out the weak spots in those who approach it. The tendency shown in developments of the ordeal for this weakness to be thought of as moral, and the development of a god who deals out punishment according to desert, are elements of real importance in the evolution of religion. Take, for example, the case of ritual purity, where the final development is surprisingly late. It is originally a rule of taboo for those who are brought into contact with power or divinity. When Daphnis breaks the taboo, which forbids intercourse with a mortal woman, his nymph lovers blind him.<sup>1</sup> The priestess of Apollo Deiradiotes must be a virgin; the bull's blood which made *ἐνθεος* the priestess at Aigai shows us why. Union with the god was fatal to the unchaste. A further

<sup>1</sup> Parthenios, *Narr. Am.* xxix. ; Servius, *Ec.* v. 20.



development takes place and ritual purity becomes moral purity;<sup>1</sup> Apuleius tells us that the boy who looks into the crystal must be pure externally and internally, in order that the vessel of the god should be as worthy as possible of the divine inhabitant. The moral gulf which separates the first stage from the last in the history of the evolution of the ordeal is wide indeed. In the former the weak brought into contact with *mana* are blasted by the power which they are not strong enough to endure; in the latter a just God vindicates the cause of the righteous or punishes the wicked.

Throughout, the ordeal is based on this notion of union with a power which will be fatal to one party, or which will declare one party to be guilty. Codrington gives nine different ordeals which are practised in Melanesia. With the exception of the alligator ordeal, and the Lepers Island custom of a man putting himself under the protection of Togaro and allowing himself to be shot at with arrows, in all the

<sup>1</sup> See Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, p. 136 foll. For the development of the idea of spiritual purity as being more important than mere ritual purity compare an Imperial inscription, Dittenberger, *Sylloge*, ii. 567, *πρῶτον μὲν καὶ τὸ μέγιστον, χεῖρας καὶ γνώμην καθαρὸς καὶ ὑγιεὶς ὑπάρχοντας καὶ μηδὲν αὐτοῖς δεινὸν συνειδόμενος*. A similar tendency is to be seen in the distinction between the impurity incurred by legal cohabitation and that incurred by fornication, Ditt. *Sylloge*, ii. 566, 567; Diog. Laert. viii. 43. See below, p. 161.



cases special emphasis is laid on the *saka* character of the instrument of the ordeal.<sup>1</sup>

Similar is the case of contact with the sacred stone when swearing an oath, a custom of which Dr. Frazer gives a list of examples from Athens, Samoa, the Garrow Hills, East Africa, the Hebrides and Iona.<sup>2</sup> In some cases an oath may be taken in symbolic contact with a god. Thus Professor Murray draws my attention to *Iliad* xxiii. 584, where Antilochos is to touch his horses and swear by the god of horses, Poseidon.

ἵππων ἀψάμενος, γαιήοχον Ἐννοσίγαιον  
ὄμνυθι, μὴ μὲν ἐκὼν τὸ ἐμὸν δόλῳ ἄρμα πεδῆσαι.

In the elaborate ritual of oath in the third book of the *Iliad* there is the participation in common by both sides in the sacrificial wine and victim. The ritual may be divided into four significant events. First, offerings are contributed by both sides, and a bowl of wine is mixed, and the two Greek chiefs are

<sup>1</sup> (1) Stone, working by proxy: "Much preparation, with cocoanut, flower sugar cane, etc.," to make the stone *saka*, i.e. "hot" with supernatural power. (2) Lighted bundle of cocoanut fronds applied with a charm to legs of the accused. (3) Accused swallows a stone magically heated by wizard. (4) A bit of cocoanut made *saka*. (5) Almonds mashed with a charm. (6) At Saa a spear ordeal, like that in *Götterdämmerung*; the spear is an ancient weapon called *usu* and very *saka*. (7) A *saka* song: the accused says, "Well, that song is for me; if I did that, let me and my children suffer." Codrington, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, "Old Testament Folklore," *Anth. Essays*, pp. 133-134.



cleansed with water (ll. 267-270). Secondly, Agamemnon cuts the hairs off the lambs, and they are then distributed to the chiefs of both sides (ll. 271-275). Thirdly follows the invocation, the recital of the conditions of the oath, and the killing of the victims (ll. 276-294). Fourthly, cups are filled from the bowl of wine, and each man taking his cup offers a libation saying, "May the guilty person's brains be poured forth like this wine" (ll. 291-301). Each of the chiefs holds hair cut from the victim's head, and each individual pours out wine which has been drawn from the common bowl. And so in the adultery trial prescribed in Numbers v. 11-31. The priest consecrates holy water before the Lord, and puts "of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle" into it. The woman is then set before the Lord, and replies "Amen, Amen" to a recital of the curse. The curse is then blotted into the water of bitterness, which is drunk with the result that if the woman is guilty it causes "her belly to swell and her thigh to fall away."<sup>1</sup> So Malays, in taking a solemn oath, drink water in which the *běsi kawī*, or part of the regalia, has been dipped,<sup>2</sup> or water in

<sup>1</sup> Numbers v. 11-31. Some features of the ritual have been omitted.

<sup>2</sup> Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 28, note.



which daggers and spears have been dipped.<sup>1</sup> Hindus swallow water in which the image of a god has been immersed, and Negroes of Issyng water in which fetiches have been washed. In Loango and Sierra Leone magical waters are drunk which prevent or stimulate urination in the case of guilt.<sup>2</sup>

Let us turn to Greece. Here, too, contact with *mana* is dangerous. The draught of bull's blood at Aigai inspired the prophetess, but was at the same time an ordeal fatal to applicants who were unchaste.<sup>3</sup> A Delphic priestess is recorded to have died with all the symptoms of *delirium tremens* as a result of inspiration from the exhalation.<sup>4</sup> The life of the priest at Kolophon was shortened by his draughts of the divine water.<sup>5</sup>

Plutarch divides the magical streams which earth sends up into two classes, of which the first comprises τὰς ἐκστατικὰς καὶ νοσώδεις καὶ θανατηφόρους, the second the streams of healing.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 525.

<sup>2</sup> J. G. Bourke, *The Scatologic Rites of all Nations*, p. 249 seq.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. vii. 25. 13. Cf. Masai blood ordeal, Hollis, *The Masai*, p. 345. So Themistokles was said to have committed suicide by drinking bull's blood. And in Scottish tradition bull's blood was a poison. It is worth noticing that in the story of Aison it is the blood of the sacrificed bull which he drinks, Apollodoros i. 143.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. *De def. or.* 51, 438.

<sup>5</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 103 (106), 232.

<sup>6</sup> Plut. *De def. or.* 40, 432 D.



In Macedonia not far from Euripides' grave was the confluence of two rivers, "alter saluberrimi potus, alter mortiferi."<sup>1</sup> Are both properties equally to be derived from the possession of magical power by the streams of prehistoric Greece?<sup>2</sup> What made the water of bitterness poisonous was the fact that it was consecrated to the Lord, and had dust from the floor of the tabernacle in it; it is the power of the water, which has had sacred objects dipped in it, which makes it fatal in the Hindu, Malay, and Issyng examples. Does the same explanation hold good of the poisonous streams of Greece, or of those three fountains "in Liberoso Taurorum colle" which are "sine remedio, sine dolore mortiferi"?<sup>3</sup> In the case of the Styx, at any

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxi. 2 (19), 29.

<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps worth noticing that often the harmful side of *mana* tends to eliminate the good aspects. Fear is the larger element in the feeling of awe. Thus "among the Iroquoian tribes the term *otgon*, denoting specifically the malign, deadly, lethal or destructive use or exercise of the *orenda* potency, is gradually, it would seem, displacing the more general vocable, *orenda*, as a name for this hypothetic mystic potency, for the reason, it appears, that the malignant and the destructive rather than the benign manifestation of this subsumed mystic potency produce the more lasting impressions on the mind," Hewitt, *op. cit.* Cf. history of the word *t'îra*, Doutté, 361-362, specialised finally as bad omen. Similarly *virus* loses entirely its good sense and means poison.

<sup>3</sup> Pliny, *N.H.* ii. 103 (106), 231. Poisonous waters in Thrace, Leontini and at Soracte, Pliny, *N.H.* xxxi. 2 (19), 27-29. There are variations in the name of the Thracian stream which is also mentioned, Antig. Caryst. 156; Sotion, p. 139; Vitruvius viii. 3; Arist. *De mir. ausc.* 131.



rate, I have little doubt. Its waters were held to be a poison deadly to man and every living creature. A horse's hoof alone was proof against its corrosive influence, and there is a story that at the instigation of Aristotle Antipater sent the deadly draught to Alexander in a mule's or horse's hoof. There is nothing in the taste or physical characteristics of the water to account for this evil reputation. The explanation must lie in its connection with the most solemn oath that man or god must take. Hesiod's description would almost suffice by itself to establish the oath by the Styx as a poison ordeal,<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Frazer has collected evidence which gives us good grounds for believing that the oath was always accompanied by a draught or libation of the water.<sup>2</sup> The awe with which the Styx was regarded as a water possessing magical power, and its use in oaths whose ordeal is analogous to that of the other cases we have quoted where the guilty party "drinketh to himself damnation," have won for the Styx its reputation as an irremediable poison. And there are traces of a beneficial contact with this potent water. The stream in which Thetis dipped her son

<sup>1</sup> Hesiod, *Theog.* 775-805.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. viii. 18, and Frazer's notes.



to make him invulnerable is the eldest of the nymphs αἱ κατὰ γαῖαν ἄνδρας κουρίζουσι.<sup>1</sup> We are told of a Manx well that "whosoever drinketh thereof receiveth instant health or instantly he dieth."<sup>2</sup> This is just the double aspect of *mana*.

Other types of water ordeal remain to be considered. The healing spring has sometimes power to harm as well as power to bless. We are reminded of the punishment of Gehazi, or that inflicted by Asklepios of Epidauros on the untruthful and avaricious Echedoros<sup>3</sup> by the properties of a spring in the Isle of Cerdonia which the author of the *Spanish Mandevile* quotes on the authority of Solinus. Its water "healeth all impuritie of the eyes and withall serveth for a discoverie of thieves, for whosoever by oath denieth the theft which he hath comited in washing himself with that water loseth incontinent his eyesight."<sup>4</sup> And so we hear of "rivers and lakes which burned the hands of those that had falsely sworne being put into them, and others that filled them full of leprosie."<sup>5</sup> With these examples may be compared the spring of Zeus Horkios at Tyana

<sup>1</sup> Hesiod, *Theog.* 346-361.

<sup>2</sup> Moore, *Folklore*, v. p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> Frazer, *Pausanias*, iii. p. 249.

<sup>4</sup> *The Spanish Mandevile*, fol. 40a.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* fol. 38a.



whose water executed summary punishment on the perjurer.<sup>1</sup> But for our purpose the ordeals which are to be considered divide themselves roughly into two classes. The first of these is the ordeal where indication of guilt is given by the refusal of the Divine element to receive into it the guilty person. It is the principle of witch-swimming, and the most learned and foolish of English monarchs has defined it thus : "It appears that God hath appointed (for a supernaturall signe of the monstrous impietie of witches) that the water shall refuse to receive them into her bosome, that have shaken off the sacred waters of Baptisme and wilfully refused the benefite thereof."<sup>2</sup> This type of ordeal figures in the legal procedure of Assam, and has been used to test witches in Arabia and Burma no less than in the British Isles.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Tylor quotes a mediaeval sentence which again clearly states the principle ; "si aqua illum velut innoxium receperit, innoxii submerguntur aqua, culpabiles supernatant." He notes that it is recognised in the Hindu

<sup>1</sup> Philostratos, *Vit. Apoll.* i. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Daemonologie*, iii. cap. vi., King James's Works (London, 1616), p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> See Frazer, *Paus.* iii. p. 388 ; Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*,<sup>2</sup> p. 179. In North Africa names are rolled in balls of paste ; the culprit's name alone does not sink, Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 357.



Code of Manu.<sup>1</sup> The principle, indeed, in its generalised form receives the widest recognition. It is manifested in the inability of fairies to repeat the Lord's Prayer,<sup>2</sup> or in stories like that of Pontius Pilate, where the elements refuse to receive the body of the superlatively wicked man.<sup>3</sup> The Thibii of the Pontos, notorious for their power as *jettatori*, did not sink in water; "eosdem praeterea non posse mergi, ne veste quidem degravatos."<sup>4</sup> There are several recorded instances of divinatory processes which obviously have their origin in this kind of ordeal. Into the water of Ino at Epidauros Limera they threw barley loaves. "If the water takes and keeps the loaves, it is a good augury for the person who threw them in; but if it sends them up to the surface, it is judged a bad omen."<sup>5</sup> At Aphaka in Syria people

<sup>1</sup> Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,<sup>2</sup> i. p. 141. It occurs in a Persian story, Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions*, i. 177.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart, *Popular Superstitions, etc., of the Highlanders of Scotland*, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ovid, *Met.* vii. 444, "composito Scirone patet, sparsisque latronis | terra negat sedem, sedem negat ossibus unda"; ib. viii. 97, Minos says to Scylla "di te submoveant, o nostri infamia saeculi, | orbe suo tellusque tibi pontusque negetur"; Empedokles, Diels, *Frag.* 115; oaths of Orestes (Eur. *Or.* 1086), and Hippolytos (Eur. *Hipp.* 1030), discussed by Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 418. The Sinhalese have a fire ordeal which works on this principle. Names of suspected persons are written on pieces of paper, charmed, and put in the fire. All the slips are consumed except the one which bears the culprit's name, Hildburgh, *J.A.I.* xxxviii. p. 167.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, *N.H.* vii. 2; Phylarchos, *F.H.G.* i. p. 354.

<sup>5</sup> Paus. iii. 23. 8.



threw offerings into a lake; if accepted they sank, if rejected they floated on the surface.<sup>1</sup> Pausanias declares that a parallel mode of divination was employed at Etna. Offerings were cast into the craters. "If the fire swallows them up, the people are glad, taking it for a happy omen; but if the flame rejects what a man throws into it, they think evil will befall that man."<sup>2</sup> At the Nymphaion in Apollonia, Dio Cassius witnessed a similar mode of divination. Jets of flame seem to have shot up sporadically through fissures in the earth, particularly when the river was high. The querent must take some frankincense and breathe his wish in a prayer, and throw the offering, the vehicle of his prayer (*ρίπτεις αὐτὸν τὴν εὐχὴν φέροντα*), into the flame. If the wish was to be fulfilled, the flame shot up and consumed the offering; if it was doomed to failure, the flame vanished without accepting the offering (*ἐξαναχωρεῖ τε καὶ ἐκφεύγει*).<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Zosimus i. 58, quoted Dalyell, p. 514; Frazer, *Paus.* iii. p. 388. Frazer quotes also a pool in the Arabian desert where the same interpretation was put on sinking or floating objects (Damascius, *Vita Isidor.* 199).

<sup>2</sup> Pausanias iii. 23. 9. Some doubt has been cast on this statement. It seems reasonable, however, to believe that if Pausanias had meant the Palikoi he would have said so. It is perhaps a little gratuitous to accuse him of the double mistake both as to the place of the ordeal and as to the method of interpretation.

<sup>3</sup> Dio Cassius xli. 45. The oracle answered questions of any kind except those relating to death or marriage.



root idea manifested in these customs is that of the rejection by the divine element of the accursed thing. The transition to a divination by throwing things representative of the person into the water is the easier when it is remembered that ordeal by proxy<sup>1</sup> is extremely common, and also that the method of attaining union with the sacred well was to throw objects into it. And just as the coins of Amphiaraios' spring at Oropos come to be regarded as offerings to the hero, so here there can be little doubt that the notion of sacrifice has affected the theory of the divinatory rite. Dr. Frazer aptly quotes other instances of sacrifices to volcanoes in his note on the Etna rite, and the loaves of Epidauros Limera were evidently offerings to the goddess.<sup>2</sup> Thus we get the notion of the acceptance or the refusal of sacrifice figuring also as an element in these divinatory rites.

The type of ordeal which remains to be considered is that in which the guilty person or his representative is sucked down by the water. Doubtless the basis of the belief is the credited

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Malay diving ordeal, Skeat, pp. 542-544; Melanesian *dau he'u* and the alligator ordeal, Codrington, p. 212. In some of the African poison ordeals the dose is administered to hens as proxies, Hopf, *Thierorakel*, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. cakes offered to rivers or the sea, Paus. vii. 24. 3; x. 8. 10.



existence of water spirits which drag under and drown the unwary. Those who looked into a mirror pool in Samoa ran the risk of being sucked in by the treacherous water,<sup>1</sup> and of the Alkyonian Lake Pausanias says: "I was told too that smooth and still as the water of the lake looks to the eye, it yet has the property of sucking down anyone who is rash enough to swim in it: the water catches him and sweeps him down into the depths."<sup>2</sup> Similarly at the Cauldron of the Palikoi in Sicily, "when a man wished to take a solemn oath, he wrote upon a tablet, and flung it into the water; if he swore truly, the tablet floated; but if he foreswore himself, it sank."<sup>3</sup> If the apparel of an invalid floated in the Dow Loch, convalescence should follow: if otherwise, his decease. The same method of divination was used at St. Oswald's Well near Great Ayton and Ragwells at Whitby. Theft was betrayed by the sinking of the billet inscribed with the name of the thief thrown with others into the holy water, both in Scotland and elsewhere.<sup>4</sup> In Western Yannan old

<sup>1</sup> Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, vol. ii. p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Pausanias ii. 37. 6. (trans. Frazer).

<sup>3</sup> Steph. Byz. s.v. Παλική; Aristot. *De mir. ausc.* 58; Frazer, *Paus.* iii. p. 389, with references. Summary punishment fell on the perjurer.

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Gutch, *County Folklore*, ii. *N. Riding*, pp. 26, 34; Dalyell, p. 513. For the "elsewhere" of the last of these instances Dalyell is



women divine the welfare or death of absent men by means of needles threaded with cotton wool and set afloat. As the wool gets wetted the needles sink one after another, and the man whose needle sinks first would be the dead one.<sup>1</sup> The Holy Well at Little Conan, Cornwall, shows plainly how this mode of divination may arise out of the throwing of objects into the holy well, and the fee to the priest is an interesting feature. On Palm Sunday a cross of palm is thrown into the well after a present has been made to the priest. If it swam, the thrower was to outlive the year; if it sank, he would die.<sup>2</sup> The principle of this ordeal is seen in its simplest form in the Malay diving ordeal. The oaths are written out, and sealed in bamboo tubes. Two boys act as proxies and dive into the water holding the bamboos. The boy who has the false oath is half drowned, and is obliged to come up to the surface.<sup>3</sup>

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not explicit; perhaps it was France. His reference is to Massé, *L'Imposture et tromperie des diables*, 32.

<sup>1</sup> Hartland, *op. cit.* ii. p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Skeat, *Malay Magic*, pp. 542-544.



## CHAPTER VII

### DIVINATION AT SACRED SPRINGS

Ἀπόλλωνι δὲ παῖδας ἐκ Μελίας γενέσθαι λέγουσι Τήνερον καὶ Ἰσμήνιον· Τηνέρω μὲν Ἀπόλλων μαντικὴν δίδωσι, τοῦ δὲ Ἰσμηνίου τὸ ὄνομα ἔσχεν ὁ ποταμός.<sup>1</sup>

“No objects of the natural world,” says Dr. Farnell, “attracted the religious devotion of the primitive and later Greeks so much as rivers and springs, and no other obtained so general a recognition in the cults of the Greek states.”<sup>2</sup> The examples of the water ordeal which have been examined testify to the reverence paid in early times to rivers, lakes, and wells. And in oaths rivers figure frequently in the company of Helios, Earth, and Olympian deities as divine witnesses and punishers of perjury.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias ix. 10. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Farnell, *Cults*, v. p. 420; cf. Karsten, *Studies in Primitive Greek Religion*, pp. 26-33. “Nullus enim fons non sacer,” Servius, *Aen.* vii. 84.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. *Iliad* iii. 276-280; *Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo*, 83-86; Euripides, *Phoinissai* 613; *Rhesos* 827; Polybios vii. 9; *C.I.G.* 2558;



Not only are offerings made to rivers by generals, who wish to cross them,<sup>1</sup> but rivers possess their own priests or *τεμένη*, and sacrifices and dedications are made to them.<sup>2</sup> There are even suggestions in myth that at one time the practice of offering human sacrifices to rivers was not unknown.<sup>3</sup> Greek literature and mythology are full of Acheloos and the river gods.<sup>4</sup>

The reason for the sanctity of rivers in Greece is largely to be sought in the value naturally attaching to water in a dry and thirsty land, and also perhaps to marked characteristics

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Ditt. *Syll.* 600 a; *Museo Italico*, iii. 657, quoted Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, p. 12, n. 2.

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Herodotos vi. 76, vii. 54, vii. 113; Lukian, *Alex.* 47; Plutarch, *Lucullus* 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad* xi. 727, v. 77, xxi. 130, xxiii. 146; Pindar, *Pyth.* xii. 27; Pausanias iv. 3. 10; Herodotos viii. 138; Diodoros iv. 23. 4. Dedications to rivers, *J.H.S.* xxv. p. 60, No. 22; *C.I.G.* 3700; Galatian and Phrygian inscriptions, *J.H.S.* xix. p. 76, Nos. 31, 32; *B.C.H.* xxv. p. 328; Kerkyra, *I.G.A.* 347. At Chalkedon a river cult apparently gave the name *ποτάμιος* to one of the months, *J.H.S.* vii. p. 154. The river-god figures frequently on coins.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias vii. 21. 1-5, ix. 33. 4, vii. 19. 4, vii. 20. 1; Frazer, *Pausanias*, v. p. 143.

<sup>4</sup> Acheloos is the river-god *par excellence*. "Acheloum generaliter propter antiquitatem fluminis omnem aquam veteres vocabant," Servius, *Georg.* i. 9; cf. Ephoros *ap.* Macrobius, *Sat.* v. 18, *F.H.G.* i. p. 239. That is why the Megarians dedicated an altar to Acheloos in the place where they diverted the waters of a stream, Paus. i. 41. 2. For the worship of Acheloos at Oropos, Athens, Mykonos, Mantinea, Rhodes, Sicily and Greece in general, see Frazer, *Pausanias*, i. p. 527, and references.



peculiar to the geological formation of the country. The drought of Greek lands, where all but a very few rivers dry up in summer, naturally makes water a divine thing.<sup>1</sup> Of the difficulty and importance of getting water, particularly in the Argolis, Greek legend is full;<sup>2</sup> and the way in which, in a volcanic country, streams spring suddenly from the rock, and large rivers sink below the earth to reappear after flowing perhaps a considerable distance underground, is calculated to impress the observer with superstitious awe. To-day the wellings from the rock, often periodic in their appearance, are most of them *ἀγιάσματα*, miraculous waters attached to some saint and his church. Small wonder if antiquity ascribed to them a magical origin.

Here the hoof of Pegasus cleft the rock,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the influence of lack of water on conceptions of Paradise ancient and modern, and on funeral rites, see Lawson, *op. cit.* pp. 520-521, and the Arabic parallel, Golziher, *Archiv f. rel. Wiss.*, 1910, pp. 20-27.

<sup>2</sup> The spring on Akro-Korinth was extorted by Sisyphos from Asopos, Paus. ii. 5. 1; cf. Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 117. Pyrrhichos in Lakonia was given by Silenos, Paus. iii. 25. 3. Phliasian Asopos was called after its discoverer, Paus. ii. 12. 4; cf. Adrasteia at Nemea, Paus. ii. 15. 3, and the Ἡράκλειος κρήνη at Troizen, Paus. ii. 32. 4. *ἄνυδρον ἐὸν Δανααὶ θέσαν Ἄργος ἔνυδρον*, Strabo viii. 6. 8, 371. One of Agamemnon's services to mankind was the digging of wells, Hesychios, s.v. Ἀγαμεμνόνια φρέατα. In North Africa the discovery of springs is similarly the work of saints, Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> Hippokrene in Boeotia (Paus. ix. 31. 3; Hesiod, *Theog.* 6; Ovid,



Dionysos smote the earth with his wand,<sup>1</sup> Atalanta planted her spear,<sup>2</sup> or the Maid lifted a stone<sup>3</sup>; Poseidon's trident,<sup>4</sup> Herakles' club,<sup>5</sup> the strong tread of heroes,<sup>6</sup> or the animal who guides the settler to the destined site,<sup>7</sup> summon water-springs from the earth.

And the "swallows," *καταβόθρα* as they are called in modern Greek, through which even large rivers disappear, sometimes for good, sometimes to reappear, are certainly remarkable enough to excite reverence. "It goes," as an Anatolian peasant said to me of one of them, "to the Lower World" (*πάει 'στον κάτω κόσμον*). For the loves of Alpheios and Arethusa are suggested by real phenomena, and classical geographers are arguing from facts familiar to

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*Met.* v. 255; Strabo viii. 379, 410; Kastalia (Bode, *Mythog.* i. 130, ii. 112); in Troizen, Paus. ii. 31. 9. For parallels in folklore see Frazer, *Paus.* iii. p. 32; a Manx Hippokrene, *Folklore*, v. p. 221; cf. Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, 107.

<sup>1</sup> Kyparissiai in Messenia, Paus. iv. 36. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Kyphante in Lakonia, Paus. iii. 24. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Herkyna at Lebadea. The curious story of the fugitive goose, Paus. ix. 39. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Amymon in Argolis, Eur. *Phoinissai* 186-189; Lukian, *Dial. Marin.* 6. 3; cf. Salt Well on the Akropolis.

<sup>5</sup> τὰ λουτρά τὰ Ἡρακλέους in Dryopis, Anton. Lib. iv.

<sup>6</sup> In Kos, Χάλκωνος, Βούριναν ὅς ἐκ ποδὸς ἄνυσε κράναν (Theokrit. vii. 6). Similarly Achilles in the Troad, Lykophr. 245; Schol. Eur. *Androm.* 1139. The Ismenos was once called Κάδμου πούς, Pseud. Plut. *De fluv.* 2. 1. Cf. *Sir John Mandeville*, vii. p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> Bukeraia at Plataia was made by the horn of the cow which guided Polybos, *Et. Mag.* 207. 42.



them when they enter on their wild speculations as to the identity, for instance, of the Nile and a stream in Delos.<sup>1</sup>

Phenomena like these *καταβόθρα* are naturally "considered full of mysterious power" by primitive man,<sup>2</sup> and their sanctity in many cases must date to a remote past. And the sudden disappearance of streams into the bowels of the earth accounts for the frequency with which they are regarded as entries or gates to the Lower World.<sup>3</sup> It is easy to understand why Pluto was crowned with *φασγάνιον*, the sword-flag.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Inland salt springs regarded as sea wells, Pausanias i. 26. 5, ii. 24. 6, viii. 10. 4 (a similar Cornish belief, Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 53). Rivers reborn under another name, Ovid, *Met.* xv. 273; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 103 (106); Pausanias ix. 30. 8, ii. 24. 6; Strabo viii. 6. 8, 371; Paus. v. 7. 5, ii. 5. 3, viii. 44. 4, viii. 54. 1; Philostr. *V. Apoll.* i. 21. Stories that objects thrown into one stream reappear in another, Strabo vi. 270; Pliny, *N.H.* ii. 103 (106). 225; *F.H.G.* i. p. 206; Pausanias vii. 24. 3, x. 8. 10, iii. 21. 2; Schol. Aristoph. *Birds* 1694 (examples from modern Greece, Cornwall and Wales, Bent, *The Cyclades*, p. 430; *Outlook*, Aug. 7, 1909; Croker, *op. cit.* iii. p. 255). In ancient Greece it was the Nile that reappeared in Delos (Paus. ii. 5. 3; Schol. Lykophr. 576); in modern Greece it is the Jordan (Bent, *op. cit.* p. 58).

<sup>2</sup> See the account of similar places on the Fraser River, and the attitude of the Shuswap towards them, Teit, *Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, ii. 7, p. 598.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. the Alkyonian Lake, Paus. ii. 37. 5; the Styx, Ovid, *Met.* i. 188; the Acherusian Lake at Ephyra, Paus. i. 17. 5; Frazer, *Pausanias*, ii. p. 161; Acheron at Herakleia Pontika, Apoll. Rhod. ii. 352, 744, with Scholia; a spring at Argos, Hesychios, s.v. *ἐλεύθερον ὕδωρ*; a pool at Hermione, Paus. ii. 35. 10; Kyane in Sicily, Ovid, *Met.* v. 409-424; Diodoros iv. 23. 4. And these examples are by no means exhaustive.

<sup>4</sup> Cornutus 35.



The belief in bottomless tarns which lead to Middle Earth and the subterranean habitations of fairies, or in submerged countries which lie below the water, is common to most lands and peoples.<sup>1</sup> Watercourses and streams in mediaeval Italy are the best places for making compacts with the devil, who often appears in the form of a miller<sup>2</sup>; a mill is regularly the rendezvous for devils in a common type of folktale. The Lake of Kotylia mentioned by Dionysios of Halikarnassos is the "lacum ab antiquis daemonibus consecratum et ab ipsis sensibiliter inhabitatum" of Peter Bersuire.<sup>3</sup> In a land of underground streams it is not surprising to find this connection of water with the underworld peculiarly close.

The connection, too, of Mother Earth with her waters is recognised by Greek religion. It is she that sends up the various streams

<sup>1</sup> To give a few random examples, Scott, *Minstrelsy*, ii. 271 f.; Gutch and Peacock, *op. cit.* p. 12; Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Nos. 24, 61; Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees*, p. 240; Cushing, "Zuñi Myths," *A.R.A.B.E.* xiii. pp. 410, 411, 413; and the articles of Preuss in *Zeitschrift für Erakunde*, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> Heywood, *Ensamles of Fra Filippo*, p. 313.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Bersuire died in 1326. The text of his interesting account is given by Heywood, *op. cit.* p. 315. When the passage is compared with Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* i. 15, there can be no doubt, I think, that the two authors are really thinking of the same locality, and that we have a genuine case of continuity of a local tradition from classical to mediaeval times.



her gifts of good or ill to man<sup>1</sup>; Acheloos is her son, and flees in sorrow to his mother's caves<sup>2</sup>; sacred waters are often dedicated to the Mother and the Maid, and their statues are frequently to be found at holy wells.<sup>3</sup>

With the fertility of man and nature Mother Earth and her waters are connected<sup>4</sup>; and apart from specific magical wells which do away with sterility,<sup>5</sup> the object of the ritual washings in the ancient Greek marriage service,<sup>6</sup> the aspect of the nymphs as *κουροτρόφοι*,<sup>7</sup> and the stories

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *De def. orac.* 40, 432 D ἡ δὲ γῆ πολλῶν μὲν ἄλλων δυνάμεων πηγὰς ἀνίσχεται ἀνθρώποις, τὰς μὲν ἐκστατικὰς καὶ νοσώδεις καὶ θανατηφόρους, τὰς δὲ χρηστὰς καὶ προσηνεῖς καὶ ὠφελίμους.

<sup>2</sup> Servius, *Georg.* i. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias i. 38. 1, vii. 21. 4.

<sup>4</sup> On the widespread belief in the birth of children from springs see Dieterich, *Mutter Erde*, p. 18 foll.; M'Kenzie, "Children and Wells," *Folklore*, xviii. p. 268.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Sinuessa, Linus, Elatos, and the Thespian fountain, Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxi. 2 (4). 8, and 2 (7). 10. For non-Greek examples see Pfister, *op. cit.* p. 371; M'Kenzie, *op. cit.* p. 272; Moore, *Folklore*, v. pp. 221, 224.

<sup>6</sup> Pollux iii. 43; Thukydides ii. 15; Euripides, *Phoinissai* 347; *Iph. Taur.* 818; Aischines, *Epist.* x. 680 (discussed by Farnell, *Cults*, v. p. 423); Frazer, *Pausanias*, v. p. 389; Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 555. With this rite is connected the practice of placing the figure of the λουτροφόρος on the tombs of those who die unmarried. Schol. A and B, *Iliad* xxiii. 142 τοῖς ποταμοῖς ἔτρεφον τὰς κόμας ἐπεὶ κουροτρόφοι νομίζονται καὶ τοῖς γαμοῦσι δὲ τὸ λουτρὸν ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐκόμιζον γονὴν οἰωνίζόμενοι, καὶ τοῖς πρὸ γάμων τελευτῶσιν ἡ λουτροφόρος κάλπις ἐτίθετο.

<sup>7</sup> Hesiod, *Theog.* 346-348; on cutting the hair in honour of a river, Pausanias viii. 41. 3, i. 37. 3; *Iliad* xxiii. 140; cf. Malay custom of sending child's hair to Zemzem, Skeat, *op. cit.* pp. 342, 355. To dream of rivers, lakes, or nymphs is good πρὸς παίδων γονήν, Artemidoros, *On.* 2. 38, 138; Porphyry, *De antro nymph.* 12, says ναῖδες οὖν νύμφαι



of the washing of infant gods and heroes in the rivers of Greece,<sup>1</sup> must be explained by the belief in the fertilising power of water and in its magical properties of making children strong<sup>2</sup> which has given to sacred water an important part in the marriage and puberty initiations of many peoples.

We have seen, then, that in Greece the element of water is in its own right invested with divinity, and that rivers are holy streams associated with Earth and the underworld. Further, the wells of Greece are connected with heroes. Several influences probably are at work to turn the sacred locality into the grave of a hero. The chief and most universal of these I believe to be a tendency in the development of religion to seek after a clear-cut personality to worship. The vague nymphs or fairies take the place of the impersonal *mana* of the water, in their turn to be ousted by the more definite personalities of heroes or

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αἱ εἰς γένεσιν λούσαι ψυχαί, ὅθεν καὶ τὰς γαμουμένας ἔθος ὡς ἂν εἰς γένεσιν συνεζευγμένας νύμφας τε καλεῖν καὶ λουτροῖς κατελεῖν ἐκ πηγῶν ἢ ναμάτων ἢ κρηνῶν ἀνάντων εἰλημμένοις.

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias i. 38. 9, iv. 33. 1, viii. 8. 2, viii. 16. 1; Euripides, *Bacchae* 519; Plutarch, *Lys.* 28.

<sup>2</sup> The Bageshu, for example, state definitely as the motive of the sprinkling of initiates after the circumcision ceremony with the water of sacred waterfalls that "it makes them quite well and strong and enables the girls to have children," Roscoe, *J.A.I.* xxxix. p. 189.



saints.<sup>1</sup> And the mutual connection of heroes and holy wells with the miraculous healing of sickness, and the ties already noticed which bind the sacred springs to Mother Earth and the dead, must have assisted the process.

### CONTACT WITH THE DIVINE ELEMENT

For the sanctity of the waters of Greece and the powers with which they are associated in Greek religion, this short sketch must suffice. We are more directly concerned with the part played by them in Greek divination. And the method which seems most primitive in conception may be taken first—that in which inspiration is drawn from contact with the magical or divine power of the water.

Several streams were noted in the ancient world for the property of making mad those who drank of them. For example, in Aithiopia was a pool which had this effect on human beings.<sup>2</sup> Pliny mentions the Veline Lake, a stream in Phrygia, and a Syrian river which made mad those who drank an overdose of the water.<sup>3</sup> Pausanias tells us of a water at

<sup>1</sup> See my article on "Cenotaphs and Sacred Localities," *B.S.A.* xvii.

<sup>2</sup> Ovid, *Met.* xv. 320 ; Pliny, *N.H.* ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Pliny, *N.H.* xxxi. 2 (4). 9.



Potniai that made mares mad,<sup>1</sup> and in Thrace the Kossinites had the property of maddening horses.<sup>2</sup> The restriction to a certain kind of animal in the last two cases is probably to be explained by that degeneracy in the efficacy of magical powers which time and civilisation produce.<sup>3</sup> It is probable that once these streams of restricted efficacy had the power of making all creatures mad who drank of their waters.

Tertullian places the Kolophonian spring in the same category as those we have quoted.<sup>4</sup> Now the water of the spring at Kolophon was drunk by the priest, and inspired him with the divine madness of prophecy.<sup>5</sup> Drinking the water made the priest *ἐνθεος*; it united him with the *mana* of the spring. This method of union by drinking is common enough to need little illustration. Texts of the Koran are given in solution as a beneficial medicine, and Arabic

<sup>1</sup> Paus. ix. 8. 2, connected with the Glaukos story; see commentators on Verg. *Georg.* iii. 267. It is not so clear in their account whether the power of the water was limited to animals.

<sup>2</sup> Aelian, *N.A.* xv. 25.

<sup>3</sup> The same kind of restriction may be seen in the case of the charms of modern folklore. It is observable in the greater facility with which the *jettatore* overlooks animals. Some interesting statistics of the percentage of English magic wells, whose efficacy is restricted to the healing of children or the specific complaint of sore eyes, are given, *Folklore*, xviii. pp. 253-254. Whether the author would agree with my explanation of this restriction I am not sure.

<sup>4</sup> Tertullian, *De anima*, 50.

<sup>5</sup> Tacitus, *Annals*, ii. 54; Pliny, *N.H.* ii. 103 (106). 232.



children have even been known to have been given to drink the water which has washed the chalk off the blackboard at the end of the lesson.<sup>1</sup> In a magical papyrus we read *καὶ λαβὼν τὸ γάλα σὺν τῷ μέλιτι ἀπόπιε πρὶν ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου καὶ ἔσται τι ἔνθεον ἐν τῇ σῇ καρδίᾳ.*<sup>2</sup> With the drinking of the Kolophonian spring may be compared the draught of bull's blood at Aigai,<sup>3</sup> or that of the lamb's blood at Argos.<sup>4</sup> At Argos every month a lamb was sacrificed by night to Apollo Deiradiotes, and a woman, debarred from intercourse with the other sex, becomes inspired by drinking the victim's blood. Temporarily she is the god,<sup>5</sup> and it is only the literary criticism of a late and sceptical era that admits even that the words she utters are not the words of the god himself.<sup>6</sup> So the drinking of the magic water fills the drinker temporarily with the power of the water, or in later times makes him the mouthpiece of a god. It can hardly be doubted that the maddening

<sup>1</sup> Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Pap. Parth.* i. 20. 59, quoted Fahz, p. 115; cf. the draughts of immortality in the South Italian mysteries, Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, p. 172. Persian kings drank only of the sacred water of the Choaspes, Herodotos i. 188; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxi. 3 (21). 35. In later superstition the Choaspes water is a beverage in the underworld, Lukian, *Menippos* 7. 465.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. vii. 25. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Paus. ii. 24. 1.

<sup>5</sup> See Frazer, *Golden Bough*,<sup>2</sup> i. pp. 130 seq.

<sup>6</sup> Plut. *Pyth. orac.* 120.



draughts at magic fountains long preceded the advent of Apollo.

At Hysiai, Pausanias saw among the ruins of the town a spring which in former days had inspired with prophecy all those who drank of it.<sup>1</sup> At Delphi the priestess drank of the spring Kassotis.<sup>2</sup> Lukian implies that at every Apolline oracle the promantis drank of the sacred spring.<sup>3</sup> Clement of Alexandria exclaims in triumph, *σεσίγηται γοῦν ἡ Κασταλίας πηγή, καὶ Κολοφῶνος ἄλλη πηγή, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὁμοίως τέθνηκε νάματα μαντικά.*<sup>4</sup> For Kastaly it is true that the tradition of mantic power is found only in late writers, and one of the most careful of these, Pausanias, is silent on the point.<sup>5</sup> The function of the spring at Dodona is obscure; mention of it occurs only after the oracle had ceased to exist.<sup>6</sup> In the very elaborate ritual of the oracle of Trophonios, the inquirer is washed in the river Herkyna and must drink of the waters of Lethe and Mnemosyne.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Paus. ix. 2. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. x. 24. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Lukian, *Bis accusatus*, I. 792; *Jup. trag.* 30. 675.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* ii. 3. 1.

<sup>5</sup> See Pausanias x. 8. 9, with Frazer's notes and references. Suidas mentions a spring of divination called Kastalia, but it appears to belong to Antioch, and is described as *πηγή ἐν τῇ καλουμένῃ Δάφνῃ*: Suidas, s.v. *Κασταλία*.

<sup>6</sup> Servius, *Aen.* iii. 466.

<sup>7</sup> Paus. ix. 39. 7 foll.



But the real, & the important thing is the trance - drinking is only one way of producing it

of. 162

The primary object of the drinking of the sacred spring by the priest or prophet is union with the divinity, or, in the pre-animistic stage, union with the power of the water. It is to these beliefs that we owe, on the one hand, the importance of the water of sacred springs in the oracles of the Olympian gods, and on the other hand the traditions of streams whose waters make men mad.<sup>1</sup>

Dream & Trance

### INCUBATION

Perhaps the most frequent of the methods of divination practised at the holy wells of Greece was that of incubation. The strange phenomenon of sleeping visions has naturally in every clime attracted the attention of superstitious man, and dream-books even to-day have a large sale among certain orders of society in the British Isles. Through dreams, as Agamemnon believed, Zeus reveals his will, and Bellerophon sleeps by the altar of Athena at Korinth.<sup>2</sup> Long before the days of Artemidoros or Aristides, the sick sought in dreams a relief for their sufferings. All hero-oracles

<sup>1</sup> In the same category, perhaps, is to be placed the Lynkestian spring which made men drunk. For drunkenness as a sign of possession in the case of victims of human sacrifice at Rhodes (Porph. *De abst.* ii. 54) or in Mexico, see Hubert et Mauss, *Mélanges*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Pindar, *Ol.* xiii. 105.



cure disease, and their instrument is incubation<sup>1</sup> after the fashion described in the *Plutus* of Aristophanes,<sup>2</sup> or to be witnessed at any modern Greek church of repute on the occasion of its festival.<sup>3</sup> In Graeco-Roman times, the Hercules of medicinal springs earned the title *Somnialis*,<sup>4</sup> and Dionysos, helper of the Amphikleans in sickness, communicated his cures to them in dreams.<sup>5</sup>

Again Earth, in whom M. Bouché Leclerq recognises "la divinité prophétique par excellence," and whose prophetic powers are attested by her connection with Dodona, Delphi, the Gaeum at Olympia and the oracle at Aigai,<sup>6</sup> was the sender of dreams. Euripides in a

<sup>1</sup> See Bouché Leclerq, *op. cit.* p. 319. Examples are Mopsos of Mallos, Plut. *De def. orac.* 45; the various *manteia* of Amphiaraos, Herod. viii. 134; Paus. ix. 8. 3, ii. 13. 7; Kalchas and Podaleirios, Strabo vi. 3. 9, 284, Lykophron 1047, and Scholia.

<sup>2</sup> For the oracles of Asklepios see Bouché Leclerq, *op. cit.* iii. pp. 271-307.

<sup>3</sup> An account of ancient and modern incubation in Greece, based upon Deubner's *De incubatione* and autopsy, is given in Miss Hamilton (Mrs. Dickins), *Incubation*.

<sup>4</sup> Bouché Leclerq, *op. cit.* iii. p. 310.

<sup>5</sup> Pausanias x. 33. 11.

<sup>6</sup> For oracles of Earth see Bouché Leclerq, ii. pp. 250-260. "Gaia devait donc être, aux yeux des Hellènes des premiers âges, la divinité prophétique par excellence, et nous verrons les théories des âges postérieures lui rendront peu à peu le privilège exclusif d'alimenter l'inspiration des oracles," p. 352, referring to the *περίγειοι δαίμονες* of Eusebios (*Praep. Evang.* v. 16). Once more we see how the later developments of Greek religion reach behind the Olympians to take up the superstitious heritage of an earlier creed.



wonderful chorus tells of her quarrel with Apollo over precedence at Delphi, and how

νύχια  
 χθὼν ἔτεκνώσατο φάσματ' ὀνείρων  
 οἳ πολέσιν μερόπων τά τε πρῶτα, τά τ'  
 ἔπειθ', ὅσσα τ' ἔμελλε τυχεῖν  
 ὕπνου κατὰ δνοφερὰς γᾶς εὐ-  
 νὰς ἔφραζον.<sup>1</sup>

And dreams were the means by which the dead revealed the future to the living. The Nasamonians<sup>2</sup> and the Augilai of the Cyrenaic hinterland<sup>3</sup> practised incubation on tombs. The same practice is found in Australia,<sup>4</sup> Palestine,<sup>5</sup> and Ireland,<sup>6</sup> and the islanders of the Torres Straits sleep with a skull under their pillow.<sup>7</sup> In Christian times Cyril and Hieronymus attack the rite as a heathen superstition.<sup>8</sup> At Acharaka in Asia Minor there was a popular sanatorium by the Charonian Cave. The officials used to sleep by the hell gate and prescribe for their patients in accordance with the revelations they thus received.<sup>9</sup> With each

<sup>1</sup> Euripides, *Iph. in Taur.* 1261 foll.; cf. *Hecuba* 70; Welcker, *Kl. Schrift.* iii. p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos iv. 172. The modern Touareg of North Africa, Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 412.

<sup>3</sup> Pomponius Mela i. 8. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Mauss, *Origines des pouvoirs magiques*, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah lxx. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 496.

<sup>7</sup> Haddon in *Anth. Essays*, p. 179.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted Welcker, *op. cit.* p. 90.

<sup>9</sup> Strabo xiv. 44, 649.



of the powers with which holy wells are connected, heroes, the dead, and Mother Earth, the practice of incubation is associated.

The Gaelic rite of *Taghairm* (a word apparently meaning "echo") shows us that also in its own right the magic spring has power to send dreams. "Here the querent was wrapped in a cow's hide, his head alone remaining free, and carried by assistants to a solitary spot or left under the arch formed by the projected waters of a cataract: where he continued during night, while other beings seeming to flit around him, he derived that inspiration from them which he delivered as an oracular response to his comrades on the following day."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps sleeping by the sacred water has the same kind of efficacy as sleeping with a piece of the sacred tree under your pillow.<sup>2</sup> It is a form of union with the magic power. That at least must be the meaning of the sleeping on the hide of the slain animal. To examine this practice in detail would need too long a digression. It recurs in the rites of incubation at the oracles

<sup>1</sup> Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 495. The details of the description bear a marked resemblance to Vergil, *Aen.* vii. 85 foll., or the incubation of the Lithuanians by the sacred fire, Hieronymus of Prague quoted by Usener, *Götternamen*, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Ireland, Duncan, *Folklore*, v. p. 196. Greece, Fulgentius, *Mit.* i. 14; Bode, *Mythog.* ii. 23; Euseb. *Praep. Ev.* v. 12; Hubert, s.v. "Magia" in Daremberg et Saglio.



of Picus and Faunus,<sup>1</sup> Kalchas and Podaleirios,<sup>2</sup> and Amphiaraos.<sup>3</sup> Pythagoras, after being cleansed by the Idaean Dactyls, slept by a river on the skin of a black lamb.<sup>4</sup> The clothing of the god or of the worshipper in the skin of the animal sacrificed is familiar in antiquity,<sup>5</sup> as in Mexico. The root of the matter is probably expressed in a sentence of Dr. Preuss: "In der Haut nämlich sitzt vor allem die Zauberkraft des Tieres."<sup>6</sup> A satisfactory explanation of the origin of the customs must at any rate take account not merely of totemistic rites or animal worship, but of all those many dances in which the savage imitates or identifies himself with animals. Such an investigation would be alike beyond the scope of this treatise and the knowledge of the writer.

Beneath the tree and beside the brook of Dodona, that sacred spot at which all the modes of divination appear to meet and flourish in combination, the Selloi with unwashed feet, who sleep on the ground, seem to have received in dreams an intimation of the future.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vergil, *Aen.* vii. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Lykophron 1047; Strabo vi. 3. 9, 284.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. i. 34. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Porphyry, *Vit. Pythag.* 17.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Ammon, Herodotos ii. 42; worshipper at Hierapolis, Lukian, *De dea Syria*, 55; cf. Miss Harrison on the Διὸς κώδιον, *Prolegomena*, pp. 23-27.

<sup>6</sup> *Globus*, 86, pp. 389-390.

<sup>7</sup> Eustathius, *Iliad* 1057. 64. For the discussion of these χαμαιεῦναι, χαμαικοῖται, γηλεχέες, see Welcker, *op. cit.* pp. 90-91.



We have mentioned the oracle at the spring of Picus and Faunus, and that on the banks of the healing waters which flowed by the supposed grave of Podaleirios. Like Amphiaraos of the Oropian spring, Ino Pasiphaë revealed the future in dreams to the ephors of Sparta,<sup>1</sup> and to humbler folk. "Inquirers of the oracle go to sleep, and the goddess reveals to them in dreams all that they wish to know. Water flows from a sacred spring sweet to drink."<sup>2</sup> Whoever this Ino may have been,<sup>3</sup> there can be little doubt in the relevance of the mention of the sacred spring. The divinatory water at Epidauros Limera went by the name of the Water of Ino.<sup>4</sup> Welcker believes that Lemnos, from which Hypnos is brought in the *Iliad*, possessed a *Schlaforakel*.<sup>5</sup> If so, we have no information as to its character or its ritual. But in the case of Delos we are more fortunate. The goddess Brizo is a water-goddess. She has to do with the fortunes of the fishing fleet, and offerings are brought to her in boat-shaped vessels. And once more the water power gives oracles in dreams.<sup>6</sup> Lukian has all the sceptic's

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Kleomenes* 7 f., *Agis* 9; Cicero, *De div.* i. 43. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Pausanias iii. 26. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Frazer's note, Paus. *loc. cit.*; Usener, *Götternamen*, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> Paus. iii. 23. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Welcker, *op. cit.* p. 92; *Iliad* xiv. 233.

<sup>6</sup> Hesychios, s.v. Βριζοί; Athenaios viii. 335 A. Semos the Delian, *F.H.G.* iv. p. 493.



accurate knowledge of the forms which he mocks. In the middle of the Agora in the Island of Dreams was a spring called Kareotis, and hard by two temples of Deceit and Truth. Here, too, is their shrine and oracle, over which presides Antiphon the interpreter of dreams, appointed by Sleep to the honoured post of prophet.<sup>1</sup>

### SUB-RITES AT HEALING WELLS

The lands of classical antiquity were full of waters possessing magical properties,<sup>2</sup> the majority of which, here as elsewhere, possessed the power of healing. In the stream within the cave at Samikon in Elis lepers washed away their uncleanness.<sup>3</sup> The Alyssos in Arkadia cured the bite of mad dogs.<sup>4</sup> The waters of Pamisos in Messenia healed the diseases of little children.<sup>5</sup> The spring of the Ionides at Heraklea in Elis was a panacea;<sup>6</sup> the spring of Podaleirios in Damia a panacea for animals.<sup>7</sup> The Alpheios cured ἀλφοί, the Kydnos gout, and the Althainos wounds.<sup>8</sup> The spring at

<sup>1</sup> Lukian, *Vera Historia*, B, 33, 129.

<sup>2</sup> For examples of magical properties other than medicinal belonging to classical streams, wells, and lakes, see Pausanias vii. 23. 3; Herodotos iv. 181; Athenaios ii. 15-19, 41 E-43 F; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* ii. 103 (106). 230, xxxi. 2 (20). 29; Aristotle, *De mir. ausc.* 184; *F.H.G.* i. pp. 61, 206, 316, 337; Lucretius vi. 848; Ovid, *Met.* xv. 307-356.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. v. 5. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Paus. viii. 19. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Paus. iv. 31. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Paus. vi. 22. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Strabo 284.

<sup>8</sup> Schol. Lykophr. 1050.



Skotusai in Thessaly not only healed the wounds of men and animals, but even caused split wood, if thrown into it, to join up and become whole.<sup>1</sup> The sanctuaries of Asklepios tend to have their sacred spring.<sup>2</sup>

Partly perhaps the notion of cleansing or washing away evil may have contributed to the healing power of water,<sup>3</sup> but there is also the idea of uniting the sick man with the power of the water by making him either drink of it,<sup>4</sup> or throw into it some object belonging to him. This throwing of coins, etc., into the water becomes regarded as an ex-voto offering, but that its original intent is rather to unite well and patient is shown, I think, by the fact that frequently the thing thrown is of no value and, indeed, is often no more than a pin.<sup>5</sup> At the Oropian spring of Amphiaraos, "when a man has been healed in consequence of an oracle vouchsafed to him, it is customary for him to

<sup>1</sup> Arist. *De mir. ausc.* 127.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Pausanias iii. 21. 2 and 21. 8.

<sup>3</sup> See Goldziher, *Archiv f. rel. Wiss.*, 1910; the story of Naaman, the cleansing of Orestes with Hippokrene water, Paus. ii. 31. 9; the story of the Anigros river, Ovid, *Met.* xv. 282, Paus. v. 5. 7; the streams of Perseus at Joppa, of Oidipous at Thebes, of Achilles at Miletos, of Telephos at Patara, for which the references are given, Pfister, *op. cit.* p. 360.

<sup>4</sup> For example, victims of the Evil Eye in modern Greece drink the water of ἀγιάσματα, Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> See Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, ii. cap. xi.



drop silver and gold coins into the spring.”<sup>1</sup> Dr. Frazer in his note quotes the younger Pliny’s remark about the Clitumnian spring,<sup>2</sup> the throwing of money into the lake of Curtius in fulfilment of a vow made for the health of Augustus,<sup>3</sup> and the discoveries of old Italian money in the hot springs of Vicarello.<sup>4</sup>

Now once again it is to be noted that divination often begins where magic fails, and the practice of throwing objects into healing wells produces a method of divining as to the patient’s recovery. You go to the magic well in the same spirit of anxious despair as that type of sufferer with whom advertisements have made us familiar turns as a last chance to the quack medicine recommended by her friends. You hope, but are not quite sure of success ; you are exactly in that frame of mind which generates the divinatory sub-rite. As you throw your coin in, your anxiety clutches at signs, and you watch carefully what happens to it. Thus, for example, in Scotland we have a mode of divination obviously derived from the rites of the sacred well. The particular side of a coin dropped into water proved the health of an

<sup>1</sup> Paus. i. 34. 4 (trans. Frazer).

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, *Ep.* viii. 8. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 57.

<sup>4</sup> Frazer, *Paus.* ii. p. 474. He gives also many references to the healing wells of folklore.



absent friend: "gif the cross of the sixpence be up, then they are weill; gif not, they are not weill."<sup>1</sup> Again, the motive of union with the magic well has become in course of time obliterated, and what is thrown in has become an offering to the god. The patient watches with eager intensity to see if his offering is accepted or refused.<sup>2</sup> It is obvious that these kleromantic sub-rites, if developed in this way, will tend to present a single alternative. The sixpence must come down "cross" or "heads"; an object in the water must either float or sink. The whole *raison d'être* of this kind of divination is to comfort anxiety with a strong and definite conviction.<sup>3</sup>

### WATER SPIRITS AND DIVINATION

One may well suspect that the nymphs of sacred wells and groves played a much larger part in the religious life of the Greek peasant than literature would suggest. Even in the analogous case of the English fairy, literature, though it gives us a *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the fairy lore of Herrick's poems, would

<sup>1</sup> Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 512. (Trial of Bessie Skebister.)

<sup>2</sup> Some cases are discussed below.

<sup>3</sup> Of course when a sub-rite arising in this way has become stereotyped and forms part of a divinatory art, all kinds of developments are possible. See below, p. 170.



be a misleading guide were it our only source of information. Literature is taken in by euphemism, and tends to idealism; one hears but little in literature of the victims of the "good people" who are "pixy led" or "pixy mazed." The nymphs must have played the same part in popular superstition as the Nereids of modern Greece, or the fairies of the British Isles.

There is a tendency, noticeable even among a number of primitive peoples, to think of these spirits of nature, muses, nymphs, and the like, as feminine.<sup>1</sup> As to the reason I am not clear, except on the negative point that "fertility" has nothing to do with it. In ancient Greece male nature spirits seem to play a part in popular superstition, but a strictly subordinate part like that played by male Nereids in modern Greece.<sup>2</sup> In the *Iphigeneia in Tauris* the herdsmen thought that Orestes and Pylades might be Nereids.<sup>3</sup> Homer was said by some to be the offspring of two nature

<sup>1</sup> Psellus says: "As many demons as live in damp places, and enjoy a softer way of living, give themselves the forms of birds or women. That is why the Greeks gave them a feminine designation, Naiads, Nereids, or Dryads," Psellus, *De op. daem.* (Gaulminus) p. 83, lii.

<sup>2</sup> There are of course satyrs. Literature and literary and Dionysiac associations have combined to obscure the part really played by satyrs in popular superstition.

<sup>3</sup> Euripides, *Iph. Taur.* 272.



spirits.<sup>1</sup> Like fairies or Nereids, these beings are dreaded for their outbursts of petulant anger,<sup>2</sup> and just as modern Greeks speak of "the Ladies," "our good Queens," or "the kind-hearted Ones," the ancient Rhodians called them *Μακρόβιοι*,<sup>3</sup> or the Lesbians "Ladies of the Island" (*Ἐννησίαδες*).<sup>4</sup> The name "nymphs" itself is just a euphemistic title meaning "fair ladies."<sup>5</sup>

From localities of confirmed sanctity the vague nymphs tended to be ousted by the stronger personality of hero or god, and with the exception of the Cave of the Sphragitides on Mount Kithairon,<sup>6</sup> their inspiration is rather connected with certain prophetic persons or victims than with specific wells or caves. Mr. Lawson has given an admirable description of the wandering madman, whose maunderings are received with awe in modern Greece.<sup>7</sup> The ancient would have spoken of him, as of Bakis,

<sup>1</sup> [Plut.] *De vit. Hom.* A 3, described Homer's mother as *κόρην τινὰ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων γενομένην ὑπὸ τινος δαίμονος τῶν συγχορευτῶν ταῖς Μούσαις ἐγκύμονα*.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. story of Rhoikos in Charon of Lampsakos, *F.H.G.* i. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Hesychios, s.v. *Μακρόβιοι*.

<sup>4</sup> Hesychios, s.v. *Ἐννησίαδες*.

<sup>5</sup> Some scholars believe that the word means "the brides" of the satyrs. I doubt very much if it is more than a complimentary title meaning "marriageable maidens," i.e. young ladies at the zenith of their attractions.

<sup>6</sup> Paus. ix. 3. 9; Plutarch, *Aristides* 11.

<sup>7</sup> Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 299. For madness as a symptom of possession cf. *Iliad* xvii. 210 with xv. 604 foll.; Euripides, *Bacchai* 298 foll.



as *νυμφόληπτος*.<sup>1</sup> And possession by the nymphs was the source of the inspiration of many of the traditional poets and prophets—the *lymphatici*. The Muses themselves were a subdivision of the nymphs. As Karios wandered round a lake he heard the voice of nymphs, whom the Lydians call Muses, and was taught music.<sup>2</sup>

Of the circumstances under which possession took place we have little information. There are, of course, the husbands of nymphs. True Thomas obtained his powers from his relations with the Queen of the Fairies, and Daphnis from his nymph lovers.<sup>3</sup> Numa<sup>4</sup> again finds a parallel in the mayor of a modern Greek community.<sup>5</sup> Of the more general conditions under which the doubtful privilege of becoming possessed by the nymphs might be conferred, we know but little. Nymphs haunted lonely places,<sup>6</sup> and the heat of mid-day has always been a dangerous time in Greece<sup>7</sup>; in the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sokrates in *Phaidros* 238 and 241.

<sup>2</sup> Xanthos, *Frag.* 2, *F.H.G.* i. p. 36. 4; Schol. Lykophron 273. Conversely the nymphs of the Ilissos are *αἱ Μοῦσαι αἱ Ἰλισσίδες*, Apollodoros in Steph. Byz. s.v. *Ἰλισσός*.

<sup>3</sup> Parthenios, *Narr. Am.* xxiv.; Servius, *Eclogue* v. 20; cf. sexual intercourse with god, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Ovid, *Fasti* iii. 275, "illa Numae coniunx consiliumque fuit."

<sup>5</sup> Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 135.

<sup>6</sup> Cornutus 14; Plutarch, *De tranquillitate* (*Moralia*, Teubner, vii. p. 120) ex Stob. *Flor.* 58. 14.

<sup>7</sup> See Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 79; Plato, *Phaidros*, *loc. cit.*



British Isles those who slept on green hills at sundown, or who entered fairy rings at night, were liable to put themselves in the power of the spirits. But we are all too ignorant about the muses and nymphs who gave to Hesiod and Bakis their mantic lore. It is to the disclaimer of the satirist of a sophisticated age that we turn for a general description of the inspiration by nymph and muse, in the age when poet and prophet were synonymous terms :

Nec fonte labra prolui caballino,  
Nec in bicipiti somniasse Parnaso  
Memini, ut repente sic poeta prodirem ;  
Heliconidasque pallidamque Pirenen  
Illis remitto quorum imagines lambunt  
Hederae sequaces.<sup>1</sup>

The powers of the sea had foreknowledge of the future, but for obvious reasons it was difficult to locate them and obtain an answer. Sometimes unsought they appeared in a calm to warn the hero of saga, and sometimes a kindly nymph helps the mortal to catch a sea-god asleep upon the beach, and force a prophecy from him. The one localised oracle of the lesser marine powers is that of Glaukos and the Nereids at Delos.<sup>2</sup> But in tradition,

<sup>1</sup> Persius, *Choliambi*.

<sup>2</sup> Athenaios vii. 47, 296. His authority is Aristotle's *Constitution of Delos*.



at any rate, the Old Man of the Sea, γέρων ὀλοφώια εἰδώς, whether he is called Nereus, Proteus, or Glaukos, has the knowledge, if he has the will, to reveal the future.<sup>1</sup> Amphitrite, in a Lesbian version of *The Dolphin Rider*, is given the credit for oracular powers.<sup>2</sup>

Poseidon is a deity whose history is full of perplexities for the student. He is not only the sea-god; his power seems originally to have extended over part at least of the domains assigned to his brothers. It can hardly be doubted that he was once the god of all water, perhaps even particularly of fresh water.<sup>3</sup> He is the god of the earthquake, and has associations with the nether world, and at Tainaron, with which he was so closely connected,<sup>4</sup> was a ψυχοπομπεῖον, or oracle of the dead. In many of the Greek states his cult appears in conflict with that of other Olympians. In Athens,

<sup>1</sup> Apollodoros ii. 5, 11, 4; Schol. Ap. Rhod. iv. 1396; *F.H.G.* i. 78; Horace, *Carm.* i. 15; *Odyssey* iv. 410-460; Vergil, *Georgic* iv. 387; Ovid, *Fasti* i. 367; Euripides, *Helena* 13, *Orestes* 362; Diodoros, iv. 48. 6; Athenaios, *loc. cit.*; Schol. Lykophr. 754.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. *De soll. an.* 36, 984 E.

<sup>3</sup> Cornutus 4; Paus. ii. 2. 8, iii. 21. 5; Farnell, *Cults*, iv. pp. 5-6, and references. We hear of Poseidon Νυμφαγέτης or Κρηνοῦχος, Cornutus 22; the harbour at the extremity of Malea was called Nymphaion, and contained a statue of Poseidon, Paus. iii. 23. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Poseidon Tainarios of Sparta (Paus. iii. 12. 5; Hesychios, s.v. *Tainaplas*), and the Temple of Poseidon at Tainaron, with the hell-gate through which Herakles dragged Kerberos, Strabo viii. 5. 1, 363; Paus. iii. 25. 4; Pind. *Pyth.* iv. 45; Schol. *Acharnians* 509.



Delphi, Argos, Aigina, territorial disputes of Poseidon with other deities are recorded in legend.<sup>1</sup> We hear of his surrendering oracular Delos to the mother of Apollo,<sup>2</sup> and tradition asserts that at one time he gave oracles at Delphi, where, according to Musaeus' *Eumolpia*, he shared the ownership of the prophetic shrine with Earth.<sup>3</sup> But apart from these associations with Delos and Delphi, and the existence of a Poseidon in Thurii with the cult title *Πρόφαντος*,<sup>4</sup> the god of waters does not seem directly connected with divination.

There is one possible oracle of the horse Poseidon, of which an account is given in the very difficult description of the rites of Onchestos.<sup>5</sup> M. Bouché Leclercq connected the practice at this sanctuary with the divine

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Quaest. Conviv.* ix. 6, 741 A; Pausanias i. 26. 5, ii. 15. 5, ii. 33. 2, ii. 1. 6; Strabo viii. 373; Paus. ii. 30. 6; Servius, *Aen.* iv. 377.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, *loc. cit.*; Vergil, *Aeneid* iii. 73. An oracle, quoted by Strabo (*loc. cit.* from Ephoros) and Pausanias ii. 33. 2, runs—

“’Tis as good to dwell at Delos and Calauria  
As at holy Pytho and windy Taenarum.”

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias x. 5. 6; cf. Aischylos, *Eumenides* 27—

Πλειστοῦ τε πηγὰς καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κράτος  
καλοῦσα καὶ τέλειον ὕψιστον Δία  
ἔπειτα μάντις ἐς θρόνους καθιζάνω.

Poseidon was the father of Delphos and Parnassos, Paus. x. 6. 1; Schol. Lykophr. 208; Pliny, *N.H.* vii. 56. 203; Steph. Byz. s.v. Παρνασσός. See further Farnell, *Cults*, iv. p. 77, R 33.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Lykophr. 522.

<sup>5</sup> *Hom. Hymn Ap. Pyth.* 51. For a discussion of the passage see Farnell, *Cults*, iv. p. 16.



horses of Achilles, who prophesy their master's death.<sup>1</sup> Divination by the neighing of horses, or by the way in which they step over an arrangement of rods, is, as far as I know, peculiar to Northern Europe and the Slavs of Prussia.<sup>2</sup> Is it possible that some of the invading tribes from Middle Europe, who formed so important an element in the Hellenic stock, are responsible for the rites of Onchestos?

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* ii. p. 367; *Iliad* xvii. 426, xix. 405.

<sup>2</sup> Tacitus, *Germ.* 10. For Norway, Iceland, Holland, Stettin, Rügen, etc., see Hopf, *Thierorakel*, pp. 68-74.



## CHAPTER VIII

### LEKANOMANCY

THERE remain to be considered those modes of divination in which a vessel of water plays an important part as an instrument. All these methods one may include under the title Lekanomancy, although in classical authors the meaning of the word generally implies the most popular of these rites, viz. the reading of future events reflected in a bowl of liquid. For obvious reasons the term must further cover the cases where a crystal or a mirror takes the place of the vessel of water or the pool of ink. The most interesting feature of these rites as a whole is the close analogies which they present to the practices at holy wells, and the parallel development of an independent spiritual agent to explain their efficacy, the result of a gradual personification of the power of the water.

In his list of the characteristic prophets of the different nations of antiquity Strabo mentions



the Persian lekanomanteis and hydromanteis,<sup>1</sup> and Aelius Spartianus, commenting on the weakness of the Emperor Didius Julianus for foreign superstitions, speaks of the magic mirror in connection with the magi.<sup>2</sup> But the Persian origin of this mode of divination need hardly be seriously considered, and there is as little reason to suppose that it came to classical lands from Persia as there is for believing that augury was the invention of Arabs or Cilicians. The origin of the rite seems linked with the magical qualities of holy wells whose efficacy must date back to a very remote antiquity, and its practice is found independently in many parts of the world, as far afield, for instance, as British New Guinea.<sup>3</sup>

One may perhaps begin a survey of lekantomantic methods by noticing those cases in which the determining factor in causing the use of the bowl of water seems to be its convenience as an instrument rather than any mystic or esoteric belief. In North Africa to-day divination is practised by throwing pieces of gold and silver into a cup of liquid,<sup>4</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Strabo xvi. 2. 39, 762. The original authority for the Persian origin of the rite seems to be Varro, Aug. *De civ. dei* vii. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Ael. Spartianus, *Did. Julianus* vii. 10, *Scrip. Hist. Aug.* (Teubner) i. p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 655.

<sup>4</sup> Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, p. 388.



Joseph's cup "which my lord drinketh and whereby he divineth" served probably for a similar rite.<sup>1</sup> In ancient Greece, too, to observe the movement of the liquid or the sound of the splash caused by throwing in objects was a method of divining the future.<sup>2</sup> In Babylon diviners observed the results of dropping oil into water.<sup>3</sup> At the present day the custom of pouring melted lead, wax, or the white of an egg into water and divining from the shapes which result the trade of a future husband, the luck for the year, and so on, survives in the folk practice of modern Europe. Finns (stearine and melted lead), Magyars (lead), Russia (wax), Denmark (lead and egg), and the northern counties of England (egg) will supply examples. The rite has been reported in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Krete, and is, I believe, common in the islands of the Aegean.<sup>4</sup> In England in the seventeenth century it was used "to learne whether the sick

<sup>1</sup> Genesis xliv. 5, 15. Witton Davies, *Divination and Demonology*, etc. p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* i. p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> Jastrow, *Aspects of Religious Belief*, etc. pp. 146, 282. Dr. Farnell draws attention to a reference in Aisch. *Ag.* 322 to this practice in Greece, *Greece and Babylon*, 301.

<sup>4</sup> Jones, *Magyar Folk-Tales*, p. liii; Abbott, *Macedonian Folklore*, p. 52; Henderson, *Folklore of the Northern Counties of England*, p. 105; 'Ο Κρητικὸς Λαὸς, Sept. 1909, p. 138; Bent, *The Cyclades*, p. 162; Carnoy et Nicolaïdes, *Traditions populaires de l'Asie Mineure*, pp. 342, 354, 355.



man was bewitched or not.”<sup>1</sup> I have heard of its survival as a family pastime in Germany and Scotland. In these and analogous rites much must have turned on the simple fact that the bowl of water is a convenient ritual instrument, and we find it used as such in the drawing of lots. In the *Casina* of Plautus, for example, the lots representative of the rivals are put into a bowl of water and drawn by a third party.<sup>2</sup> A method exactly similar was in use at Kirkby Ravensworth in Yorkshire, to choose the wardens of the Kirkby Hill Hospital.<sup>3</sup> Something analogous is the story of the partition of the Peloponnese. “Temenus took a pitcher with water in it, and dropped into it the lots of Cresphontes and the sons of Aristodemus, an agreement having been made that they whose lot came up first would have the first choice of land. Temenus made both the lots, but the lot of the sons of Aristodemus he made of earth dried in the sun, and the lot of Cresphontes he made of earth baked in the fire. So the lot of the sons of Aristodemus was dissolved in the water, and, the lot thus falling on Cresphontes, he chose Messenia.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reginald Scot, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 12th Booke, xviii. p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Plautus, *Casina* ii. 295 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Gutch, *County Folklore*, ii. *N. Riding*, etc. p. 360.

<sup>4</sup> Pausanias iv. 3. 5 (trans. Frazer) ; cf. Apollodoros ii. 8. 4, where



But, throughout, the connection of lekano-mancy and the ritual of the holy well is very close. There are instances, the well at Amorgós for example, in which a cup of water is drawn from the holy well, and the indications of the dust, insects, hairs, etc., floating on the surface are interpreted.<sup>1</sup> Further, the custom of throwing objects into wells, and the divinatory sub-rites which arise from it, must have affected where they did not originate the type of divination we have been discussing. The close bond between the two may be seen in an historical instance. Lots in classical times were frequently thrown into a basin of water<sup>2</sup>—the basin serving merely as a ritual instrument; then we find the oracle of Geryon ordering Tiberius to throw a golden die into the well of Aponus, a famous healing spring.<sup>3</sup>

Our information as to the minor superstitions of classical antiquity is sadly lacking in detail, and

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the lots of Temenos and the sons of Aristodemos were stones, that of Kresphontes a clod of earth. Reference is made to the story in the scene in the *Casina*.

<sup>1</sup> Lawson, *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*, p. 333.

<sup>2</sup> See Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* i. p. 191.

<sup>3</sup> Suetonius, *Tiberius* 14. 3. For the healing properties of the Aponus see Martial vi. 42. 4; Claudian, *Id.* vi. Its name was supposed to be a transliteration from the Greek. Claudian brings out the underworld connection of the sulphur spring, e.g. ll. 15-18; cf. Lucan, *Pharsalia* vii. 193.



I know of no instances, such as occur in North Africa or Sweden<sup>1</sup> for example, of the transference of the water ordeal to the small scale operations of a dish of water. But it is hard to believe that the existence of these methods of divining at holy wells and the rites of interpreting the future by throwing objects into a basin of water are not interrelated. In Scotland a prisoner at a witchcraft trial was accused of casting coins into a vessel of water to discover the health of absent parties: "gif the cross of the sixpence be up, then they are weill; gif not, they are not weill."<sup>2</sup> The analogy to the rite in which the sick man divines his chances of recovery by the position of the coin which he throws into the holy well is too close to be ignored.

The most important and best known type of lekanomancy is, of course, divination by the reflection in a bowl of water, ink, or fluid of some kind. Many instruments may be used; divination by the mirror (katoptromancy) and crystal-gazing are only variants of the same superstition. To quote evidence for its continuous prevalence over a wide area will be

<sup>1</sup> Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 357; Mannhardt, *Zeitschrift f. d. Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> Dalrymple, *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (Trial of Bessie Skebister), p. 512.



unnecessary ; the superstition is lamentably too familiar as the plaything of idle people who have nothing better to do than to search out some folly sufficiently egregious to tickle a credulity spiced with half-serious artificial awe. And the follies of Bond Street are exploited with more serious and tragic results among the uneducated classes who have not had equal opportunities of acquiring discernment. The *Manchester Guardian* of October 28, 1909, contained an account of a coroner's inquest on a Cardiff postman's wife who committed suicide by inhaling gas. Her stepfather gave evidence that the week before she had come back from a visit to a fortune-teller and had said, "When she asked me to look in the crystal, I saw myself seated in a chair deliberately committing suicide with gas."

This type of lekanomancy, no less than those we have examined, is connected with the magical well. In the Sanctuary of Demeter at Patrai was a holy spring: "Here there is an infallible mode of divination, not however for all matters, but only in cases of sickness. They tie a mirror to a fine cord and let it down so far that it shall not plunge into the spring but merely graze the surface of the water with its rim. Then, after praying to



the goddess and burning incense, they look into the mirror, and it shows them the sick person either living or dead. So truthful is this water.”<sup>1</sup> Our informant, Pausanias, proceeds to quote the water of the spring of Apollo near Kyaneai in Lykia, where the water will show to anyone who looks into it whatever he wishes to see.<sup>2</sup> At Tainaron was a magic spring about which the same author remarks: “Nowadays there is nothing wonderful about the spring; but they say that formerly when people looked into the water they could see the harbours and ships. A woman stopped these exhibitions for ever by washing dirty clothes in the water.”<sup>3</sup> Lukian in the *Vera Historia* is evidently ridiculing a familiar superstition: “And I saw another marvel, too, in the palace. A great mirror lies over a well of no very great depth. If one goes down into the well, one hears all that is being said amongst us here on earth, and if one looks into the mirror, one sees all cities and nations, just as if one was actually standing over them. On that occasion, for example, I saw my relatives and all my native land; whether they saw me or not I

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias vii. 21. 12 (trans. Frazer).

<sup>2</sup> Pausanias vii. 21. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias iii. 25. 8 (trans. Frazer); cf. the Oropian Spring: “They neither sacrifice into it nor do they use its water for purification nor for washing the hands.”



can't say for certain. But whoever doesn't believe that it is so, if ever *he* goes to the place will know that I am speaking the truth."<sup>1</sup> In Lincolnshire on St. Mark's Eve girls walk backwards to the Maiden's Well at North Kelsey, and after going three times round it can see, on looking into the water, the features of their future husbands.<sup>2</sup> The rite is analogous to that in which the would-be bride sees her future husband's face in the mirror on St. Andrew's Eve. Apuleius' accusers make the possession of a mirror a charge of magical malpractice.<sup>3</sup> In Cornwall the conjurer of St. Colomb, rather a celebrated local personage in the first half of the last century, detected thieves by showing their faces in a tub of water.<sup>4</sup> The famous Willox, after dipping his magic stone in a basin of water, was able to see reflected the face of the thief.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lukian, *Vera Historia*, A 26.

<sup>2</sup> Gutch and Peacock, *County Folklore*, v. *Lincolnshire*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Apuleius, *Apologia* 13. Similarly a Dr. Compton asked Mr. Hill whom he desired to see, took up a looking-glass that was in the room, and Hill saw his wife in it, Glanvil, *Sadd. Trium. Relation*, i. p. 281.

<sup>4</sup> Hunt, *op. cit.* p. 210.

<sup>5</sup> Stewart, *The Popular Superstitions and Festive Amusements of the Highlanders of Scotland*, p. 222; cf. Frazer, *Pausanias*, iv. p. 151. In the *Acharnians* the use of liquid is referred to, line 1128:

Λα. κατάχει σύ, παῖ, τοῦλαιον. ἐν τῷ χαλκίῳ  
ἐνορῶ γέροντα δειλίας φευζοῦμενον.

Δι. κατάχει σὺ τὸ μέλι. κἀνθάδ' εὐδηλος γέρων  
κλάειν κελεύων Λάμαχον τὸν—Γοργάσου.



There is little profit in adding further examples, which indeed might be multiplied indefinitely. Out of the fairly representative specimens I have given there are two points to be observed: (1) the close connection between the well and the mirror or magic *λεκάνη*; (2) that in the examples under consideration the theory of the matter is simple. Demeter, and perhaps Apollo, may have been held responsible for the visions in the wells of Patrai and Lykia, but, with this possible exception, in no other case is there any intrusion of animism or of any external agency. Simply in virtue of its magic properties the instrument reflects the image.

Now the tendency in the case of magic wells is towards the gradual personification of their power. The magic well becomes the well inhabited by a class of vague and indeterminate spirits with some generic name—fairies or nymphs. And the tendency of development is toward the crystallisation of these personalities into more definite and clear-cut forms. The local nymphs supplant the vaguer spirits without a name, and often the spirits become a single spirit, a Skamander or a Tilphusa. But further, just as the saint ousts the fairy in the British Isles, so in Greece and elsewhere



the nymph is ousted by a god, or the spring retains its power as the supposed site of some prophet's grave. In other words, the process is a gradual personification of the power of the water, with the natural corollary that the power is more and more dissociated from the well until, in the final stage, the well becomes no more than the instrument or the appurtenance of the god or hero thus evolved.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting, I think, to observe the working of the same tendency in the case of lekanomancy.

We find here, too, that in many instances the power of the water no longer serves as the sole cause of the apparition. The magical property is not inherent in the water, but is the result of some spiritual agency. In order to see the desired vision a spirit must be invoked. There is, for example, the following formula for finding a thief. A damsel approached a phial of holy water with a taper of sanctified wax, saying, "Angelo bianco, angelo santo, per la sua santità e per la mia virginità mostrarmi che ha tolto tal cosa"; the querent then beheld a diminutive figure of the offender in the phial.<sup>2</sup> A more elaborate

<sup>1</sup> See *B.S.A.* xvii.

<sup>2</sup> Dalyell, *op. cit.* p. 520; cf. a North Country example where the wise man uttered the words, "I command ye, I exorcise ye, the arch-angels Michael and Gabriel, that ye make Mark Jobling's shop to



method, again, is one in which a spirit is not only invoked, but actually appears. Reginald Scot gives directions for summoning the spirit to appear in your crystal stone,<sup>1</sup> and in his account of the use of the crystal and the phial of holy water to discover thieves, in both cases the spirits first appear and then conjure up the scene.<sup>2</sup> Sir Frederick Swettenham describes how an Arab placed in some water a piece of paper on which a charm had been written. First there appeared a little old Jinn, who was then asked to conjure up the scene of the robbery.<sup>3</sup> In the little old Jinn the power of the magic water or crystal has become a clear-cut personality.

So strong is this tendency to personify the power of the water as an external agency—a tendency doubtless assisted in the old world by that movement of philosophical speculation of which Neo-Platonism is the most distinguished manifestation—that Psellus accounts even for that type of lekanomancy which we first examined as due to the action of demons who

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appear in the glass, and also the likeness of the thief or thieves, so that they may be seen and identified." On the conclusion of the incantations he said, "Presto! quick begone!" lo and behold, Mark's shop and the thieves appeared in the glass, Gutch, *County Folklore*, ii. *N. Riding*, etc., p. 190.

<sup>1</sup> Scot, *op. cit.* 5th Booke, xix.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* pp. 188, 189.

<sup>3</sup> Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 538.



have a natural love for hollow places, and who lurk in the bowl of water and dispose the objects you throw in or cause the sound of the significant splash.<sup>1</sup> In the case of divining by the crystal the summoning of a spirit is a regular part of the business in post-classical times. The imposing barbarity of the horrors of necromantic ritual, and the tendency at certain phases of superstition or religious belief to think of ghosts as the most important kind of spirit, have produced a confusion between necromancy and hydromancy, and the spirits invoked into the water may be ghosts. It is interesting to remember that the indeterminate spirits which inhabit sacred springs may, in Servius' words, be "nymphae praesidentes" or "heroum animae."<sup>2</sup> "Numa himself," writes St. Augustine, "to whom no prophet of God, no holy angel was sent, was compelled to make hydromancy in order to see in water the images of gods or rather the mockeries of demons, from whom he might hear what ordinances were to be constituted and observed in sacred ritual." This fact he believes to underlie the story about Egeria. "Ita enim solent res gestae aspersione mendacionum in fabulas verti."

<sup>1</sup> Psellus, *De op. daem.* 42, quoted Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> Servius, *Aeneid* vii. 84; *Eclogue* i. 53.



Further, he tells us that with the addition of blood you may get your answers from the underworld, a method called in Greek *νεκυλομαντεία*, which, whether you call it hydromancy or necromancy, is nothing else than the supposed prophesying of the dead: “*quae sive hydromantia sive necromantia dicatur, id ipsum est, ubi videntur mortui divinare.*”<sup>1</sup> A curious commentary on this passage is the explanation of Tzetzes that Odysseus did not really go down to Hades, but consulted Teiresias' ghost by lekanomantic means.<sup>2</sup>

More generally the method is to summon some god or spirit to your water or crystal. The magical papyri are full of instances. For example, you are instructed: “When you wish to be informed about matters, take a brazen vessel or dish or phial of any shape you like, and put water in it. If you invoke the heavenly gods, rain water, if the earthly, sea water, if Osiris or Serapis, river water, if the dead, spring water. Hold the vessel on your knees casting into it oil made from unripe olives, and bending yourself over the vessel speak the ordained spell, and invoke whatever god you will; ask him about what you wish, and he will answer

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *De civ. dei* vii. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Tzetzes *ad* Lykophron 813.



you and will tell you about everything. And if he tell you, dismiss him.”<sup>1</sup> Notice that here the power of the water has entirely departed. The summoned god does not, like the little old Jinn or the spirits of Reginald Scot, cause an image of the desired information to take his place; the water has become merely a housing place for the god who answers your questions or speaks oracles. In the course of his defence against the charges of magical malpractices Apuleius mentions a statement of Varro that inquirers as to the result of the Mithridatic War learned the future from a boy who sang 160 verses of prophecy contemplating a *simulacrum* of Mercury in a bowl of water.<sup>2</sup> Hippolytus in his *Refutatio omnium haeresium* gives an interesting account of the various methods of conjuring apparatus which charlatans used to effect the appearance of the god or spirit in the bowl.<sup>3</sup> In some cases, however, it seems that engraving an image on the vessel might be done as part of the ritual, and with no particular intent to deceive. Here is a specimen from the demotic papyri. “Formula: you take a bowl of bronze, you engrave a figure of Anubis in it, you fill it

<sup>1</sup> *Pap. Par.* 222 ff. ; *apud* Abt, *Die Apologie des Apuleius*, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Apuleius, *Apologia* 42.

<sup>3</sup> Hippolytus, *Ref. omn. haer.* iv. 35.



with water—[here follow some words whose meaning is uncertain]—you finish its surface with fine oil, you place it on three new bricks, their lower sides being sprinkled with sand; you put four other bricks under the child, you make the child lie down upon his stomach; you cause him to place his chin on the brick of the vessel; you make him look into the oil, he having a cloth spread over his head, there being a lighted lamp on his right and a censer with fire on his left." Further ritual instructions follow, after which it continues: "When you have finished, you make the child open his eyes, you ask him saying, 'Is the god coming in?' If he says, 'The god has come in,' you recite before him—[here follows an incantation]—you ask him concerning that which you desire. When you have finished your inquiry which you are asking about, you call to him seven times: you dismiss the god to his home."<sup>1</sup>

In many of the examples of lekanomancy which have been given, and many more might be quoted, there is to be observed this use of the small boy or the virgin. In Morocco, for instance, you should get a young negress.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Griffith-Thompson, *Pap. Col.* xiv. p. 101; *apud* Abt, *op. cit.* p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 34.



The phenomenon needs no elaborate comment. To-day little boys in white clothes draw the tickets of the State lotteries in Italy; the famous sortes of Praeneste were drawn by the pure hand of a boy.<sup>1</sup> Apuleius tells us that the human soul when it is pure and unsophisticated may be lulled into oblivion of its surroundings and return to its primal nature, which is in truth immortal and divine. The instrument must also be unblemished and worthy of an indwelling power.<sup>2</sup> This is a very proper religious sentiment; but to anyone who is familiar with the use of the boy or virgin in less innocent magical practices, or among peoples of other standards of morality, it is unconvincing. Ritual purity has originally nothing to do with seemliness, but is a precaution of a magical character. A good example is to be found in the rules of ritual purity in the religion of ancient Greece. The philosophers and poets are, of course, the pioneers at interpreting ritual purity in terms of moral purity, but despite their preaching it is not until a surprisingly late date that there is any trace in the inscriptions of a moral as opposed to purely ritual meaning in the rules for

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De div.* ii. 41 (86).

<sup>2</sup> Apuleius, *Apologia*, 43.



admission to temples or sacrifices.<sup>1</sup> In fact it is not until Imperial times that we find in the temple rules any recognition of a pure heart and a right spirit within as a desirable complement to hands ritually clean.

28 | The physical phenomenon which seems to underlie the series of allied superstitions of which crystal-gazing is the type, appears to be the fact that in the case of certain people hypnotic self-suggestion can be induced by continuous and concentrated gazing at a bright object. This fact may well account for the magical power with which crystal stones are accredited by Australian blacks and other primitive peoples.

<sup>1</sup> Wächter, *Reinheitsvorschriften im griechischen Kult*, pp. 4, 8 f. ; and see above, p. 103.



## CHAPTER IX

### OMENS AND SUB-RITES

This day is big with fate ; just as I set  
My foot across the threshold, lo ! I met  
A man whose squint terrific struck my view ;  
Another came, and lo ! he squinted too :  
And ere I turned the corner of the street,  
Some ten short paces, 'twas my lot to meet  
A third, who squinted more—a fourth, and he  
Squinted more vilely than the other three.  
Such omens caught the eye when Caesar fell,  
But cautioned him in vain ; and who can tell  
Whether these awful notices of fate  
Are meant for Kings or Ministers of State ?

*Bombastes Furioso, Sc. iv.*

IN connection with the discussion of the divinatory developments at magical localities we have already had occasion to notice the creation of divinatory sub-rites. A divinatory significance is attached by the anxiety of the patient to rites, the original purpose of which had nothing to do with divination. The sick man watches anxiously to see which side of



the coin he throws into the well lies uppermost, and seeks desperately a solution of his hopes or fears. The formal arts of divining the future are not in the first instance rational or arbitrary creations; they have their origin in the sub-rite and in the omen. This "seeking after a sign," and the recognition of a revelation of future calamity in some strange happening, may be traced to the nervous anxiety engendered by some momentous occasion or to the importance attributed to the occurrence of the abnormal. In strict logical analysis we may say that in the one case the anxiety creates the portent, and in the other the portent creates the anxiety; in practice the two motives are often indistinguishably blended.

The lower the stage of culture, the narrower is the field of experience, and the more circumscribed is the trivial round. Proportionately more startling to the savage is the occurrence of the abnormal. The fear of the stranger or the magical significance attributed to strange things are evidence of the force with which the unusual impresses itself on his imagination. Much, of course, of the most primitive omen observation is really in a sense inductive. Those who are acquainted with the West Country, where woodcraft has not yet perished,



will be familiar with the way in which the movements of sheep or birds betray to the expert the wiles of the hunted stag. When the Murring see an old man kangaroo hopping towards them, they believe that he is warning them of danger, and a cracking sound in the ground when they are asleep puts the Kurnai on their guard.<sup>1</sup> Obviously the phenomena which really do accompany the enemy's advance have played a part in the significance of the omen, though the mental association may be unconscious and not the result of a rational process. As always, the significance of the omen is extended, and we get the derivative portent among the Kurnai, for whom to dream of old men kangaroos sitting round the camp is a certain sign of danger.<sup>2</sup>

The basis, however, of the observance of omens is the occurrence of the abnormal, and the impression which it makes. This may, of course, be some entirely new experience, such

<sup>1</sup> Howitt, *J.A.I.* xvi. pp. 46-47. Similarly Bushmen say, "The approach of strangers causes us to become drowsy. The near approach of a commando is heralded by a mist" (*A Short Account of Further Bushman Material*, collected by L. C. Lloyd, 1889). It is a priori probable that strangers and enemies would approach if possible when they were asleep and commandoes take advantage of a mist. The Koita of British New Guinea take warning from the movements of parrots, etc., but do not attribute the sign to any non-human agency: "Bird he smell man and sing out," Seligmann, *Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Howitt, *loc. cit.*



as the first sight of a white man, or it may be an event qualitatively abnormal. The sound of the dog howling,<sup>1</sup> and that of the owl hooting,<sup>2</sup> are of themselves uncanny enough to account for the universal fear which they have inspired. The birth of a calf with two heads or some

<sup>1</sup> As a presage of death in Italy, Germany, and among Kamtschadals (Hopf, *Thierorakel*, pp. 22, 33, 58, 60); among Magyars (Jones, *Magyar Folk-Tales*, p. lxii.); in Macedonia (Abbott, *op. cit.* p. 107); in Lower Bretagne (Grimm *ap.* Crofton Croker, iii. p. 152); in Cornwall, Yorkshire, and the Northern Counties (Hunt, *op. cit.*, 2nd series, p. 106; Mrs. Gutch, *County Folklore*, ii. p. 70; Henderson, *op. cit.* p. 48); among Malays (Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 183), and the Koita of British New Guinea (Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 189). The Pygmies say that the dog's howl is *oudah* (Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, p. 101); in sixteenth-century Germany it brought "Böse Zeitung" ("Der alten Weiber Philosophie," *Zeitschrift f. d. Myth. u. Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 313); cf. Pausanias iv. 13. 1; Plutarch, *De superst.* 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Anth. Pal.* ii. 232, and the references in Thompson's *Glossary of Greek Birds*. For Italy, Germany, Albania, Macedonia, Magyars, Switzerland, Kalmucks, West Australia, New Guinea, Java, Borneo, Philippines, China, Siam, India, Dahomey, and West Africa, see Hopf, *Thierorakel*, pp. 22, 33, 39, 102, 106, 110; Swainson, *Folklore of British Birds*, pp. 126, 128; Jones, *Magyar Folk-Tales*, p. lx.; Rose, "Punjab Folklore Notes," *Folklore*, xxi. p. 216; Seligmann, *loc. cit.*; Abbott, *loc. cit.* Maories and Tatars, Tylor, *Prim. Cult.*<sup>2</sup> i. p. 119; Takelma, Sapir, *Journal American Folklore*, xx. pp. 35-36. Owls tend to be the form adopted by ghosts. Ancient Arabs, Doutré, *op. cit.* p. 361; Pima, Russell, *A.R.A.B.E.* xxvi. p. 252. In Madagascar it is called the "Ghost Bird" or "Spirit Bird," Sibree, *Folklore*, ii. p. 341. Similarly wizards, vampires, and evil spirits appear as owls. Cherokees (Mooney, *Myths*, etc., p. 284); Haida (Swanton, *op. cit.* p. 27); Tlingit (Swanton, *A.R.A.B.E.* xxvi. p. 471); cf. charm to scare the strix, Bergk, *Anth. Lyr.* (Teubner, 1907), *Carm. Pop.* 29—

στρίγγ' ἀποπομπεῖν νυκτιβάαν, στρίγγ' ἀπὸ λαοῦ  
ὄρνιν ἀνωνυμίαν ὠκυπόρους ἐπὶ νῆας.

Cf. the Latin *striges*, Ovid, *Fasti* vi. 132 foll., and the modern Greek στρίγλα, the Albanian *strigha*, Italian *strega*.



similar monstrosity is sufficiently remarkable to arouse apprehension. But the portent is usually vague. It tells you neither what the danger is, nor with certainty the victim that it threatens.

And who can tell  
Whether these awful notices of fate  
Are meant for Kings or Ministers of State?

This vagueness and uncertainty necessitate the development of the interpreter's art, or in the humbler sphere that of the handbook. Among savage peoples if a frog or some other creature that does not usually come indoors is seen in a house, it is an omen. They will go and inquire of a wizard what it means.<sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh must summon their wise men to give the interpretation of their portentous dreams. "Hic magna quaedam exoritur, neque ea naturalis, sed artificiosa somniorum interpretatio, eodemque modo et oraculorum et vaticinationum. [Sunt enim explanatores, ut

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Malays, Skeat, p. 534. This is the Greek οἰκοσκοπητικόν . . . ἐπειδὴ ἐν τῇ στέγῃ ἐφάνη γαλῇ ἢ ὄφει ἢ μῦς ἢ ἐκενώθη ἔλαιον ἢ μέλι ἢ οἶνος ἢ ὕδωρ ἢ τέφρα ἢ ἄλλο τι ὃ τι τόδε σημαίνει, Nonnus *ap.* Greg. Naz. 72; Migne 36. 1024; Terence, *Phormio* iv. 4. 24-27; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* viii. 4. 24, 842; Theophrastos xvi. The γαλῇ, of course, points the joke in the comic poet's parody of Euripides' line ἐκ κυμάτων γὰρ αἰθις αὖ γαλήν' ὀρώ (*Orestes* 279):—

A. γαλήν' ὀρώ. B. ποῖ πρὸς θεῶν; ποῖ ποῖ γαλήν;

A. γαλήν'. B. ἐγὼ δ' ὥμην γαλήν' λέγειν σ' ὀράν.—Schol. *ad loc.*



grammatici poetarum.]”<sup>1</sup> At once the necessities and the interests of these professors of the art of interpretation prompt them to develop to the full the possibilities of elaborate and complex subtleties. The intricacies of their art alike afford an excuse for failure and enable them undetected to impose upon the layman if they so desire. Xenophon evidently prized a rough-and-ready working knowledge of the rules of extispication as a general’s only means of ensuring the honesty of his seer.<sup>2</sup>

The portent will naturally have a doubled significance if it occurs in connection with some solemn act, some important crisis, some anxious undertaking. The horror of the abnormality is increased if it is the animal which you are offering in solemn sacrifice which has a deformed liver.<sup>3</sup> And it is easy to under-

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 51 (116).

<sup>2</sup> Σιλανὸς δέ μοι ὁ μάντις ἀπεκρίνατο τὸ μὲν μέγιστον, τὰ ἱερὰ καλὰ εἶναι· ἥδει γὰρ καὶ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἄπειρον ὄντα διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ παρεῖναι τοῖς ἱεροῖς· ἔλεξε δὲ ὅτι ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς φαίνοιτό τις δόλος καὶ ἐπιβουλὴ ἐμοί, Xen. *Anab.* v. 6. 29. For the necessity of keeping a check on manteis, cf. further, Schol. Demosthenes, *Meid.* 552. 6 (Dindorf ix. p. 607); Aeneas Pol. 10. 4; Plato, *Laches* 199 A.

<sup>3</sup> Besides the sub-rites of sacrifice we have those many oracles from the acceptance of its food by the sacred animal, e.g. the fish oracle at Sura, Steph. Byz. s.v. Σοῦρα; Plut. *De sol. an.* 976 c; Aelian, *Nat. An.* 12. 1; Pliny, *N.H.* xxxi. 2. 22 (18); Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 151; the sacred snakes in Illyria, Aelian, *De cult. deorum* 34; or the more familiar example of the sacred chickens which accompanied the armies of Rome. Apis “responsa privatis dat e manu consulentium cibum capiendo,” Pliny, *N.H.* viii. 46 (71). 185.



stand how anxiety on important occasions often creates the omen. The perceptions are sharpened ; little things are noticed, and assume a disproportionate importance. You are far more likely to notice the fact if you trip over the threshold on the occasion of your marriage, or when you are setting out on a long journey, than if the accident occurs in the course of your normal comings and goings. The importance of the occasion intensifies, where it does not create, the gravity of these minor incidents. We are told that in moments of supreme danger and of hairbreadth escapes the mind automatically focusses with photographic clearness on apparently unimportant detail. It is an analogous mental phenomenon which plays so large a part in the genesis of the sub-rite.

Malay magic is full of good examples of these sub-rites. The effort of the worshipper to ascertain the divine pleasure with respect to a sacrifice newly offered becomes crystallised into a sub-rite, and eventually develops into a special and separate rite called *Tilek* (divination).<sup>1</sup> On important occasions like the filing of the first tooth every detail is of significance, and the falling of the fragments naturally must

<sup>1</sup> Skeat, p. 535, i.e. some references are there given to the many examples of the divinatory sub-rite which the book contains.



be ominous of the future fate of the patient.<sup>1</sup> The characteristic of this art of divination that develops from the sub-rite, on which it is especially desirable to insist, is that the action of the rite is not originally performed with a divinatory intent. Its ominous character is created by what M. Doutté has described as "*l'état d'attente anxieuse dans lequel le désir se mélange à la crainte.*"<sup>2</sup> But when established as a divinatory sub-rite it often detaches itself and becomes an independent and purely divinatory process.

Where the sub-rite has not been developed into an intricate art by the professional, it tends, as would be expected, to give answers or indications in a single alternative. Either the project will prosper or it will not, the patient will die or recover, the gods accept the sacrifice or they refuse it. The practical convenience of this divination by a simple alternative is obvious in the case of the layman. He gets a definite answer to his hopes and fears. And, roughly speaking, all popular divination, which is principally concerned with the discovery of thieves or with the alternative prospects of life or death, proceeds on these methods, employing, where the question is

<sup>1</sup> Skeat, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> Doutté, p. 372.



incapable of a single simple alternative, a system of dichotomy, analogous to that employed in the choosing of Saul to be king of Israel. The instrument is the answer, affirmative or negative, to a simple alternative. Apply the test to a sufficient number of people, and you will find the thief.

In the hands of professionals we should expect the divinatory sub-rite to develop more subtlety in its indications, and to give an answer more exact than a simple alternative on a broad issue. The specialist is there to tell the worshipper why the gods refuse his sacrifice, the degree of their anger, the means of averting it, and so on. And particularly, the exacter interpretation of the occurrences during the performance of rites of an official or public character will demand a more elaborate science. Further, as Artemidoros knew, an elaboration of its intricacies by no means lessens the respect of the layman for the science of the expert.<sup>1</sup> The dignity of a formal art will demand not merely observation whether the first tree cut to build a house falls towards or away from the builder,

<sup>1</sup> ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς ἐμῆς συντάξεως ἐπεμνήσθην καὶ νῦν σοι παραινῶ χρῆσθαι μὲν ἀναγραμματισμῷ, ὅταν τινὶ κρίνων ὀνείρους ἐθέλῃς ἐτέρου σοφώτερον δοκεῖν κρίνειν, ἐαντῷ μέντοι κρίνων μηδαμῶς χρήσῃ, ἐπεὶ ἐξαπατηθήσῃ, Artemid. iv. 23. 216.



but more intricate deductions from an exacter orientation. All the circumstances of the event must be taken into consideration, their often contradictory symbolism must be adjusted, and it needs an expert to choose between possible interpretations, and to know where exactly, in what is recognised as a complex phenomenon, the stress of importance should be laid.<sup>1</sup> And in the development of these divinatory arts elaboration is often assisted and increased by the introduction of theological considerations or astrological schematism.

#### DIVINATION FROM INVOLUNTARY MOTIONS OF THE BODY

In the ordinary life of classical antiquity the observation of omens must have played as important a rôle as in the old-fashioned

<sup>1</sup> The intricate difficulties of astrology are an excellent example, and here too I am disposed to believe that the whole imposing structure is based merely on such simple omen observation as that given by Lenormant, *La Divination*, etc. pp. 8-9, note. "If the moon is visible on the first of the month, the face of the land will be well ordered, the heart of the country will be rejoiced. If the moon appears very big there will be an eclipse, if small the harvest will be good," etc. etc. But it must be confessed that the untrustworthiness of this author, wherever I have had the requisite knowledge to check his statements, deprives his testimony of any very positive value. I should like it to be clear that, wherever he is cited, I quote him for no more than what his testimony is worth.



English village.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the portents which accompany the clash of empires or the advance of armies, the humbler business of every day was affected by such facts as that the traveller set out left foot first,<sup>2</sup> or by the objects he met on the road. Σύμβολον is the term which roughly covers these various ominous occurrences. According to Philochoros their interpretation was first invented by Demeter, or was under her especial patronage.<sup>3</sup>

To compile an exhaustive list of these σύμβολα and their interpretation would be an impracticable and fruitless labour. Κληδόνες, which develop a peculiar oracular importance, will be dealt with later. It is perhaps just worth noticing here that ἀπαντήσεις may in somewhat similar fashion become a kleromantic instrument for divine revelation. Xouthos finds his son in the first person he meets after leaving the Pythian shrine.<sup>4</sup> But for the purpose of seeing the tendencies which govern the development of a formal art for the interpretation of omens, it will be sufficient to take the

<sup>1</sup> Theophrastos, *Characters* xvi. ; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* viii. 4. 24-25 ; Xenophon, *Mem.* i. 1. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Apuleius, *Met.* i. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Pind. *Ol.* xii. 10 ; Schol. Aristoph. *Birds* 721 ; Hesychios, s.v. σύμβολα, etc. Bouché Leclercq (*op. cit.* i. p. 121) gives the improbable explanation : " On y avait attaché le souvenir de Déméter, sans doute parce que la déesse, cherchant sa fille en tous lieux, avait dû être attentive à toutes les rencontres."

<sup>4</sup> Euripides, *Ion* 534-536.



superstitions with regard to *πταρμοί* and the science of *παλμικόν*. And thanks to the erudition of Hermann Diels, not only is the text of the Melampus treatise easily accessible, but also, in translation, the *Zuckungsbücher* of many other lands.<sup>1</sup>

The origin of the importance attached to sneezing and to involuntary motions of the

<sup>1</sup> Diels, "Beiträge zur Zuckungsliteratur des Okzidents und Orients" (*Abhandl. d. Kön. Akad. der Wiss.*, Berlin, 1908 and 1909). Vol. i. contains a critical text of Melampus' *Περὶ παλμῶν*, and vol. ii. the contents of analogous books of Russia, Servia, Bulgaria, Roumania, Arabs, Jews, Turks, and India, with some extracts from the folklore of France and England. Further material is to be found in Haberland, "Die Vorbedeutung am eigenen Körper," *Globus*, 35 (1879), p. 58, and Preuss, "Die Vorbedeutung des Zuckens der Gliedmassen in der Völkerkunde," *Globus*, 95 (1909), p. 245. Evidence not contained in these works is to be found in the following passages: England—Henderson, *Folklore of the Northern Counties*, pp. 112-113, 136-137; Mrs. Gutch, *County Folklore*, ii. *The North Riding*, etc., pp. 219-221; Scotland—Dalyell, *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, p. 503; Germany—"Der alten Weiber Philosophie" in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, iii. pp. 311 and 316; Bohemia—Holland, "Aberglauben aus Böhmen," *Zeitschrift f. d. Myth. und Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 175; Magyars—Jones, *Magyar Folk-Tales*, pp. lxiv.-lxv.; Albania—Garnett, *Women of Turkey, Jewish and Moslem*, p. 291; Macedonia—Abbot, *Macedonian Folklore*, pp. 111-113; Modern Greece—Lawson, *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*, pp. 329-330; Bent, *The Cyclades*, pp. 22 and 429; Epiros—*Σύλλογος*, 1884, xviii. p. 195 foll.; *Ζωγραφεῖος Ἀγῶν*, 1891, i. p. 14; Ainos—*Σύλλογος*, 1874, ix. p. 349; Cappadocian Greeks—*Ἀρχελαός, ἡ Σινασός*, pp. 88, 91, 93; North Africa—Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, pp. 366-370; Bushmen—*Bushman Reports*, pp. 17-19; Tlingit—Swanton, *Annual Report of the American Bureau of Ethnology*, xxvi. p. 459; Shuswap—Teit, *Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, ii. 7, p. 620; New Guinea—Koita, Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 113; Roro-speaking tribes, *id. op. cit.* p. 309.



body is primarily due to their arbitrary nature. It is *per se* a startling phenomenon to find the body, which in normal action is the slave and instrument of its owner's will and intention, behaving in a way independent of his desire or volition. Simply because it is involuntary, the twitching of the eyelid or the tingling of the ear must be miraculous. And primitive man finds a significance in everything which attracts his notice, particularly in cases where there is no obvious cause. It does not seem necessary to suppose an animistic explanation of the palmic art, and there is no hint of animism in the examples from some of the lower races.<sup>1</sup>

Sneezing, of course, though belonging to the same genus as the other involuntary motions of the body,<sup>2</sup> has developed a peculiar significance under the influence of animistic beliefs<sup>3</sup> and the importance which attaches to the openings of the body in magico-religion.<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> E.g. the Melanesian instances. The Bushmen say simply that "they feel in their bodies that certain events are going to happen. There is a kind of beating of the flesh which tells them things. Those who are stupid do not understand these teachings; they disobey them and get into trouble, such as being killed by a lion, etc.," *Bushman Reports* (Dr. Bleek), p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Takelma (Sapir, "Religious Ideas of the Takelma Indians," *Journal of American Folklore*, xx. p. 40), and Shuswap (Teit, *op. cit.* p. 620).

<sup>3</sup> Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,<sup>2</sup> i. pp. 98-99.

<sup>4</sup> On "der Zauber der Körperöffnungen" see Preuss, "Der Ursprung der Religion und Kunst," *Globus*, 86.



satisfaction or fear with which the sneeze has been regarded by many peoples and in many lands has evidently been affected by the belief in the exit or entrance of forces or spirits through the openings of the body.<sup>1</sup> In ancient Greece the sneeze was recognised as of peculiar significance and on the whole for good,<sup>2</sup> though the practice of saluting the sneeze prevailed here as elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> Its most important indication was the ratification of the truth of the words that were being uttered at the moment of sneezing, and it was even more effective than formal acceptance in words as substantiating the significance of an omen.<sup>4</sup> But in so far as a series of rules for interpreting the significance of sneezes is in question, the development is along exactly the same lines as that of the interpreta-

<sup>1</sup> See Haberland, *op. cit.* pp. 59-60; Tylor, *loc. cit.*; Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 367 foll.; Seligmann, *op. cit.* p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> See Bouché Leclercq, *op. cit.* p. 161 foll., and references.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *De anima* i. 9. 4 (Bekker); *Problemata* 33. 7 and 9; Theokritos xviii. 16; Athenaios ii. 72. 66 c. The sneeze of evil significance, Theokritos vii. 96, with Scholion καθὸ τῶν πταρμῶν οἱ μὲν ὠφελοῦσιν, οἱ δὲ εἰσι βλαβεροί, and the story in Frontinus, *Strat.* i. 12. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 2 (5). 23; Petronius, *Sat.* 98. 4; *Anth. Pal.* xi. 268; cf. instances, Tylor, *op. cit.* pp. 100-104; *Odyssey* xvii. 545, and the well-known incident in Xenophon, *Anabasis* iii. 2. 8-9, where the soldier sneezed at the words πολλὰ ἡμῖν καὶ καλὰ ἐλπίδες εἰσι σωτηρίας. For a similar belief in modern Greece see Lawson, *op. cit.* pp. 329-330; in Macedonia, Abbott, *op. cit.* p. 113; in Germany, Haberland, *op. cit.* p. 59.



tion of other motions of the body and indeed of omens in general.

The primary significance attached to involuntary motions of the body has followed the natural associations of the part affected. For example, the tingling of the hand is very naturally interpreted in terms of the giving or receiving of money<sup>1</sup>; the tingling or ringing of the ear means that you will hear news, or that some one is talking of you<sup>2</sup>; and to take a slightly more elaborate association, a cold shudder down the back is in some way connected with ghosts, death, or the grave.<sup>3</sup> A certain number of interpretations are, of course, arbitrary, but the

<sup>1</sup> Melampus 81; Diels i. p. 27; Germany—*ib.* ii. pp. 121-122; Norway—*ib.* p. 123; England—*ib.* pp. 124, 125; Henderson, *op. cit.* p. 113; France—Diels ii. p. 126; Servia—*ib.* pp. 38, 41; Roumanian—*ib.* p. 49; Arabic—*ib.* pp. 83, 88; Turkey—*ib.* p. 109; modern Greece—Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 329; Bohemia—Holland, *op. cit.* p. 175; N. Africa—Doutté, *op. cit.* p. 366; Magyars—*Magyar Folk-Tales*, p. lxiv; Macedonia—Abbott, *op. cit.* p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Lukian, *Dial. Meret.* 9. 2, 302; Pliny, *N.H.* xxviii. 2 (5). 24; Peru—Preuss, *op. cit.* p. 246; Shuswap—Teit, *op. cit.* p. 620; Iceland—Diels ii. p. 123; Germany—*ib.* pp. 122, 129; Switzerland—*ib.* p. 121; Turkey—*ib.* p. 107; Arabic—*ib.* p. 75; Bulgaria—*ib.* p. 42; Servia—*ib.* pp. 37, 40; Roumania—*ib.* p. 47; Hebrew—*ib.* pp. 100, 101; England—*ib.* p. 124; Henderson, *loc. cit.*; R. Scot, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 12th Booke, xvi. p. 185; Macedonia—Abbott, *op. cit.* p. 111; modern Greece—Lawson, *loc. cit.*; Magyars—*Magyar Folk-Tales*, p. lxv; "Der alten Weiber Philosophie," No. 19, *Zeitschrift f. d. Myth. und Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 316.

<sup>3</sup> Germany and France—Haberland, *op. cit.* p. 63; Cora Indians of America and natives of Bengal—Preuss, *op. cit.* p. 246; Shuswap—Teit, *loc. cit.*; Bohemia—Holland, *op. cit.* p. 175; England—Henderson, *loc. cit.*; Albania—Garnett, *op. cit.* p. 291.



general rule is that the motion of any particular part of the body has a meaning which has something to do with the function of that part.<sup>1</sup> One of the first steps in the elaboration of an art of interpretation is the distinction between right and left. The sign on the left will bear the opposite significance to the sign on the right. How arbitrarily this factor has modified interpretation may be seen in the fact that frequently in the same country, while the

<sup>1</sup> The significance attached to these involuntary motions bears interesting testimony to the prevalence of the fear of being mentioned by another person. In most of the cases where the interpretation is not based simply on the function of the organ, the prominence of this fear has suggested the meaning. For example, sneezing among the Takelma (Sapir, *op. cit.* p. 40. The person must say "Who is it calls my name? May ye say in regard to me 'Do thou prosper, mayest thou go ahead yet another day!' May ye blow to me!" in order to avert the danger); the Shuswap (Teit, *loc. cit.*, a woman is mentioning your name); the Masai (Hollis, *Masai*, p. 334, when a person sneezes he says to himself "Some one is calling me." If other people are present they say to him, "May God make your head hard!" or "Have good health!"); Bushmen (Lloyd in *Bushmen Reports*, p. 20); hiccoughing among modern Greeks and Macedonians (Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 329). The charm is to guess the name of the backbiter; cf. France (Diels, ii. p. 126, No. 124), and further examples (Haberland, p. 62). In England the burning of the cheek (Brand, p. 174, in Diels ii. p. 124) has been interpreted as an indication that some one is speaking of you. The exigencies of the antagonism of right and left have brought it about that often the tingling of one ear is good as opposed to that of the other. I know of no cases where the tingling of both ears is of good omen, but wherever the distinction of right and left is not specified, the fact that some one is speaking of you is always of evil foreboding. (See English examples, Diels, *loc. cit.*, and Melampus 47 and 48: ὠτίου δεξιῶ τὸ ἔσωθεν ἀλλομένον κακὸν τι σημεῖον. ὠτίου λαιῶ τὸ ἔσωθεν ἀλλομένον κακὸν τι σημεῖον· ἀκούσεται τι καὶ οὐ χαρήσεται· δούλῳ δὲ καλόν.)



distinction between right and left is universally observed, the significance attached to right and left respectively will, by different persons, be interpreted in precisely the opposite way. The itching of the palm implies either the giving or the receiving of money, but in Germany and Norway, for example, it is now the right hand which gives and the left which receives, now the left which gives and the right which receives. Again, the exacter localisation of the sensation may supply the need of a more elaborate interpretation. In the Melampus treatise the interior is distinguished from the rest of the ear, and, to take a random example, in the Servian printed book sixteen different interpretations can be drawn from various parts of the two eyes. In some cases its relation to external objects can influence the meaning of an involuntary motion. For example, among the Tlingit, if a man's mouth twitches he says, "I am in luck." If he goes to his fishing-line he will find a large halibut on it. If his mouth twitches towards a person on his right, that person will bring him luck, and if towards a person on his left the opposite.<sup>1</sup> The number of times a person sneezes is further of importance. Reginald Scot laughs at those who

<sup>1</sup> Swanton, *op. cit.* p. 459.



believe that "by two sneezings a man should be sure of good luck or successe in his businesse."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this is what leads Aristotle to suppose that people naturally sneeze twice more often than once or several times.<sup>2</sup> Further, the time of day may introduce considerations as to the interpretation. *Διὰ τί οἱ μὲν ἀπὸ μέσων νυκτῶν ἄχρι μέσης ἡμέρας οὐκ ἀγαθοὶ πταρμοί, οἱ δ' ἀπὸ μέσης ἡμέρας ἄχρι μέσων νυκτῶν;* inquires Aristotle,<sup>3</sup> and Reginald Scot mentions the fact that "many will go to bed againe if they sneeze before their shoes be on their feet."<sup>4</sup> Again, the sex or status of the person affected introduces a further complexity. In Southern India and in Bengal the interpretation of signs which hold good for men is reversed for women.<sup>5</sup> In the Melampus treatise the inter-

<sup>1</sup> R. Scot, *op. cit.* Booke xi. cap. xix. p. 151. The Koita, on the other hand, say that to sneeze once is lucky, twice or three times unlucky, Seligmann, *op. cit.* p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *Prob.* 33. 3 διὰ τί δις πτάρνυται ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ, καὶ οὐχ ἅπαξ ἢ πλεονάκεις;

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *op. cit.* 11; cf. Haberland, *op. cit.* p. 59. In W. Prussia, for example, not only the time of day but the day of the week affects the interpretation. Among the Magyars a great catastrophe follows a sneeze on Friday the first thing in the morning when the stomach is empty, Jones and Kropf, *Magyar Folk-Tales*, p. xlix.

<sup>4</sup> Scot, *op. cit.* Booke xi. cap. xv. p. 148. The Bushmen say that a sneeze early in the morning is unlucky, Lloyd, *op. cit.* p. 20. In antiquity the time of day affected the luckiness of a form of salutation (e.g. ἐγὼ δὲ ὁ χρυσοῦς ἐπιλαθόμενος ὑγιαίνειν σε ἤξουν, εὐφημον μὲν καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐν καιρῷ δὲ ὡς οὐ κατὰ τὴν ἔω, Lukian, *Pro laps. salt.* 1, 725), or the interpretation of dreams (Philostr. *V. Apoll.* i. 37. 79).

<sup>5</sup> Preuss, *op. cit.* p. 246.



pretation differs for the maiden, the widow, or the slave. It is the conflicting claims of all these different factors in the determination of the omen which produce the elaborate science. The meaning of the exact location of the sensation, whether it was on the left or right, the number of times it is repeated, the time of day and the day of the week on which it occurred, the external direction of the sign, the sex, status or profession of the person affected, all these taken singly may each be intelligible on a symbolic interpretation, but when they are all combined we achieve a chaos of nonsense like Artemidoros' *Oneirokritika* or Melampus' *Περὶ παλμῶν*. For most of the alternatives proceed by contraries, and if one constructs an hypothetical but possible omen interpretation the many contradictions and difficulties become obvious. Suppose that a woman B's mouth twitches on the right towards A on a Friday morning; the twitching of the mouth on the right means luck: A will bring B good luck. But then B is a woman. If emphasis is laid on this the omen may be reversed, because men and women are contraries. The bad fortune that A is to bring on B may next be defined in terms of A's age and profession. But then the whole business happened on a Friday morning.



If the morning is an unlucky time, and Friday is an unlucky day, this may be held to increase the certainty of evil. On the other hand, it might be argued that Friday being the opposite in significance to the other days of the week the whole interpretation must be again reversed. And all this time no account has been taken of B's status. It will affect the nature of the good or evil which the omen portends, and further, widows are the contrary of virgins. It is possible that the interpretation must be once more inverted. Indeed, on a smaller scale the dream-books and the omen treatises have the same involved and intricate uncertainty as the more grandiose astrological science. And this chaotic elaboration helped in both cases to rivet the chains of the superstition. When an astrological prognostication or an omen fails to come true, how easy it is to account for it by some mistake in the calculation or the diagnosis! And that doctors sometimes disagree does not discredit these pseudo-sciences: the right interpretation becomes a question of authority. "Unter den Konkurrenten der Mantik trägt, wenigstens in den gebildeten Zeiten des Heidentums, derjenige den Sieg davon, der seine Auslegung mit den meisten und besten Autoritäten stützen kann."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Diels, *op. cit.* i. p. 13.



Further, I am convinced that this development of a learned science based on authorities, wherever in the field of divination it may be met, is the product of an analogous process to that which we have examined in the comparatively simple case of *παλμικόν*. Whether it be astrology, augury, or the science of extispication, we must take into account this tendency to elaboration, assisted often by the traditional wisdom of a professional or sacerdotal class whose training as men of knowledge and whose interests direct or indirect conduce further to elaboration and mystification. From comparatively simple beginnings and on humble foundations the stately edifices have been reared. They are not arbitrary creations but the products of a natural and intelligible process of development. Such an admission must affect the question of origins. If the art of extispication is explicable as a development from the sub-rite of sacrifice, while admitting that an older and more advanced discipline may have affected a younger art, we shall be less disposed to regard the science of divination by entrails as an arbitrary invention of Etruria or Babylon imported into Greece and accepted as a complete system by the diviners of Hellas.



## THE SUB-RITES OF SACRIFICE

τί δῆτα μαντεύομεθα; τοῖς θεοῖσι χρὴ  
θύοντας αἰτεῖν ἀγαθά, μαντείας δ' ἔαν.<sup>1</sup>

It is obvious that the anxiety which attaches to the moment of sacrifice will create many divinatory sub-rites. By watching the smoke,<sup>2</sup> the movements of the victim,<sup>3</sup> or the orientation of its fall,<sup>4</sup> the worshipper satisfies his fears or hopes as to the acceptability of his offering or the prospects of his success. The preliminary rites at Delphi,<sup>5</sup> for example, are in some sense divinatory, and these preparations to ensure the success of the important ceremony have in them the possibility of becoming rites of divination. Indeed, the number of possible

<sup>1</sup> Euripides, *Helena* 753.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad* viii. [548]; Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 169; καπναῦγαι in Rhesium and Montelione, *C.I.G.* 5763, 5771; Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 180. This is the point of Diphilos' description of the parasite—

ἀπενὲς δὲ τηρῶ τοῦ μαγείρου τὸν καπνόν.  
κἂν μὲν σφοδρὸς φερόμενος εἰς ὀρθὸν τρέχῃ,  
γέγηθα καὶ χαίρω τε καὶ πτερύσσομαι·  
ἂν δὲ πλάγιος καὶ λεπτὸς, εὐθέως νοῶ  
ὅτι τοῦτό μοι τὸ δεῖπνον ἀλλ' οὐδ' αἷμ' ἔχει.

Athenaios vi. 29. 236 c.

Cf. Malay doctor's divination by smoke, where the rite has become practically an independent method of divination, Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 410.

<sup>3</sup> Macrobius, *Sat.* iii. 58.

<sup>4</sup> Human sacrifice of Druids, Diod. Sic. v. 31, and Kaspian tribes, Strabo xi. 4. 7, 503. The war-horse sacrifice in Campus Martius, Polyb. xii. 4. 6; *F.H.G.* i. p. 231. See further Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 150, quoting Psellus, *De op. daem.* 38; cf. Scot, *op. cit.* p. 142, xi. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Plut. *De def. or.* 435 C, 437 B.



divinatory sub-rites of sacrifice is almost unlimited. The methods of divination δι' ἐμπύρων connected particularly with Zeus of Olympia,<sup>1</sup> with Ismenian Apollo at Thebes,<sup>2</sup> and through Pyrkon and the Pyrkaoi with Delphi,<sup>3</sup> are described in the Scholia to Euripides' *Phoinissai* (1255 foll.). The mantis watched the shape of the flame and the direction of the sparks. If the fire blazed up and greedily devoured the portion which was burned, it portended victory. The tail of the victim was put inside the bladder, the mouth of which was tied with wool; the direction of its bursting and the contortions of the tail were to be interpreted in terms of victory or defeat. The Iamids placed the skins of victims on the fire, or slit the hides and prophesied from the straightness of the cuts.<sup>4</sup> Ooscopy, naturally popular when Orphism was in the ascendant, libanomancy dear to the vegetarians, who abhorred the slaughter of animals,<sup>5</sup> and aleuromancy, which was of sufficient importance to create for Apollo the cult title of ἀλευρόμαντις, belong to the same order of sub-rites.<sup>6</sup> Omo-

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos viii. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Herod. *loc. cit.*; Soph. *O. T.* 21 ἐπ' Ἴσμηνοῦ τε μαντεῖα σποδῶ; Philochoros, *F.H.G.* i. p. 416.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. x. 5. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Pind. *Ol.* vi. 114.

<sup>5</sup> Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 264, and references.

<sup>6</sup> Also phyllomancy, alphetomancy, krithomancy; Iamblichus, *De myst.* iii. 17. See Bouché Leclercq, i. pp. 180-182, to whose account



platoscopy or scapulomancy, to which in Greece so far as I know there is no direct reference earlier than Psellus,<sup>1</sup> is interesting as an example of how a rite, originally a sub-rite of sacrifice, may become an independent mode of divination. As one or the other it is familiar in many parts of the world. In Tartary, among the Chukchi, in North Africa, in modern Greece, Albania and Macedonia, it is as well known as in the folklore of the British Isles where divination by the speal-bone was once popular.<sup>2</sup> Again, the sacrificer may draw omens from the way in which the blood spurts from the victim, or read indications of the future in its coagulated surface.<sup>3</sup>

These various sub-rites of sacrifice were, next to the consultation of the inspired oracle, the most ordinary method by which, in the historical period, the Hellene divined the future; and when the Olympian religion was at its zenith the inspection of entrails tended to eclipse

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there is nothing to add; cf. Jewish divination by barley and date-stones, Ezekiel xiii. 19; Robertson Smith, *Journal of Philology*, xiii. p. 287.

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> Tylor, *Prim. Cult.* i. pp. 124-125; Bogoras, p. 96; Doutté, p. 371; Lawson, p. 264; Abbott, *Macedonian Folklore*, pp. 96-98; Dalyell, p. 515 foll.; Miss Durham, *High Albania*, pp. 104-106.

<sup>3</sup> Eurip. *Phoinissai* 174, and Schol. North Africa—Doutté, p. 470; cf. p. 372. Kimbrian prophetesses—Strabo vii. 2, 3, 294. Druids—Diod. Sic. v. 31. Modern Greece—Lawson, p. 326. See further Blecher, pp. 4, 5, and references.



the importance of augury, which itself took somewhat the colour of a sacrificial sub-rite.<sup>1</sup> To attempt to classify or to enumerate exhaustively their almost unlimited possibilities of variation is a difficult and unprofitable task. Of the most important of them, however, extispication or the examination of entrails, something must be said. Into great detail or the discussion of technicalities it will fortunately be unnecessary to go. The literature which centres round the bronze liver from Piacenza, and the admirable treatise of Blecher have between them collected and sifted all the available evidence.<sup>2</sup> To these works, whose

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 249, and cf. Bouché Leclercq's theory of the importance of carnivorous birds in augury, vol. i. p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> G. Körte, "Über die bronze Leber von Piacenza," *Mitt. Arch. Inst. (Rom)* xx., 1905, pp. 348-379; Karl Thulin, *Die etruskische Disciplin*, ii., "Die Haruspicin"; id. *Die Götter des Martians Capella und der bronze Leber von Piacenza*; (Boissier's *Note sur un monument babylonien se rapportant à l'extispicine* I have been unable to consult;) Blecher, *De extispicio capita tria, accedit de Babyloniorum extispicio Caroli Bezold supplementum*. The best photographs etc. of the Etruscan liver are to be found in Körte and the second cited work of Thulin. It is figured also in Keller, *Antike Tierwelt*, p. 328. Jastrow, *Aspects of Religious Belief and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 143 ff., gives a detailed account of Babylonian methods of hepatoscopy, and illustrations taken from the libraries of recorded observations, systematically compiled by Babylonian seers, and the model livers in use for teaching beginners in the science. His conviction that the idea of divination by the liver was borrowed by Etruscans and Greeks from Babylon does not lead me to alter the view I have expressed here. The fact that Hittites borrowed scientific methods of hepatoscopy from Babylon does not assist the borrowing theory or help to solve the Homeric crux. A prehistoric borrowing of the idea can hardly be



results will here be freely used, the reader in search of a detailed account of the similarities of technique in the arts of Etruria, Babylon, and Greece, may be referred. Here we shall be concerned only with the problem of origin, the character of the art as a development from the sub-rite, and the various interpretations which various religious or philosophical theories gave of its validity.

With the exception of Blecher, scholars seem generally agreed that this mode of divination is of Babylonian origin. Bouché Leclercq, indeed, believed in a simultaneous convergence on Greece of influences from East and West. He even charts the route. From Babylon the science came through Karia to Cyprus, where Zeus was worshipped as *σπλαγχνοτόμος* (Athen. iv. 74), and thence to Greece. From the West, Etruscan influence penetrated Magna Graecia, and through Sicily and the Galeots reached the Iamids of Elis.<sup>1</sup>

But despite the names of authority which sanction this theory of a foreign origin, the probabilities seem to me to be on the other

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postulated, for the chief characteristic of hepatoscopy in Greece is its connection with Olympian deities.

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, vol. i. pp. 169-171. Athenaios does not mention divination; he says merely *κάν Κύπρω δέ φησι τιμᾶσθαι Ἡγήσανδρος ὁ Δελφὸς Δία Εἰλαπιναστὴν καὶ Σπλαγχνοτόμον*.



side, and the interpretation of the similarities and dissimilarities of the various disciplines to be vitiated by a certain misunderstanding. There is one difficulty of importance, the silence of Homer.<sup>1</sup> For this I can offer no satisfactory explanation, but it remains equally a crux for those who maintain the foreign origin of divination by entrails. No one, so far as I am aware, has attempted to maintain that Greek extispication is derived solely from the Etruscan discipline. But if the influence came from Babylon, it is very difficult to believe that its introduction was later than the last editing of the Homeric poems, and it is almost impossible to believe that the art could have reached Greece without passing through Ionia. And further, it is with Western Greece, Elis, and the Iamids, not with Asia Minor, that the science is most closely connected.

The Greeks themselves assigned the origin of extispication as of augury to mythical figures, to Delphos son of Poseidon, to Prometheus, to Sisypheus or Orpheus<sup>2</sup>; and among the peoples supposed by antiquity to have invented the art are Etruscans, Egyptians,

<sup>1</sup> Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> Bouché Leclercq, *loc. cit.*; Pliny, *N.H.* vii. 203; Aischylos, *Prom. Vin.* 493; Diodoros vi. frag. 8; *Orph. Argon.* 34.



Cyprians, Cilicians, or Chaldeans.<sup>1</sup> But these disputes as to originality are due, as so often, to the simple fact that the rite was practically universal in the ancient world.<sup>2</sup> And Cicero tells us that the principles which governed the sciences of the Etruscans, Eleans, Egyptians and Carthaginians were different. "Alios enim alio more videmus exta interpretari, nec esse unam omnium disciplinam."<sup>3</sup> Throughout the Lower Culture the practice of divination by entrails is familiar: among Malays, Polynesians, New Zealanders, Sandwich Islanders, the tribes of Sarawak and India, in Africa and in Peru, as in the folklore survivals of Germany, the entrails of the victim of sacrifice or solemn feast give presage of the future.<sup>4</sup> It is a priori probable that wherever on a solemn occasion, at a feast or sacrifice, an animal is disembowelled, the sub-rite of interpreting omens taken from the entrails will be developed. In Greece, too, the probabilities would lead us to

<sup>1</sup> Blecher, pp. 34-35; Ovid, *Met.* xv. 558; Herodotos ii. 58; Tatian, *Adv. Graec.* i.; Tac. *Hist.* ii. 3; Greg. Naz. *Karà 'Iouλ.* 13.

<sup>2</sup> Armenians, Indians, Persians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Carthaginians. See Blecher, p. 71, and his references, and Witton Davies, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Cicero, *De div.* ii. 12. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Tylor, *Prim. Cult.*<sup>2</sup> i. pp. 123-124; Blecher, pp. 243-245; Frazer, *Paus.* iv. pp. 5-6. To the references given by these authors may be added: Hose and M'Dougall, *J.A.I.* xxxi. 181 (Sarawak); Hollis, *Masai*, p. 324; E. Clodd, *Folklore*, vi. p. 63 (Hawaii).



suppose that this mode of divination developed automatically, as elsewhere, out of the ritual of sacrifice.

The whole question of the similarity and dissimilarity of technical terms appears to me to have little or no weight in this problem of origins. The learned scholars who have waged this warfare as to whether the Greeks did or did not distinguish the *pars familiaris* from the *pars hostilis*, or have insisted on the analogies to πύλαι and ποταμός in the technical terms of Babylon, appear to regard the rival disciplines as a fixed content which development has in no way modified. To my mind it is more plausible to suppose that the similarities are due to contact with the more intricate foreign sciences at a later stage of development, than that the dissimilarities are due to the local developments of a common corpus of doctrine. All our sources of information as to Greek technical terms are late, and belong to a time when the normal method of divination by entrails, practised in the Mediterranean area, must have assimilated much from all the rival disciplines. What I believe to have happened is this. In each case, in Etruria, in Rome, in Greece, and in Babylon, quite independently there developed, as a sub-rite of sacrifice, the



practice of examining the entrails of the victim. When the Greeks and Romans came into contact with the methods of Etruria and Babylon, the modification of the indigenous art by these foreign rites, which had achieved a far more elaborate and imposing intricacy, was inevitable. In Italy, indeed, the Etruscan art practically superimposed itself entire on the Roman<sup>1</sup>; in Greece, the influence of Etruria, and in a greater degree that of Babylon, modified and elaborated the technical science.

In Greece, at any rate, divination by entrails was limited to the animals of Olympian sacrifice<sup>2</sup>—goats, lambs, and calves; and the divination from the entrails of dogs as practised by the Elean Thrasyboulos seems to have been a foreign importation.<sup>3</sup> In the practice of the East a greater number of the animal species were employed for divinatory purposes. The reason is clear. The difference in divinatory method is due to the difference in the national rites of sacrifice, and to the greater variety of

<sup>1</sup> Thulin, as against Blecher, maintains the distinction between the Roman and Etruscan arts, *op. cit.* p. 5: the Roman is just an undeveloped sub-rite; naturally the imposing science of Etruria was bound in some sort to supersede it.

<sup>2</sup> Blecher, p. 29; Bouché Leclerq, i. p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias vi. 2. 4; Blecher, *loc. cit.*; Bouché Leclerq, ii. p. 68. Thrasyboulos seems to have been an eclectic, if we are to connect the appearance of the γαλεώτης on his shoulder with the Galeots of Sicily.



victims in Oriental worship. As for divination by the entrails of frogs and the like,<sup>1</sup> the supposed use of these animals in the East may perhaps be attributed to the deliberate and repulsive eccentricities of the rites of magic, which in the days of Juvenal was in the hands chiefly of Egyptians and charlatans from the Orient.<sup>2</sup>

The inspection of entrails, despite the degree of complexity which the art attains in later times, is simply a sub-rite. Any abnormality in the liver of a victim on the solemn occasion of sacrifice is naturally a portent, and a liver without a lobe (*ἄλοβον ἥπαρ*, *iecur sine capite*) is a presage of disaster. Thus in Germany, if the liver of a pig is found to be "turned over," some member of the household will die.<sup>3</sup> Again, the anxiety of the participants may trace in the markings on the liver (*fissiculare*) the solution of their hopes or fears on a solemn occasion, as at the Christmas festival the Serbs

<sup>1</sup> Blecher, *loc. cit.*; "ranarum viscera nunquam inspexi," Juv. *Sat.* iii. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Aere minuto

Qualiacumque voles Iudaei somnia vendunt.

Spondet amatorem tenerum vel divitis orbi

Testamentum ingens calidae pulmone columbae

Tractato Armenius vel Commagenus haruspex ;

Pectora pullorum rimabitur, exta catelli,

Interdum et pueri ; faciet quod deferat ipse.

Chaldaeis sed maior erit fiducia.—Juvenal, *Sat.* vi. 546 foll.

<sup>3</sup> Tylor, *loc. cit.* ; Blecher, p. 72 (Wuttke, *Deutscher Volksaberglaube*,<sup>3</sup> p. 272).



learn from the markings on the liver of the pig slain for the feast whether a child will be born to the family in the coming year.<sup>1</sup> From such simple origins, we must suppose, developed the imposing sciences of Etruria and Babylon no less than the arts of Greece and Rome which their maturity was to influence. The Roman sacrificial ceremony is thus described. "The victim was taken aside by the attendants (*victimarii*) and actually slaughtered by them: from it they extracted the sacred parts (*exta*), liver, heart, gall, lungs, and midriff, and after inspecting them to see that they had no abnormality—but not in the earlier period for purposes of augury—wrapped them in pieces of flesh (*augmenta*), cooked them and brought them back to the celebrant, who laid them as an offering upon the altar, where they were burned."<sup>2</sup> Here we have simply a sub-rite of sacrifice to test if the victim is sound, a development analogous to that which creates at a later stage sub-rites of a sub-rite whose purpose is to determine if the victim is qualified to give auspices.<sup>3</sup> Originally the object

<sup>1</sup> Blecher, *loc. cit.* (Krauss, *Volks Glaube der Südslaven*, p. 170). The rite is exactly analogous to that of scapulomancy.

<sup>2</sup> Bailey, *Religion of Ancient Rome*, p. 92. The italics are mine.

<sup>3</sup> *Probatio*, see Thulin, *op. cit.* p. 16. "Colligi enim nisi ex sana victima futura non possunt," Servius, *Georg.* iii. 489.



of the inspection is to see if all is well with the victim. "Die römische Eingeweideschau wollte nur erforschen, ob alles in Ordnung wäre."<sup>1</sup> Naturally, if anything portentous were observed in the entrails, if, for example, an organ was lacking, something terrible was sure to happen. If all was well, if God accepted your sacrifice, you could proceed on your undertaking with a light heart. Blecher rightly distinguishes this simple inspection, which reassures or blights the inquirer's hopes, as an earlier stage in the development of divination by entrails than that to which belong our Etruscan and Babylonian liver charts.<sup>2</sup> True to its origin as a sub-rite, the use of this method of divination is customary on all occasions of anxious importance or of grave danger. "The ancients resorted to extispication particularly before crossing a river or joining battle, before starting on a journey or beginning a march or undertaking some dangerous project; further, before founding a city or laying out a camp, or on occasions on which the future caused them anxiety in any way."<sup>3</sup> In art we are familiar with the figure

<sup>1</sup> Thulin, *op. cit.* pp. 5, 12.

<sup>2</sup> See Blecher, p. 46 foll. and p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Blecher, p. 47, with many references. He quotes further the practice of the rite by the Roman consuls on entering office, by the Egyptian kings at the beginning of a new day, and by the Greeks before sending representatives to Delos or Delphi.



of the young man holding out to the warrior the liver of the slaughtered victim.<sup>1</sup> And in its less developed form, the inspection of entrails can, like kleromancy, give answers only to a simple alternative. "Die Römer stellten an den Gott eine Frage, die er mit 'Ja' (*litare*) oder 'nein' (*non perlitare*) zu beantworten hatte."<sup>2</sup> In war, as a rule, the alternative is a simple one. Are we to march or to remain where we are? Are we to attack or to wait? With the naïve spirit which prompts the private school-boy tossing for pennies to claim the "best of threes," if the first verdict goes against him, the general of antiquity allowed himself a margin (in Greek custom restricted to the same number three) before allowing that fate was really against him.<sup>3</sup> He then proceeded on a succession of days to examine the entrails until the favourable signs allowed him to take action.<sup>4</sup> It is the same exhaustive process that we get in all kleromantic methods where only the answer "yes" or "no" is possible. Τοῖσι μὲν νυν "Ελλησι καλὰ ἐγίνετο τὰ ἱρὰ ἀμυνομένοισι, διαβᾶσι

<sup>1</sup> There is an interesting possible survival of a classical *motif* in Christian art in the pictures of St. Ansano of Siena, which Miss Kemp-Welch believes to have descended from Roman and Etruscan representations of the seer holding the liver, A. Kemp-Welch, "The Emblem of St. Ansano," *Burlington Magazine*, March 1911, p. 337.

<sup>2</sup> Thulin, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Xen. *Anab.* vi. 4. 16, vii. 6. 44, vi. 4. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Xen. *Hellenika* iii. 3. 4.



δὲ τὸν Ἀσωπὸν καὶ μάχης ἄρχουσι οὐ.<sup>1</sup> The first inspection did not tell them more than that all was well; it needed the adverse decision of the second to limit the success by the condition of adopting defensive tactics. But the art of Etruria and Babylon had reached a far more elaborate stage of development. "Die Etrusker liessen die Eingeweide selbst reden, und sie vermochten die Sprache zu deuten, welche die Götter durch bestimmte Zeichen der Eingeweide redeten."<sup>2</sup> We have only to look at the two models of livers which have been preserved to us to get some idea of the intricacy of the development in which theology and astrology assisted. The elaboration of a science of magic from the ritual of the earlier forms, particularly where, as here, the practice lies in the hand of professionals, is the normal course of development. In the case of Greece, an additional influence in this elaboration was the contact with disciplines which had reached a further stage of development. This I believe is the true explanation of the influence of the Babylonian and Etruscan arts on that of Greece, and the appearance in the Hellenic science of technicalities analogous to those which are to be found in the other two.

<sup>1</sup> Herod. ix. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Thulin, *op. cit.* p. 5.



If it be asked why so universally the condition of the liver has been held to indicate the future, our answer must first take account of the factor of practical convenience. It is easier to read signs in the liver than in other entrails, just as the shoulder-blade lends itself more readily than other bones to the art of divination. And I imagine further that the liver is liable to show more variation in size, colour, etc., and more marked abnormality in cases of disease.<sup>1</sup> But undoubtedly the chief reason for the place occupied by the liver is the fact that it was held by Greeks as by other peoples to be the seat of life.<sup>2</sup> This belief, whose endurance is to be witnessed in the magical practice of *defixio* in the fourth century A.D., affected medical doctrine from the time of Plutarch and Aretaeus<sup>3</sup> to that of Burton and the investigators of the black bile of Melancholia.

The theories offered to explain the validity of the inspection of the liver as a divinatory process are interesting. The Pythagoreans, as would be expected of those who regarded the

<sup>1</sup> See Jastrow, *op. cit.* p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> See references, Blecher, p. 58 foll. Besides instances from Homer and the Greek dramatists, he quotes the German phrase, "frei von der Leber sprechen." Jastrow (*op. cit.* p. 150) points out that the liver is naturally thought to be the source of the blood in the body, and "the blood is the life thereof."

<sup>3</sup> See references, Blecher, *loc. cit.*



crime of Odysseus' sailors in slaying the oxen of the Sun as a proof that Homer held the right views about vegetarianism,<sup>1</sup> endeavoured to discredit the art of whose powers their superstition was none the less convinced.<sup>2</sup> Epicureans and Cynics rejected the claims of the science.<sup>3</sup> The Stoics, with their wonted honesty, formulated the difficulty of their faith. Gods exist, and therefore divination must exist;<sup>4</sup> but they could not believe with the vulgar that a miraculous change in the organs of the victim was produced at the moment of inquiry.<sup>5</sup> If fate ruled the universe, how was it possible to divine by the entrails of the sacrificial victim? It is, indeed, the fundamental crux of divinatory arts, which, as we noticed, regard as variable the laws of nature, which their inquiry presupposes to be universal and necessary.<sup>6</sup> The Stoic answer to the problem was the theory that fate caused the inquirer to employ a victim which had from natural causes the requisite signs upon its entrails.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Plut.] *De vit. Hom.* B, 125.

<sup>2</sup> Porphyry, *De abst.* ii. 51; Iamblichos, *Vit. Pyth.* xix. 93.

<sup>3</sup> See references, Blecher, p. 38. <sup>4</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 38 (82).

<sup>5</sup> The problem seems to have been a favourite subject of dispute.

"Caesari dictatori, quo die primum veste purpurea processit atque in sella aurea sedit, sacrificanti bis in extis defuit. Unde quaestio magna de divinatione argumentantibus potueritne sine illo viscere hostia vivere an ad tempus amiserit," Pliny, *N.H.* xi. 37 (71). 186.

<sup>6</sup> Cicero, *op. cit.* See above, p. 42.

<sup>7</sup> Blecher, pp. 38-39.



The passage in Porphyry to which we have referred contains further matter of interest. Our author compares the enormity of animal extispication to that of the examination of human entrails as practised by barbarians, which, with the true magical leanings of the Pythagorean, he supposes would be more efficient.<sup>1</sup> "To inquire," he continues, "whether it is the gods that cause the signs to appear or whether it is daimones, or whether the soul in its departure from the animal answers the question, does not concern our present discussion." These three explanations are of some interest. The first two may be expressed in terms of even more primitive belief; for it was held that the god or the daimones were actually present in the liver, the seat of life. This is probably the explanation of the origin of the technical term *θεός* or *deus* for a part of the inspected entrails.<sup>2</sup> And the doctrine may

<sup>1</sup> And partly due to a development of Platonic doctrine. To combat a doctrine so barbarous was originated the theory that the liver only gave presage of the future when completely liberated from distracting passions, and hence most efficient were the entrails of animals more apathetic than man. Philostratos, *Vit. Apollon.* viii. 7. 323; cf. Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> Hesychios, s.v. *θεός*. "In nullis spirat deus integer extis," Statius, *Theb.* v. 176, with Lactantius *ad loc.*; Lucan, *Pharsalia* i. 633, "Caesique in viscera tauri invenere dei"; cf. Blecher, pp. 60-61, where the passages are discussed. This is the theory of the Babylonian rite. By the action of sacrifice, God and the animal are made one,



have played a part in the development of the feeling that the divinatory entrails had a quasi-magical power. We have earlier seen an analogous instance of a similar connection between magic and divination in the regard paid to *χρησμοί* as magical spells or talismans.<sup>1</sup> Exactly in similar fashion here, we find that at Veii to those who get possession of the victim's entrails victory is assured.<sup>2</sup> When Augustus was sacrificing at Perugia, the enemy by a sudden attack seized and removed the whole paraphernalia of sacrifice. The diviners comforted the future emperor by assuring him that the foe had thereby made his own the evil things which the entrails had portended.<sup>3</sup> Sulla, again, was advised to eat the entrails which foretold success and victory.<sup>4</sup>

Of this doctrine of the real presence the theory of daimones is but a modification in accordance with the religious philosophy of the day. It was naturally perpetuated by the Christians, who never underrated except when, like Eusebius, they were steeped in Euhemerism

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hence the seer is inspecting the liver (i.e. the seat of intelligence and life) of the God and sees God's mind at work, Jastrow, *op. cit.* p. 148.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Livy v. 21. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 96.

<sup>4</sup> Aug. *De civ. dei* ii. 24. On "die magische Kraft der Eingeweide" see further Thulin, *op. cit.* pp. 49-50.



and their opponent's learning, the infernal powers of the deities of the heathen. Diocletian, we are told, was unable to read the future in the entrails of victims on whose foreheads Christian ministers had made the sign of the cross, for the sacred symbol had put the demons to flight.<sup>1</sup>

Related again to the doctrine of the real presence is the Platonic theory that the liver is a mirror for the divine thought, and the instrument by which divine inspiration is brought to pass. Hence, at the moment of death, traces may be observed in it, the fleeting relics of its supernatural functions.<sup>2</sup>

The third explanation, that the soul at the moment of leaving the body was cognisant of the future, is related to a very widespread belief relating to the borderland between life and death. It appears in a mild form in much of that pious tract literature of the last century, where the dying good invariably get a glimpse of golden gates and hear a strain of music from celestial harps before the last flicker of their earthly life is quenched.<sup>3</sup> The theory appears

<sup>1</sup> Lactantius, *De mort. persec.* 10; id. *Inst.* iv. (*De vera sapientia*) 27. 10; cf. Min. Felix, *Oct.* 27. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Timaios* 71.

<sup>3</sup> In modern Greece the dying man is said to "see his angel," Rennell Rodd, *Customs*, etc. p. 113.



in another form in the doctrine of dreams ; and in the more repulsive rites of necromancy, where a human victim is considered necessary, it finds its most horrible expression. In the black magic of classical times we shall find some references to such practices, and an Arabian authority reports the horrible methods employed to protract the death of criminals in order to obtain from them as much information as possible.<sup>1</sup> The feeling seems to be that *in articulo mortis* the soul is on the borderland between the material and the spiritual worlds, and in the moment of crossing from one to the other is actually in touch with both. North Britons, indeed, have a word to denote the uncanny powers with which are credited those over whom death is imminent, and speak of the doomed and prescient as "fey."<sup>2</sup>

For the practical Vitruvius all these explanations have little meaning, and the last of the theories of extispication is the quasi-scientific explanation of common sense. The ancients

<sup>1</sup> Douillé, p. 401, citing Ibn Khaldoun.

<sup>2</sup> Those who are fey have prophetic power ; a sudden acquisition of second sight is often a sign of being fey. Its primary meaning is doomed.

"I'm no way superstitious, but this I allis say,

You may get the coffin ready when a doomed man is fey . . ."

says the poet of the North Riding. Mrs. Gutch, *County Folklore*, ii. p. 219.



examined the livers of animals before pitching a camp or selecting the site for a town, because the salubrity of the locality would reveal itself in the condition of the entrails of the herds pastured there. If it were found that disease had affected the sheep or cattle, it was to be regarded as probable that the place was unhealthy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vitruvius, *De arch.* i. 4. 9.



## CHAPTER X

### KLEROMANCY

THE appeal in cases of doubt or uncertainty to the fall of the lot is familiar in modern life. In the Lower Culture, where the mathematical doctrine of chances is unknown, the arbitrary decision of the lot is more than a practical convenience; it is a solemn and mysterious ordinance. Among the Masai a number of magic stones are thrown into a buffalo horn and shaken. Medicine-men know what is going to happen by the number which fall out.<sup>1</sup> Exactly analogous were the Urim and Thummim of the Jews. They were simply two stones which were put in the pocket of the priest's ephod, having respectively a negative and a positive significance. One of the stones was taken out, and the question thus answered.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hollis, *Masai*, p. 324.

<sup>2</sup> Witton Davies, p. 75. He adds that probably wherever we have the phrase "to inquire of," e.g. 1 Sam. xiv. 37 or xxiii. 2, the appeal to Urim and Thummim is meant.



The casting of lots is familiar in the Old Testament and the New as a method of ascertaining divine will.<sup>1</sup> In fact, some form of kleromantic divination is to be found in all stages of culture,<sup>2</sup> and the efficacy of the process may be based on the magical quality of the instruments, the direct ordinance of God, the arbitrament of a half-personified Fortune, or a recognition of the law of chances. The superstitions of gamblers are evidence of the reverence with which the mystery of an apparently arbitrary chance inspires the imagination.

In Greece the choice of the lot selected the champion to meet the mightiest of the Trojans,<sup>3</sup> and it played a part in the development of democratic institutions.<sup>4</sup> But it is its religious associations rather than its practical use that we must examine. The scholiast on Pindar, *Pyth.* iv. 337, tells us that the ancients used to divine by lots; astragali lay ready for the inquirer's use on the holy tables in the temple.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Joshua vii. 14; Jonah i. 7; Acts i. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. examples, Tylor, *Prim. Cult.*<sup>2</sup> i. p. 78 foll.; and references in Frazer, *Pausanias*, iv. p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> Homer, *Iliad* vii. 171 foll.

<sup>4</sup> Bouché Leclercq, i. pp. 190-191, where the author classifies the various methods: the casting of pebbles, beans, κλήροι, astragali, and dice.

<sup>5</sup> Εὐώθασι δὲ διὰ κλήρων μαντεύεσθαι· οἷον ἐὰν βάλλοντός μου τόδε ἀναβῇ, ἀποτελεσθήσεται τόδε· ἐὰν δὲ μή, οὐκ ἀποτελεσθήσεται. καὶ ἐν



Archaeology verifies his statement. In the lower deposits of the temple at Ephesos artificial ivory and decorated astragali were found, which were probably used for divination or dedicated as tokens after a successful appeal to the oracle with natural knuckle-bones.<sup>1</sup> On coins both early and late astragali appear with some frequency,<sup>2</sup> and figures casting astragali before the image of a goddess are to be seen on coins of Hypaipa, Tarsos, Samos, and Ephesos.<sup>3</sup>

Still more familiar is the vase type, which represents two warriors casting lots in front

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τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἀστράγαλοι κεῖνται, οἷς διαμαντεύονται βάλλοντες δι' αὐτῶν. ἰστέον ὅτι κλήροις τὸ πρὶν ἐμαντεύοντο, καὶ ἦσαν ἐπὶ τῶν ἱερῶν τραπεζῶν ἀστράγαλοι, οὓς ῥίπτοντες ἐμαντεύοντο.

<sup>1</sup> Hogarth, *Excavations at Ephesus*, pp. 190-191, Pl. xxxvi. Many astragali were found at the temple of Orthia at Sparta.

<sup>2</sup> *Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum. Italy*, Iguvium, p. 30, No. 2; Central Italy, p. 46, Nos. 10-13; Central Italy (?), p. 60, No. 45; Luceria, p. 138, Nos. 14-15; p. 139, Nos. 43-46. *Sicily*, Himera (481-467 B.C.), p. 78, Nos. 29 and 30. *Lycia, Pamphylia, and Pisidia*, Selge in Pisidia, fourth century, p. 257, Nos. 14-15; Pl. xxxix. 9; cf. *Zeitschr. f. Num.* v. p. 136, No. 14; Pl. vi. 7. *Lykaonia, Isauria, and Cilicia*, Kelenderis, p. 53, No. 16; Pl. ix. 10; Mallos, p. cxxi. *Cyprus*, Idalion, p. 26 foll., Nos. 10-19; Pl. v. 9-12; Paphos, p. 35, Nos. 1-3; Pl. vii. 1-3, p. lxxii.; 1-2, p. lxvi.

<sup>3</sup> Hypaipa (Gordian, two boys before Artemis Anaitis), *Cat. Brit. Mus., Lydia*, pp. lxiv., 118, Nos. 59-60; Pl. xii. 11; Tarsos (early fourth century, girl before a plant; obverse Athena seated), *Cat. Brit. Mus., Lykaonia*, etc. p. lxxx.; Samos (Saloninus, two children before Samian Hera), *Cat. Brit. Mus., Ionia*, p. 396, No. 391; Pl. xxxvii. 18; Ephesos (Geta, two children before Ephesian Artemis), *ib.* pp. 87-88, Nos. 283-284.



of an image of Athena, or before a palm-tree.<sup>1</sup> It is true that these designs have given rise to a good deal of rash speculation. They afford no justification for the wild suggestion that Athene Alea is a goddess of astragalomancy, and there is no reason to suppose that the goddess of the vases is Skiradian Athena. Again, from the presence of two warriors, especially when we remember the exigencies of design, it cannot be confidently asserted that the scene is an appeal to divination to declare the victor in an approaching duel. The figures may even represent merely warriors engaged in pastime; the design of two warriors playing *πέσσοι*, which also figures often on vases, is so similar that it is sometimes difficult to determine whether it is astragali or draughtsmen over which they crouch. Nevertheless this pictorial representation of a goddess presiding over the casting of astragali is worth recording as possible evidence of the continued associations of the religious origin of casting the dice. The analogous coin types to which reference has been made come from a quarter

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, ii. pp. 404-405; Welcker, *Alt. Denk.* iii. 1, Taf. 1-2; Roulez, "Les Peintures d'une coupe de Duris," *Annali dell' Istituto*, 1867, xxxix. p. 140 foll.; *Monumenti dell' Inst.* viii., Pl. xli.; cf. Furtwängler, *Beschreibung der Vasensammlung zu Berlin*, older black fig., Attic hydria, No. 1908; later black fig., Attic lekythi, Nos. 1953, 1982, 1984, 1987.



of the ancient world in which we know astragalomancy to have played an important part.

Skiron in Attika was notorious as the resort of rakes, gamblers, and prostitutes, who assembled, according to some of our authorities, in the temple of Skiradian Athena.<sup>1</sup> Eustathius gives a long discursus, with details as to method and the names of throws, on the gambling in the temples of Attika.<sup>2</sup> But even if there was a temple at Skiron, and it was a haunt of gamblers, it is very uncertain whether divination by astragali was practised there under the auspices of the goddess. The references of the lexicographers to Skiron as a place of divination imply rather the existence there of an augural observatory, like that of Teiresias at Thebes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The name Skiradian Athena is connected with the sunshade festival in the month Skirophorion, with an Eleusinian seer Skiros, with Skiron of the isthmus, and with Salamis which was called Skiras after the hero. These names seem all to take their origin in σκῆρος = white clay, Paus. i. 36. 4; Frazer, *Paus.* ii. pp. 488-489; Suidas, s.vv. Σκίρον, Σκίρος; Strabo ix. 1. 9, 393; Steph. Byz. s.v. Σκίρος; Plutarch, *Theseus* 17; *Coni. Praec.* 42, 144 B; Schol. Aristoph. *Ekkles.* 18. Skiron was certainly a resort of gamblers, and was reckoned, with the Kerameikos, one of the worst quarters in Attica; Alkiphron. *Epist.* iii. 25 (ed. Schepers ii. 22), iii. 8 (Schepers iii. 5). But doubts have been expressed, based on the silence of Pausanias and Strabo, whether there existed the temple of Athena at Skiron which is mentioned in Eustathius, *Odyssey* i. 107, 1397; Pollux ix. 97; Bekker, *Anec. Graec.* 30; *Et. Mag.* 717, s.v. Σκέρρα, and Photius, *Lex.* s.vv. σκίρον, σκιραφεΐα.

<sup>2</sup> Eustathius, *loc. cit.*; cf. Pollux ix. 100-101.

<sup>3</sup> Hesychios, s.v. Σκίρμαντις· τόπος δὲ ἦν οὗτος ὅθεν τοὺς οἰωνοὺς ἔβλεπον. Photius, s.v. Σκίρον· τόπος Ἀθήνησιν ἐφ' οὗ οἱ μάντις ἐκαθέζοντο.



Athena, however, has other and perhaps more primitive kleromantic associations. According to some versions of the story, the Thriai, who were daughters of Zeus and nurses of Apollo, discovered the three mantic ψῆφοι and gave them to Athena. But the goddess had no wish to poach ungenerously on Apollo's preserves, and cast them on to the Thriasian plain.<sup>1</sup> Another story makes the goddess inventor of the art; Apollo, jealous of its growing repute, appealed to the complacent Zeus, who made the lot henceforth untrustworthy.<sup>2</sup> Most of our information, indeed, has come down to us as commentary on the Apolline sentiment—

πολλοὶ θριοβόλοι, παῦροι δέ τε μάντιες ἄνδρες.

In a different series of stories, which likewise express the contempt of Delphi for the vulgar divination, Apollo hands over to Hermes the divination of the Thriai in part payment for the pan pipe.<sup>3</sup> Hermes was, of course, the gambler's god, and the uncertain divination of the chances of the dice was thus handed over to him by the god of knowledge, who has no

<sup>1</sup> Philochoros, *Frag.* 196, *F.H.G.* i. 416, *ap.* Zenob. *Cent.* v. 75; *Et. Mag.* s.vv. θρίαι and θρία; Bekker, *Anec.* p. 265; Hesychios, s.vv. θριάζειν, θρίαι. The exact method of thrioboly is uncertain and also unimportant.

<sup>2</sup> Zenob. *Cent.* v. 75; Steph. Byz. s.v. θρία.

<sup>3</sup> Apollodoros iii. 10. 2, 7; *Hom. Hymn. Merc.* 550 foll.



need of ἔρμαια, and despises the uncertainty of the lot. That is the official view of the Delphic theology. But doubtless the ritual of the oracle itself was placed in a different category to the vulgar practice of other temples or profane consultations. For at Delphi kleromancy played a part. The Thriai themselves, the honey-eating nymphs of Parnassos, had been the nurses of Apollo, and the technical use of the word ἀναίρειν of the Pythia<sup>1</sup> is paralleled in the language of the late Latin mythographers, who speak of people visiting Delphi "ad sortes tollendas."<sup>2</sup> Plutarch has preserved a story in which it appears that the successor to the Thessalian kingdom was chosen by the drawing of lots at Delphi.<sup>3</sup> Suidas tells us that above the tripod was a cup containing the mantic pebbles, which rattled when the inquirers sought an oracle: the Pythia was then brought in, and gave Apollo's message.<sup>4</sup> Here it would seem that the con-

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 192; Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, ii. p. 814.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Hyginus, *Fab.* 88; Telephus in *Fab.* 101, "petit sortem ab Apolline."

<sup>3</sup> Plut. *De frat. amor.* 21, 492 A. φρυκτοί, roasted beans, were sent to Delphi, one representing each candidate.

<sup>4</sup> Suidas, s.v. Πυθώ; Hyginus, *Fab.* 140, "nam Parnassum venit et Pythonem sagittis interfecit unde Pythius est dictus, ossaque eius in cortinam coniecit et in templo suo posuit"; cf. *Mythog. Graec.* ed. Westermann p. 384, *Narr.* lxvii. Plutarch, *De EI apud Delphos*, 16, 391, refers to a kleromantic procedure.



sultation of the pebbles was a preliminary rite to discover whether Apollo would vouchsafe an answer. At Dodona, too, kleromancy must have been practised if we are to believe the story of the Spartans, whose hopes were destroyed by the action of the pet monkey of the Molossian king, which scattered in all directions the lots ready laid out for the ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

But in temples or localities where kleromancy was not overshadowed by oracular rites of more importance, the actual mode of procedure can with more certainty be ascertained. Sometimes the inquirer seems just to have cast his die on the holy table, into the basin of water, or, like Tiberius, into a sacred pool, and from the throw to have prognosticated the general nature of the fortune in store for him, or the particular issue of the matter immediately in hand.<sup>2</sup> Slightly more elaborate is the oracle of Herakles Buraikos. "Having descended from Bura in the direction of the sea, we come to a river named Buraicus and to a small image of Herakles in a grotto. This image is also named Buraicus, and there is a mode of divination by means of dice and tablet. The person

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 34 (76).

<sup>2</sup> See Bouché Leclercq, i. p. 191; Suetonius, *Tiberius* 14. 3; above, pp. 148, 149.



who inquires of the god prays before the image, and after praying he takes four dice, and throws them on the table. There are plenty of dice lying beside the image. Each die has a certain figure marked on it, and the meaning of each figure is explained on the tablet."<sup>1</sup> From Asia Minor we have inscriptions which contain a list of the possible throws and their interpretation. The system in the different inscriptions is identical, all are written in bad metre and indifferent Greek, the names of the throws are constant in the various fragments, and the variants in the text itself are surprisingly few. There is a fragment of a system of astragalomancy with seven astragali from Termessos,<sup>2</sup> but the normal code is constructed for five astragali. Of this code we have fragments from Kosagatch, Tefeny, Yarishli, Sagalassos, Termessos, Ördekji, Indjik, and Adalia.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias vii. 25. 10 (trans. Frazer).

<sup>2</sup> Niemann und Petersen, *Die Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens*, ii. p. 222.

<sup>3</sup> Kosagatch in Lykia—Petersen und Von Luschem, *Reisen im Lykien*, Wien, 1889, ii. p. 174, Nr. 224, a, b, c; Tefeny in Phrygia—Cousin, *B.C.H.* viii., 1884, p. 496 foll.; Sterrett, *Papers of the American School*, ii. p. 79 foll., Nos. 56-58; Yarishli—Smith, "Notes on a Tour in Asia Minor," *J.H.S.* viii., 1887, p. 261, No. 50; *C.I.G.* 3956 c; Kaibel, *Epig. Graec.* 1041. This contains parts of throws 13-15 (side B), 28 (side A), 42-43 (side D), 56 (side C). It was written evidently in columns of 15, 13, 15, 13 throws. Sagalassos and Termessos—Niemann und Petersen, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 51, 139, 220; Ördekji—Sterrett, *Wolfe Expedition to Asia Minor*, Papers of the American School, iii.



astragalos has only four numbered sides with the values 1, 3, 4, and 6. The totals, therefore, range from  $1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 5$  to  $6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 = 30$ . Some of the intervening numbers, e.g. 6 or 29, cannot be made out of combinations of 1, 3, 4, and 6, but on the other hand many of the possible totals can be made by various combinations, e.g. 22 may be 1, 6, 6, 6, 3, Μοιρῶν ἐπιφανῶν, or 6, 4, 4, 4, 4, Ποσειδῶνος, or 6, 6, 4, 3, 3, Ἄρεως θουρίου. In all 56 throws are possible, and of these all except the 12th, though some of them only in fragments, can be obtained from the various stones.<sup>1</sup> The inscriptions seem to have been cut in columns, on the sides of a four-sided pillar. They give in the case of each throw the combination of figures and the total, followed by the name of the power to whom the throw belongs. The second line in some of the inscriptions consists of an attempt to force the numbers of the throw into

p. 206 foll., Nos. 339-342; Adalia—Kaibel, *Hermes* x. 193 foll.; *Epig. Graec.* 1038; Woodward, *J.H.S.* xxx., 1910, p. 260. Messrs. Robinson and Ormerod discovered a further inscription at Indjik in Pamphylia, and another observed by them at Seraidjik in Lykia has been copied by Kalinka, but apparently remains unpublished. I have to thank Mr. Ormerod for an advance proof of his publication of the inscription, "A new astragalos inscription from Pamphylia," *J.H.S.* xxii. I regret that I learned of the publication of Heinevetter, *Würfel und Buchstabenorakel in Griechenland und Kleinasien*, too late to obtain an opportunity of consulting it.

<sup>1</sup> The titles of throws 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 25 are missing, and in some cases only a few letters of the text of the interpretation are preserved.



metre. The meaning of the whole is given in three hexameters of very inferior quality. The second throw, for example, is:—

ααααγ'. ζ'. Ἀθηνᾶς Ἀρείας  
 μοῦνοι τέσσαρες, τρεῖς δὲ ὁ εἰς τάδε φράζει  
 ἔχθραν καὶ κακότητα φυγὼν ἥξεις ποτ' εἰς ἄθλα,  
 ἥξεις καὶ δώσει σοι θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη,  
 βουλὴ δ' ἔσται σοι καταθύμιος ἣν ἐπιβάλλῃ.<sup>1</sup>

Something analogous to these oracular tables are the alphabetical *γνώμαι μονόστιχοι* of Adada and Limyra. They consist of twenty-four self-contained oracular lines each of which begins with a different letter of the alphabet. Evidently by some kleromantic method a letter of the alphabet was selected, and a comparison with the corresponding sentence on the table gave the inquirer his desired response.<sup>2</sup> Not long ago I bought a little fortune-telling book, which may be procured by superstitious clients at Harrod's Stores. Its prophecies are written under the names of twenty-five prophets. To obtain an answer you wash, say your prayers, think of the question you wish solved, and after saying "Peace be unto you all holy prophets," shut your eyes, and place a finger on the square in which the twenty-five names

<sup>1</sup> The text is from the Kosagatch inscription supplemented by those of Tefeny and Sagalassos.

<sup>2</sup> *C.I.G.* 4379 o; Kaibel, *Epig. Graec.* 1040; Sterrett, *Wolfe Expedition*, No. 437, p. 311; *C.I.G.* 4310; Kaibel, *op. cit.* 1039.



are written. Whichever prophet's name your finger lights on, look it up in the book, and under it you may find your answer. The method is in principle the same, and the superstition is at least as degraded, as that manifested in the inscriptions of Asia Minor.

It is but a slight difference in machinery which distinguishes the Italian kleromantic oracles. At Caere and Falerii from a bundle of inscribed tablets one was taken out and the writing examined.<sup>1</sup> Cicero quotes the authority of the monuments of Praeneste for the discovery of the famous *sortes*. A certain Numerius Suffustius braved the ridicule of his neighbours in obedience to incessant dreams, and broke into the rock in the place his visions had prescribed. He found in it wooden *sortes* carved with inscriptions in ancient script. A chest was made for these oracular tablets from the wood of an olive from the stem of which honey miraculously flowed. As in the modern State lotteries of Italy, the lots were drawn by the pure hand of a boy.<sup>2</sup> Seventeen copper plates are in existence, each of which bears

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, iv. pp. 146-147, and references. Among the portents of 218 B.C. was the automatic prophecy of the lots at Caere, Livy xxi. 62. 5. In 217, at Falerii, the lot "Mavors telum suum concutit" fell miraculously from the bundle, Livy xxii. 11; cf. Plutarch, *Fabius* 2, where the story has been distorted; perhaps it is an inaccurate recollection of the passage in Livy.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero, *De div.* ii. 41 (85-86).



the inscription of a line of halting metre often with obvious engraver's errors.<sup>1</sup> They were at one time called (presumably, as Ritschl remarks, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle)<sup>2</sup> the Sortes Praenestinae; the editor of the *Corpus* suggests their connection with the Geryonis Oraculum of Padua.<sup>3</sup> Their provenance must remain uncertain, and it is of little moment. Undoubtedly the plates represent a method of divination which was popular in many Italian shrines, even when it fell into disrepute with the learned.<sup>4</sup>

Between this method of kleromancy and rhapsodomancy there is no difference of principle. The verses of Homer, Virgil, or the Bible may be written out on slips and one of them at random selected, or you may open the book and take as ominous the first verse on which your eye may fall.<sup>5</sup> It was thus that one of the murderers of Archbishop Sharp was confirmed in his purpose. Twice he consulted the Book, and

<sup>1</sup> *Corpus Ins. Lat.* i. pp. 267-270, Nos. 1438-1454.

<sup>2</sup> *Rhein. Mus.* xiv. p. 389.

<sup>3</sup> Suetonius, *Tiberius* 14. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Cicero says of Praeneste, "Sed hoc quidem genus divinationis vita iam communis explosit; fani pulchritudo et vetustas Praenestinarum etiam nunc retinet sortium nomen, atque id in volgus. Quis enim magistratus, aut quis vir inlustrior utitur sortibus? Ceteris vero in locis sortes plane refrixerunt." Cicero is always an advocate, and the form in which the treatise is cast does not allay the suspicion that the statement may be exaggerated, *De div.* ii. 41 (87).

<sup>5</sup> Bouché Leclercq, i. pp. 195-196; iv. 159.



chance and fanaticism steeled him against his humaner feelings with the texts "Go on and prosper," and "Go, have I not sent you?"<sup>1</sup>

This consultation of the written word has obvious affinities with the consultation of the spoken word or kledonism. Again, there is a link of connection with the consultation of the Bible and the key. In fact, most of the lesser rites of divination are to a greater or less degree kleromantic, and under this general heading they may suitably be grouped.

#### DAKTYLIOMANCY

A very favourite kleromantic method of divining the future is to consult the automatic swinging of a pendulum. If a piece of string, to the other end of which an object is attached, be suspended from the hand, a succession of unconscious or involuntary tugs produces a considerable oscillation which the agent is ignorant of causing, and therefore believes to be miraculous.<sup>2</sup> Besides the instances quoted by Professor Tylor, in which

<sup>1</sup> Dalyell, p. 522; cf. Augustine, *Confessions*, viii. 12. 29-30. A South Italian charm written in Greek characters recommends you to find out what a dream portends by opening the psalter after prayers, etc., and noticing the first letter of the alphabet which catches your eye. A table of the significance of the various letters is given, Pradel, *Griechische und süditalienische Gebete*, etc., pp. 32, 70, 71.

<sup>2</sup> Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,<sup>2</sup> i. pp. 127-128.



a bangle among the Sgau Karens and a "pendulum" among the Bodo and Dhimal are the instruments, the rite is practised by the Chukchi with "something often used,"<sup>1</sup> by the Melanesians with a stone or heavy ornament,<sup>2</sup> by the Malays with a lemon,<sup>3</sup> and by the Cherokees with stones and antique arrowheads.<sup>4</sup> In classical antiquity and in Europe a ring has ordinarily been the instrument. Reginald Scot mentions the practice,<sup>5</sup> and it is familiar in the modern nursery as one of the many games for telling what o'clock it is. I have even assisted at a solemn consultation of the ring by superstitious ladies. To the same species of divinatory rites belong the koskinomancy of Theokritos,<sup>6</sup> familiar in England as the consultation of the sieve and shears,<sup>7</sup> and the minor rites of axinomancy<sup>8</sup> and sphondylomancy.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bogoras, *American Anthropologist*, N.S. iii. p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Codrington, *Melanesians*, p. 191. <sup>3</sup> Skeat, *Malay Magic*, p. 537.

<sup>4</sup> Mooney, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokee," *A.R.A.B.E.* vii. p. 306.

<sup>5</sup> R. Scot, *op. cit.* 12th Booke, xvii. p. 189, and 16th Booke, v. pp. 344-345. A ring or a shilling and a tumbler of "south running" water are used by girls of Cleveland and Durham to ascertain their prospects of marriage. Henderson, *op. cit.* pp. 106-107.

<sup>6</sup> Theokritos iii. 31; cf. Lucian, *Alex.* 9, Philostr. *V. Apoll.* vi. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Reginald Scot, *loc. cit.*; Dalyell, *op. cit.* pp. 521-522; Henderson, *op. cit.* pp. 233-237. The method with key and Bible is, of course, exactly analogous.

<sup>8</sup> See Bouché Leclerq, *op. cit.* i. p. 183; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvi. 142; *ib.* xxx. 14; Riess in Pauly-Wiss. s.v. *Axinomantia*.

<sup>9</sup> Pollux vii. 188; Bouché Leclerq, *loc. cit.*



The machinery for consulting the pendulum shows the possibilities and limitations of kleromancy. You may obtain an answer in the affirmative or negative by observing whether or not the pendulum soon starts swinging.<sup>1</sup> Often it is suspended in a basin or a glass, which rings when the pendulum hits it. When the best friend of the dead Karen touches the basin, the ring oscillates enough to hit the rim. A natural elaboration is to arrange a code alphabet, like that employed in the rappings with which the ghostly advisers of the spiritualists delight their credulous audience. Again, a circle of names may be used, as by the Malays, Melanesians, and the Indian tribes we have mentioned. The conspirators Patricius and Hilarius used a round basin with letters marked on the rim when they inquired the name of the emperor who should supplant Valens. The ring spelled out the first letters of the name of Theodoros.<sup>2</sup>

The theory of the efficacy of the rite has, of course, varied with the beliefs of its practitioners. On the authority of Aristotle, Clement tells us

<sup>1</sup> E.g. among the Cherokees it swings in the direction of a thief. The shaman walks a little way and then takes a fresh orientation.

<sup>2</sup> Amm. Marc. xxix. 1; Zosimus iv. 13-14. The former gives an account of their childish elaborate proceedings with the tripod, Arabian spices, and the basin made of different metals.



that Exekestos, tyrant of Phokis, had two magic rings which warned him of the future by the noise they made, the one against the other.<sup>1</sup> If the pendulum supplied the machinery by which he consulted his rings we do not know, but Bouché Leclercq is right in commenting in this connection on the magic virtue of rings and gems. We remember the magic ring of Eukrates engraved with an image of Apollo which prophesied with a human voice.<sup>2</sup> In classical superstition it is the *mana* of the magic ring which works the miracle; among the Cherokees it would seem to be a combination of the power of the shaman and the power of the stone. In other cases, in the Indian instances for example, invocation is necessary. Generally in European folklore the Devil or God, according to the point of view, has been held to direct the proceedings.<sup>3</sup>

The superstition of the modern drawing-room is interesting. For the due success of

<sup>1</sup> Clem. Alex. *Strom.* i. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Lukian, *Philopseudes* 38 (63).

<sup>3</sup> "Hereupon Hemingius inferreth, that although conjuring priests and witches bring not this to passe by the absolute words of the psalm, which tend for other scope: yet Satan doth nimbly with his invisible hand give such a twitch to the Book, as also in the other case to the sive and the sheers, that down fals the book and key, sive and sheers, up starts the thief and away runneth the divell laughing."—Scot, *op. cit.* 16th Booke, v. p. 344.



the rite, the ring should be suspended by a human hair fresh pulled, and the virtue lies in what my hostess vaguely described as "personal magnetic forces." Daktyliomancy, in itself an insignificant superstition, is thus an interesting example of how ineradicable is belief in the seemingly miraculous. All explanations will more readily receive credence than that which makes necessary the rejection of a cherished superstition. And so it comes about that the success of the rite has been attributed at different times to the magic power of the pendulum, the agency of a spirit invoked, the justice of God, the deceits of the Devil, or the mysterious powers of each part in turn of the very simple instrument. I have certainly found in the case of the superstitions of our own day that neither these facts nor the true physical interpretation avail against that blindest and most obstinate of human faculties, the will to believe.

#### DIVINATION BY IMAGES

Almost as familiar as divination by the pendulum is divination by weight. The Chukchi, for example, tie a thong to the body of the dead, and the diviner then asks a



question and tries to lift the corpse. If it is easily lifted, the answer is in the affirmative; if it refuses to move, the answer is no.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Frazer has collected a number of instances of analogous usages<sup>2</sup> in his note on Pausanias' description of the scourging of the Spartan boys. The priestess of Artemis Orthia stood by holding the wooden image. "It is small and light, but if the scourgers lay on lightly because a lad is handsome or noble, then the image grows so heavy in the woman's hand that she can hardly hold it, and she lays the blame on the scourgers, saying they are weighing her down."<sup>3</sup> Dio Chrysostom tells us that Greek women when in doubt lifted a clod or stone in the temple and divined according to its weight,<sup>4</sup> and Antiphilos of Byzantium wrote an epigram on old Euboule, who thought that Phoibos gave the answer to her doubts through the heaviness or lightness of the mantic stone before his statue.<sup>5</sup>

This divination by weight played a part

<sup>1</sup> Bogoras, *American Anthropologist*, N.S. iii. p. 95, cf. p. 96. Light objects are used as pendulums; with heavy objects they practise divination by weight.

<sup>2</sup> Esquimaux, Lapps, Samoans, Burmans, and natives of Loango and Celebes—Frazer, *Pausanias*, iii. pp. 342-343.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. iii. 16. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* xiii. *De exilio* (ed. Dindorf, i. p. 241).

<sup>5</sup> *Anth. Pal.* ix. 263.



in the divination by the sacred image. The image of the god can, of course, give signs to its worshippers. We are familiar with the portent of the image which moves or sweats as presage of some coming evil.<sup>1</sup> Further, the image may answer questions. The image of Hera answered Kleomenes I. by the appearance of a flame of fire on its breast; had the flame lit up the head of the image, he would have sacked Argos.<sup>2</sup> When Dionysos was going to send a good year of plenty to the Bisalti of Thrace, they saw in his temple a great light shine.<sup>3</sup> The oracle of Ammon gave no answers in inspired verse like those of Delphi or Branchidai, but replied by nods and σύμβολα, which the prophet interpreted; Strabo is reminded of the nodding of Zeus in Homer.<sup>4</sup> Diodoros tells how the statue was carried out in a golden shrine on the shoulders of eighty priests: οὗτοι δ' ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων φέροντες τὸν θεὸν προάγουσιν αὐτομάτως ὅπου ποτ' ἂν ἄγῃ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ γεῦμα τὴν πορείαν.<sup>5</sup> In similar terms Macrobius describes the consultation of the god of

<sup>1</sup> E.g. the image of Herakles before the Spartan defeat at Leuktra, Cicero, *De div.* i. 34 (74).

<sup>2</sup> Herodotos vi. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *De mir. ausc.* 133.

<sup>4</sup> Strabo xvii. 1. 43, 814. The geographer alleges the same of Dodona: ἐχρησμέδει δ' οὐ διὰ λόγων, ἀλλὰ διὰ τινων συμβόλων, ὥσπερ τὸ ἐν Λιβύῃ Ἀμμωνιακόν, *Frag.* vii. 10, *Epitome edita*.

<sup>5</sup> Diodoros xvii. 50-51.



Egyptian Heliopolis and the answers given by the images of the Fortunes at Antium.<sup>1</sup> Analogous, if a little more elaborate, were the proceedings at Hierapolis. The oracle, says Lukian, differs from all Greek, Egyptian, Libyan, and Asiatic oracles in that the god gives responses without employing the medium of priest or prophet. When the god wishes to give an oracle it stirs on its pedestal and sweats until the priests take it up; it then drives its bearers in all directions, and leaps from shoulder to shoulder. At length the high priest puts a question, and the image drives those who are carrying it forward (an affirmative answer) or back (negative). The priests of this temple appear to have reached a high pitch of ingenuity and skill. The image, like many a magician, boasted the power of floating in the air, and Lukian witnessed a manifestation of this conjuring trick, analogous to that of "the flying pianist" which some years ago astonished the American music-hall public.<sup>2</sup>

Though consulted by Greeks these oracles

<sup>1</sup> Macrobius, *Sat.* i. 33. 13. In the Egyptian saga of Rameses XII., Khonsu of Thebes "moved his head very much" in token of his readiness to travel to Mesopotamia to heal the king's sister-in-law. See Wiedemann, *Ägyptische Geschichte*, ii. p. 522.

<sup>2</sup> Lukian, *De dea Syria*, 36-37, 480-481.



are all non-Hellenic, and, so far as I know, the practice of divining by teraphim<sup>1</sup> or small "familiar" images was also foreign to Greece. Servius mentions it in his note on the "agitataque numina Troiae" as common among Egyptians and Carthaginians,<sup>2</sup> and in North Africa at the present day an analogous mode of divination is not unknown.<sup>3</sup>

### RHABDOMANCY

Rhabdomancy or belomancy does not concern the student of Greek divination. Its mention here is rendered necessary solely by the fact that careless writers are often to be found referring to the Hellenic art of rhabdomancy, or even to "the divining rod" of Greece. The Greek names for this mode of divination occur in the comments of Hieronymus and Cyrillus on Ezekiel xxi. 18 ff. As practised by the

<sup>1</sup> Zechariah x. 2, "For the teraphim have spoken vanity and the diviners have seen a lie."

<sup>2</sup> Servius, *Aeneid* vi. 68, "aut signa ξόανα dicit, id est, simulacra brevia, quae portabantur in lecticis et ab ipsis mota infundebant vaticinationem: quod fuit apud Egyptios et Carthaginienses." I do not think that it is necessary to lay any stress on the use of the Greek word ξόανα: it is just a convenient technical term. One can imagine a modern ethnologist using it in a similar way.

<sup>3</sup> Doutté, p. 394. The women soothsayers south of Mogador keep certain "térébratules fossiles" in a box.



Arabs, Jews, and Chaldaeans, the rite appears to have consisted of shaking a quiver full of marked arrows before the image of the god until one of them fell out.<sup>1</sup> The inhabitants of Northern Africa to-day practise the rite of the ancient Arabs.<sup>2</sup> If rhabdomancy was practised by the peoples of classical antiquity, it has left no trace in their literature. The only passage known to me which suggests the possibility is the scholium on Nikander's *Theriaka* i. 612.<sup>3</sup> The scholiast seems to have been a muddle-headed ethnologist, and it is not at all clear whether he means to imply that the Lesbian Apollo divined with a myrtle wand, or merely carried a staff of myrtle. He says that the Magi and Skythians divine with a stick of myrtle, and in many places they divine with rods, quoting the authority of Dinon for this practice in Persia.<sup>4</sup> He continues καὶ ἐν Λέσβῳ ὁ

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclercq, i. 197; Riess in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. *Belomanteia*; Witton Davies, *op. cit.* p. 74; Robertson Smith, *Journal of Philology*, xiii. pp. 277-284; Hosea iv. 12; Ezekiel xxi. 21; Lenormant, *La Divination chez les Chaldéens*, pp. 17-22.

<sup>2</sup> Doutté, pp. 373-374. He has misunderstood his informants on classical matters when he says "c'est la bélomancie ou rhabdomancie des Grecs bien comme également des Juifs."

<sup>3</sup> Iamblichos, *De myst.* iii. 17, remarks ἐὶ δὲ καὶ ἄχρι τῶν ἀψύχων οἶον ψηφιδίων ἢ ῥάβδων ἢ ξύλων τινῶν ἢ λίθων ἢ πυρῶν ἢ ἀλφίτων διήκει τῇ προδουλώσει, etc., but this is hardly evidence of Greek usage.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Strabo xv. 3. 14-15, 733, τὴν δέσμην τῶν ῥάβδων ἔχοντες. For the Magian *bareçma* (the *barsom* of the Parsees) see Lenormant, *op. cit.* pp. 22-25.



Ἀπόλλων μυρίκης κλάδον ἔχει· ὅθεν καὶ μυρिकाῖος καλεῖται, and proceeds to discuss the appearance of Apollo in dreams with a myrtle wand, and the honour paid to the oldest of plants in Egypt and Persia. Apart from the fact that such an authority, if unsupported, carries little weight, it is far from clear that his Lesbian Apollo is a patron of rhabdomancy.

Various forms of divination by wands were observed by classical writers among more primitive peoples. Sometimes the principle governing the process is simply that of the lot and the fortuitous selection of a stick with a special mark upon it; sometimes it may have been connected with the magical movements of enchanted wands, on the analogy of rites familiar in the Lower Culture.<sup>1</sup> Of the divining rod and the dowser's art I have been unable to find any mention at all in classical literature.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Skythians, Herodotos iv. 67; Germans, Tacitus, *Germania* 10; Alani, Amm. Marc. xxxi. For examples of rhabdomancy in the Lower Culture cf. Tylor, *Prim. Cult.*<sup>2</sup> i. pp. 125-126; the analogous Khond divination with a war arrow, *ib.* p. 118; Kurnai divination with a throwing-stick to detect the whereabouts of an eloping pair, Howitt, *J.A.I.* xvi. p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> It is characteristic of M. Lenormant's somewhat subjective methods of handling his evidence that he remarks "Nicandre nous la montre en usage chez les Grecs," and refers to the Iamblichos passage. Neither of the passages has any more to do with the dowser's rod than has Hesiod's account of his receiving a wand from the Muses.



## KLEDONOMANCY

One of the most important of the methods of divination of the kleromantic order is kledonomancy. We have earlier had occasion to notice the importance which attaches to the spoken word. Kledonomancy is originally nothing more than the acceptance of the fatal word or of the spoken omen. Thus the wooers say to Odysseus—

Ζεὺς τοι δοίη, ξεῖνε, καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι  
ὅττι μάλιστ' ἐθέλεις· κτλ.  
ὥς ἄρ' ἔφαν, χαῖρεν δὲ κληδόνι δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.<sup>1</sup>

Κληδών and φήμη are ominous utterances of this kind whose import is seized by the hearer.<sup>2</sup> They are the same precisely as the *fâl* of the Arabs of Northern Africa.<sup>3</sup> Again, the story of how Caere came by its name is paralleled by the narrative of Jonathan's feat of arms.<sup>4</sup> In the latter story, Jonathan and his

<sup>1</sup> Homer, *Od.* xviii. 116; cf. the φήμη, *Od.* ii. 35, or that of the women grinding corn, *Od.* xx. 104-120.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. *Od.* ii. 35; Eustathius, *ad loc.* 1432; id. *Od.* xviii. 117, 1840; cf. the story of Hephaistion and Alexander, Lukian, *Pro laps. salut.* 8. 734.

<sup>3</sup> Doutté, p. 363 foll.; cf. Burton, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* (ed. Smithers), xi. p. 446, iv. p. 97. In his notes Burton seems to include other forms of divination also under the word *fâl*.

<sup>4</sup> ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐπολιορκεῖτο, ἀνὴρ δὲ πολέμιος πελάσας, χαῖρε ἤκουσε πρὸς τινος τῶν ἐπὶ τοῦ τείχους. κἀκεῖνος οἰωνίσαστο. καὶ ἡ πόλις νικηθεῖσα, Καῖρε ἐκλήθη δι' ἐκεῖνο τὸ χαῖρε, βαρβαρεισθεῖσα κατὰ τὴν ἐγχώριον γλῶσσαν, Eustathius, *Od.* 1432. "And the men of the



armour-bearer show themselves with the avowed object of extorting a *κληδών*, and of determining their conduct by it. Similarly in many folk-practices we find an appeal to the chance word overheard as a method of divination. In the Isle of Man, at Hollantide, girls filled their mouths with water, took a pinch of salt in each hand, and listened through the keyhole to the conversation in the next room but one. The first name which they heard mentioned would be that of their future husband.<sup>1</sup> At Pharai in Achaia an analogous rite was practised under the official patronage of Hermes, the market god.<sup>2</sup> "In front of the image is a hearth made of stone, with bronze lamps clamped to it with lead. He who would inquire of the god comes at evening and burns incense on

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garrison answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer and said, Come up to us and we will show you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armour-bearer, Come up after me: for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel," 1 Samuel xiv. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Moore, *Folklore*, v. p. 213; Prof. J. Rhys, *Folklore*, ii. p. 311; cf. "Der alten Weiber Philosophie," *Zeitschrift f. d. Myth. und Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 309. Examples from modern Greek folklore: Frazer, *Pausanias*, vol. iv. p. 152; Lawson, *op. cit.* p. 304. For the Kledonias on St. John's Eve see Rennell Rodd, p. 184; Bent, *The Cyclades*, p. 160; Svoronos in *Atti R. Accademia Arch. Lett. Bell. Arti*, N.S. ii., 1910, p. 49. Kledonism often is attached to popular festivals, cults, or rites, e.g. "Cult of the Executed Criminals at Palermo," Hartland, *Folklore*, xxi. p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> The *σύμβολα* of the market-square were always carefully observed by the superstitious man; see the fragment of the comic poet Philemon *ap. Clem. Alex. Strom.* vii. 4. 25, 843.



the hearth, fills the lamps with oil, lights them, lays a coin of the country called a copper on the altar to the right of the image, and whispers his question, whatever it may be, into the ear of the god. Then he stops his ears and leaves the market-place, and when he is gone a little way outside he takes his hands from his ears, and whatever words he hears he regards as an oracle. The Egyptians have a similar mode of divination at the sanctuary of Apis."<sup>1</sup> A phallic herm from Pitane in Aiolis bears the inscription 'Ερμῆς Κληδόνιος.<sup>2</sup> At the altar of Apollo Spodios in Thebes there was a regular system of divination by means of voices, a mode of divination peculiarly popular in Smyrna, where there was a sanctuary of Κληδόνες outside the walls.<sup>3</sup> In Athens

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias vii. 22. 2-3. Pliny says that Apis is accompanied by a large crowd of choristers who "repente lymphatici futura praecinunt," Pliny, *N.H.* viii. 46 (71). 185. The Egyptians, according to Plutarch, paid particular attention to the chance utterances of children playing in the temples, Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 14, 356 E; cf. the mysterious boy's voice which St. Augustine heard repeat "tolle lege, tolle lege," Aug. *Conf.* viii. 12. 29. In Germany, in the sixteenth century, "wann man die jungen kinder, auff der gassen mit spiessen und fähnlein sihet reiten und streiten, das ist ein warhafftiges zeichen des kriegs und zwitracht, so über das landt kommen werden. Wann die kinder fähnlein und creutz tragen, das ist ein zeichen des sterbens" ("Der alten Weiber Philosophie," Nos. 7, 8, *Zeitschrift f. d. Myth. und Sittenkunde*, iii. p. 310).

<sup>2</sup> Bouché Leclercq, ii. p. 400; Usener, *Götternamen*, p. 267. The tongue was, of course, sacred to Hermes, Cornutus 16.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias ix. 11. 7. In a paper on 'Απόλλων Σπόδιος in *Mélanges*



was an altar of Pheme, and sacrifices were offered to her as a goddess.<sup>1</sup> Aristides the Rhetorician mentions the altars of Κληδών.<sup>2</sup> On a stone found in Tusculum is the inscription ΦΗΜΗ | ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΩΙ.<sup>3</sup> In the third century B.C. we know of priests of Zeus Phemios and Athena Phemia in Erythrai.<sup>4</sup> And then there are the cult titles connected with ὀμφή, a word which, in late times at any rate, was assimilated to κληδών.<sup>5</sup> Zeus Panomphaios of *Iliad* viii. 250 was understood by Aristarchos as equivalent to Zeus κληδόνιος,<sup>6</sup> and Eustathius, commenting on the φήμη of the women at the mill, concludes: ἄλλως δὲ διὰ τὸ πᾶν τέρας ἀνάγεσθαι εἰς ἐκεῖνον, καθὰ καὶ πᾶσαν ὀμφήν. διὸ καὶ πανομφαῖος ἐλέγετο Ζεὺς.<sup>7</sup> Usener connects the personification Ὀμφαίη of Empedokles with the familiar Homeric θεῶν ὀμφαί.<sup>8</sup> But in considering these cult titles

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*Henri Weil*, 1898, M. Holleaux has shown reason to believe that Apollo Spodios is identical with Apollo Ismenios.

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias i. 17. 1; Frazer, *Pausanias*, ii. p. 144; Aischines i. 128, ii. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Aristides, *Or.* xl. 507 (ed. Dindorf, vol. i. p. 754).

<sup>3</sup> Welcker, *Rhein. Mus.* ii. (1843), p. 443; *C.I.G.* iii. 59736.

<sup>4</sup> Dittenberger, *Sylloge*, ii. 600 a, l. 26; cf. Zeus Euphemios, Hesychios, s.vv. Εὐφάμιος and Εὐφήμιος.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Cornutus 32, discussing the omphalos, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς ἀναδιδομένης ἐν αὐτῷ ὀμφῆς ἥτις ἐστὶ θεία φωνή.

<sup>6</sup> Usener, *op. cit.* p. 267; Zeus Panomphaios in Simonides, *Fr.* 146. 2; Ovid, *Met.* xi. 198.

<sup>7</sup> Eustathius, *Od.* xx. 100, 1885.

<sup>8</sup> Usener, *loc. cit.*; Cornutus 17; *Iliad* xx. 129, θεῶν ἐκ πεύσεται ὀμφῆς; *Odyssey* iii. 215, xvi. 96, ἐπισπόμενοι θεοῦ ὀμφῇ.



and the apotheosis of *φήμη* from the point of view of kledonism, we must be a little careful. It is clear from the Aristides passage and the implications of Pausanias that the deified *κληδόνες* might be consulted after the same kind of kleromantic fashion as the Hermes of Pharai. But it must not be forgotten that there is another element which has entered to confuse the issue, and it is in reality the *θεοῦ ὁμφή*. In the article to which we have already referred, M. Holleaux makes the distinction of these elements admirably clear.<sup>1</sup> *Κληδών* and *φήμη* can really mean two different things, whose connection is at the same time so close that they are consistently confused. From the sovereignty of the gods over omens comes the idea of the *θεοῦ ὁμφή*, which is not only the fatality of a chance utterance heard under circumstances which permit the hearer to turn it to account, but also the direct utterance of the god.<sup>2</sup> It may be, as in the case of

<sup>1</sup> Holleaux, *op. cit.* p. 196. The Scholiast on Sophokles, *Elektra* 1110, is puzzled by the confusion of these two elements and awkwardly remarks, ὅσσα, ὁμφή, καὶ κληδὼν ἄγγελοι τῶν θεῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ λέγονται, φήμη δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς θείας κληδόνας καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης διαλαλήσεως.

<sup>2</sup> The story of Kleomenes I. and the priestess of Athena shows how easy the confusion is in practice. The *φήμη* or *κληδών*, which Kleomenes refuses to accept, is at once an *ὁμφή* in the sense that it is the utterance of the official representative of the goddess, while it is



Coriolanus,<sup>1</sup> that the image or the god in person speaks, or it may be that a mysterious voice is heard whose source no one knows, or, thirdly, that news arrives with a speed which defies the conditions imposed by time and space. Camillus built the shrines of PHEME and KLEDON on the spot where Marcus Caedicius heard a mysterious voice at night-time bidding Rome prepare for the Gallic invasion.<sup>2</sup> The altar of PHEME at Athens was erected because the news of the battle of EURYMEDON reached Athens on the same day.<sup>3</sup> Between the purely kleromantic kledonism of the accepted utterance and the direct message of the god lies midway the ritual of HERMES OF PHARAI, where kleromantic methods are followed, but under the direct auspices of a god.

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also an ominous utterance whose meaning has a wider significance than that of the speaker's immediate intention, Herodotos v. 72.

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *De fort. Rom.* 319 A.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 319 A; *Camillus* 30; Livy v. 32. 6; cf. Livy i. 31. 3; Cicero, *De div.* i. 45 (101).

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aischines i. 128, p. 277 (ed. Schultz); cf. the case of Plataia and Mykale, Herod. ix. 101. Aischines, contrasting rhetorically *φήμη* and *συκοφαντία*, says *φήμη μὲν ἐστίν, ὅταν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολιτῶν αὐτόματον ἐκ μηδεμιᾶς προφάσεως λέγῃ τιν' ὡς γεγεννημένην πρᾶξιν*. This makes clear how it is that writers both ancient (e.g. Aischines i. 128) and modern (Bouché Leclercq, i. 155) connect directly Hesiod, *Op. et Di.* 763, with the deified *φήμη* of Kledonism. If Hesiod's *φήμη* was really a goddess, she is, I fancy, nearer to Nemesis (Murray, *Rise of the Greek Epic*, p. 81 foll.) than to Kledon.



## CHAPTER XI

### NECROMANCY

Εὐθὺς οὖν ἅπαντα ἐκεῖνα ἐσαλεύετο καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ἐπιδῆς τοῦδαφος ἀνερρήγνυτο καὶ ἡ ὕλακὴ τοῦ Κερβέρου καὶ πόρρωθεν ἤκούετο καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα ὑπερκατηφὲς ἦν καὶ σκυθρωπόν.<sup>1</sup>

It does not appear that divination by the dead played an important or prominent part in Greek superstition, though there are occasional references to its practice. It is true that literature may be a deceptive guide as to its prevalence among the more superstitious folk, and that art might scruple to touch a rite with such abhorrent associations except to portray the seemly expedition of Odysseus canonised by the great poet. For necromancy, associated as it is with ghosts and the underworld, always the most insistent powers of fear and darkness which impress the superstitious, naturally goes hand in hand with black magic. And it is in

<sup>1</sup> Lukian, *Nekyomanteia* 10, 470.



the days when black magic comes to the fore in the classical world that necromancy assumes its most repellent forms and excites the maximum of horror and interest. It figures repeatedly in the Roman poets, whose accounts, though influenced by Homer, contain also elements derived from the practices or alleged practices of the witches and magicians of their day.<sup>1</sup> In the Middle Ages nigromancy or negromancy came to be little more than a synonym for the Black Art, a result due in part to mistaken etymology,<sup>2</sup> but in great measure to the late classical belief in the effectiveness of repellent rites of divination said to be practised by the professors of witchcraft.

The chief practitioners of the art of divining by the dead were said to be the Magi, whom Nero employed to evoke the dead;<sup>3</sup> the Egyptians and Etruscans, to whose *νεκρομαντεία* Clement refers;<sup>4</sup> the Thessalians, to which race, according to Plutarch, the *ψυχαγωγοί* who laid

<sup>1</sup> See Fahz, *De poetarum Romanorum doctrina magica*, cap. i.

<sup>2</sup> "*Mantia*, Graece divinatio dicitur, et *nigro*, quasi nigra, unde *Nigromantia*, nigra divinatio, quia ad atra daemoniorum vincula utentes se adducit."

<sup>3</sup> Suetonius, *Nero* 34. 4; cf. Pliny, *N.H.* xxx. 1 (5). 14; Herodian iv. 12. 8. Further examples of necromancy in imperial times, Tac. *Annals* ii. 28; Dio Cassius lxxvii. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Clem. Alex. *Protrept.* i. 11.



Pausanias' ghost belonged,<sup>1</sup> and Phigalians.<sup>2</sup> Cicero's superstitious friend Appius apparently practised necromancy, and it looks as though the belief that Avernus was a gate to Hades still existed in the neighbourhood in his day.<sup>3</sup>

In Homer, ghosts of the dead<sup>4</sup> appear to mortals as Patroklos appeared to Achilles. The ghost, in every respect exactly like the live Patroklos, stands over the head of Achilles as he lies asleep, and begs for rites of burial to enable him to join the company of the dead. Achilles tries to embrace the phantom, which with a cry vanishes like smoke beneath the earth.<sup>5</sup> It is an impious necessity which forces one to treat so noble a passage of poetry with Philistine analysis, but it is our duty, I am afraid, to notice the following points. First, the ghost is the exact counterpart of the living man. Secondly, though Achilles sees it in a

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Eur. *Alc.* 1128, ὡς ιστορεῖ Πλούταρχος ἐν ταῖς Ὀμηρικαῖς μελέταις.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. iii. 17. 9, story of Pausanias and Kleonike's ghost.

<sup>3</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 58 (132); *Tusculans* i. 16 (37).

<sup>4</sup> In Mr. Lawson's account of "Revenants in Ancient Greece," *op. cit.* p. 412 foll., I can find no cogent evidence or argument. It is inspired solely by the will to believe that all the practices of modern Greece are derived from antiquity, and the plea that "when a dead man was required in literature to reappear, he was conventionally portrayed as a ghost, not as a walking corpse," hardly convinces the dispassionate. The wish is father to the thought, and strange offspring he begets.

<sup>5</sup> *Iliad* xxiii. 65 foll.



dream, there is no doubt as to its actual appearance. It vanishes beneath the earth with a cry, and to Achilles it is a final proof that there is an existence in another world. Thirdly, the ghost implies that when once the funeral rites are performed its power to visit this earth will be at an end—

οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' αὖτις  
νίσσομαι ἐξ Ἀΐδαο, ἐπὴν με πυρὸς λελάχητε.<sup>1</sup>

The funeral rites are what M. van Gennep calls *rites de séparation*. And this, on the whole, remains the doctrine of necromancy. Those who wish to learn of the future from the dead must either, like Odysseus, make a voyage to some portal of the Lower World, or else possess the magic power to cleave an opening to Hades by their spells.

Of course the theory of ghosts, in almost every land, is inconsistent if tried by the standards of logic and reason. The philosophers of a later age are puzzled, not merely by the haunting of the scenes of crimes by departed spirits, but also by the problem why if the soul is spiritual, the ghost appears in bodily shape.<sup>2</sup> And even ghosts whose bodies have been buried appear in dreams. We have already

<sup>1</sup> Compare the case of Killos the charioteer of Pelops. Theopompus *ap. Schol. Hom. Iliad ix.* 38.

<sup>2</sup> [Plut.] *De vita Homeri* 128.



noted the association of the practice of incubation with the tombs of heroes, and I suspect that when Artemidoros goes out of his way to remark that sleeping on tombs is an *ἄπρακτος διατριβή*, he is combating what he regards as a popular heresy in dream lore.<sup>1</sup> At some *ψυχοπομπεία*, at any rate, incubation was the method employed, as in the case of Euthynoos Italos, who was suspected of poisoning his rich father, Elysios the Terinaean. The young man, in order to clear himself, went to a *ψυχομαντεῖον*, performed the appointed preliminary sacrifices, and slept in the sanctuary. His father appeared in a dream and brought with him the son's *genius*, who showed him his fate in a little book.<sup>2</sup>

Euthynoos goes to a *ψυχομαντεῖον*, and in the majority of cases those who wish to consult the dead must journey, like Odysseus, to a gate of the Lower World,<sup>3</sup> and perform ritual acts of sacrifice to the dead and the powers of Hades.<sup>4</sup> When Periander wishes to make

<sup>1</sup> ἐν μνήμασι δὲ καὶ τάφοις καὶ ἐν ὁδῷ καθεύδειν τοῖς μὲν νοσοῦσι θάνατον προαγορεύει, τοῖς δὲ ἐρρωμένοις ἀπραξίαν. ἄπρακτοι γὰρ αἱ τοιαῦται διατριβαὶ καὶ τὰ χωρία, Artem. On. i. 81. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Cons. ad Apoll.* 109 c.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Servius, *Aen.* vi. 107, "sine gaudio autem ideo ille dicitur locus, quod necromantia vel sciomantia, ut dicunt, non nisi ibi poterat fieri."

<sup>4</sup> For the various details of ritual, the digging of the trench, the sacrifice of a black sheep with its head bent downwards, the invocations,



inquiry of his wife's ghost he must send to Thesprotia to the hell-gate at Acheron.<sup>1</sup> And we hear of these *ψυχοπομπεία* or *ψυχομαντεία* at Herakleia, where Pausanias interviewed the ghost of his victim Kleonike,<sup>2</sup> at Tainaron,<sup>3</sup> and at Avernus.<sup>4</sup>

The accredited ministers of divination by the dead were the *ψυχαγωγοί*, who give the title to a lost play of Aischylos.<sup>5</sup> And these functionaries not only divined, but were competent to perform other quasi-magical functions, such as purifications and the laying of ghosts.<sup>6</sup> The power of the magician did away with the necessity of visiting a recognised entry to Hades, though it is still customary to evoke a ghost through his tomb, as in the

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etc., see the references discussed by Headlam, "Ghost-raising, Magic and the Underworld," *Class. Rev.* xvi. p. 52, and the passages from the Latin poets quoted by Fahz, *op. cit.*

<sup>1</sup> Herodotos v. 92. A late legend says that Orpheus evoked Eurydike at the Thesprotian oracle of the dead, Paus. ix. 30. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *De ser. num. vin.* 555 C; *Kimon* 6.

<sup>3</sup> Plutarch, *De ser. num. vin.* 560 E.

<sup>4</sup> Diodoros iv. 22. 2 μυθολογοῦσι δὲ τὸ μὲν παλαιὸν γεγενῆσθαι νεκρομαντεῖον πρὸς αὐτῇ, ὃ τοῖς ὕστερον χρόνοις καταλελύσθαι φασίν.

<sup>5</sup> *ψυχαγωγός*. οἱ μὲν Ἀλεξανδρεῖς τὸν τῶν παίδων ἀνδραποδιστὴν οὕτω καλοῦσιν, οἱ δ' ἀρχαῖοι τοὺς τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν τεθνηκότων γοηταῖς τισὶν ἄγοντας· τῆς αὐτῆς ἐννοίας καὶ τοῦ Αἰσχύλου τὸ δράμα *ψυχαγωγός*, Bekker, *Anec. Graec.* 73. 13.

<sup>6</sup> οἵτινες καθαρμοῖς τισι καὶ γοηταῖς τὰ εἰδῶλα ἐπάγουσί τε καὶ ἐξάγουσιν· οὗς καὶ Λάκωνες μετεπέμψαντο, ἥνίκα τὸ Πανσανίου εἰδῶλον ἐξετάραξε τοὺς προσιόντας τῷ ναῶ τῆς Χαλκιοίκου, Plutarch *ap. Schol. Eur. Alc.* 1128.



case of the raising of Dareios by the spells of the Chorus in the *Persai*. In the *Nekyomanteia* of Lukian<sup>1</sup> and Philostratos' *Life of Apollonios*,<sup>2</sup> both, of course, passages with an exaggerated literary or romantic flavour, the spells or invocations of the sorcerer cleave a way down to Hades or an exit for the ghost. In some cases the ψυχαγωγός is obliged to discover the exact spot at which the ceremonies must be performed, and this will be determined by the behaviour of the sacrificial black sheep.<sup>3</sup> It is a preliminary sub-rite developed in exactly analogous fashion to the preliminary rites of testing the beast of sacrifice.<sup>4</sup>

The ghosts in Homer demand blood before they can speak to Odysseus. To come into real contact with mortal men they need a

<sup>1</sup> Lukian, *Nekyomanteia* 470.

<sup>2</sup> Philostratos, *Vita Apoll.* iv. 16, p. 70, "ἀλλ' οὐχὶ βόθρον," εἶπεν, "Ὀδυσσεύς ὀρυζάμενος, οὐδὲ ἀρνῶν αἵματι ψυχαγωγήσας ἐς διάλεξιν τοῦ Ἀχιλλεύς ἦλθον, ἀλλ' εὐξάμενος, ὅποσα τοῖς ἥρωσιν Ἴνδοί φασιν εὐχεσθαι" κτλ.

<sup>3</sup> ἐπὰν γὰρ ἐς τὰ χωρία ἀφίκωνται ὅθεν ἄγειν ἔστι τὰς ψυχάς, ἃς ποθοῦσιν οἱ δεόμενοι, ἀφικνοῦνται ἔνθα τεθνᾶσιν οἱ ψυχαγωγούμενοι· καὶ οὐχ εὐρίσκουσι παραχρῆμα τὸν χώρον ἀλλὰ ἀνιχνεύουσι τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον. πρόβατον μέλαν παραλαβόντες, εἴτα τοῦ κέρατος τοῦ ἐτέρου λαβόμενοι ἢ τῶν ποδῶν τῶν προσθίων καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ποσὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις στήσαντες περιάγουσι· τὸ δὲ ἔπεται τῇ ἔλξει καὶ μάλα εὐπειθῶς. ὅταν δὲ ἀφίκηται ἔνθα ἐκεῖνος ἢ ἐκείνη κατηνέχθη ἔνταῦθα τὸ πρόβατον ἐκποδῶν ποιήσαντες καὶ κατακρύψαντες σὺν καὶ τισὶ ποικίλαις ἱερουργίαις καὶ ἐπωδαῖς περιηγοῦνται καὶ περιέρχονται αὐτά, καὶ ἀκούουσι λεγόντων καὶ τὰς αἰτίας δι' ἃς μηνίουσι πυθάνονται, Suidas, s.vv. περὶ ψυχαγωγίας.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 194.



draught of life, for the blood is the life. Blood is ever a potent force in magical rites, and, according to Varro, by the addition of blood lekanomancy might be turned into necromancy, and the dead summoned to answer the questions of the inquirer.<sup>1</sup> Now in black magic the more awful the rite, the more powerful it is held to be. Porphyry, for example, evidently believes that more could be learned from the entrails of a human being than from those of an animal.<sup>2</sup> And human sacrifice down through the Middle Ages was the most abhorred feature of the Black Art, and believed to be the most powerful and efficacious of its rites. It is not, therefore, surprising to find the doctrine that human sacrifice is necessary to successful ghost-raising,<sup>3</sup> and Cicero hurling against Vatinius the charge of sacrificing boys for necromantic purposes.<sup>4</sup> It is a piling on of the horrors, a motive which inspires many of the extra-

<sup>1</sup> "Adhibito sanguine etiam inferos perhibet sciscitari et νεκρομαντεῖαν graece dicit vocari," Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, vii. 35; see above, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> Porphyry, *De abst.* ii. 51, οὐκοῦν ὁ τοιοῦτος ἀναιρείτω καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους· ἐπιφαίνεται γὰρ μᾶλλον, ὥς φασίν, τοῖς τούτων σπλάγχνοις τὰ μέλλοντα.

<sup>3</sup> "Sine occisione hominis non fiebat," Servius, *Aen.* vi. 107; cf. id. *Aen.* vi. 149.

<sup>4</sup> "Quae te tanta pravitas mentis tenuerit, qui tantus furor, ut cum inaudita ac nefaria sacra susceperis, cum inferorum animas elicere, cum puerorum extis deos Manes mactare soleas?" Cicero, *In Vat.* 14. See further Philostr. *V. Apoll.* vii. 11, 20, viii. 5, 7, and the references in Fahz, *op. cit.*



vagances of magical ritual, when the most powerful spell for coercing the presence of the dead is held to demand the sacrifice of an unborn babe, ripped untimely from its mother's body.<sup>1</sup> And another theory, which we have already noticed,<sup>2</sup> doubtless assisted to cement the connection of human sacrifice with necromancy, the belief that *in articulo mortis* the spirit of the dying man hovered between the worlds of the living and the dead, and was able to give tidings of the future because it stood on the threshold of the next world. To the instances of this belief already cited may be added the story of Antinous and Hadrian.<sup>3</sup>

The spells and sacrifices of witches and wizards give them power to raise the dead from the tomb, and to learn of the future from the summoned ghosts. In the magical practice of late and post-classical periods an instrument is sometimes provided through which the ghost speaks. The ghost is summoned into a corpse, either that of the victim of the horrid sacrifice or one selected, as in the scene in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, from the graveyard in which the

<sup>1</sup> Lucan, *Pharsalia* vi. 556; Ammianus Marcellinus xxix. 2. 17; *Pap. Par.* vs. 2579.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Dio Cassius lxix. 11. According to Dio, Antinous was a victim of a necromantic sacrifice, and was said by some willingly to have devoted himself to death in the interests of his imperial lover.



incantation takes place. The papyri give directions for calling the spirit into the corpse, and coercing it to reveal the future.<sup>1</sup>

There is yet another mode of divination which must be mentioned in connection with necromancy. The prophet who possesses or is possessed by a familiar, usually an ancestral ghost, is often to be met with in the Lower Culture.<sup>2</sup> Among the Jews, besides the power of summoning spirits enjoyed, for example, by the Witch of Endor, diviners might possess a familiar ghost who speaks through their lips. The words *'ōb* and *yiddē 'oni*, which mean in the first instance the spirit of a deceased person, came to mean him or her that divines by such a spirit. Now the Septuagint translates *sho'ēl 'ōb*, one who consults an *'ōb*, by the word *ἐγγαστρίμυθος*.<sup>3</sup> The *ἐγγαστρίμυθοι* were apparently very common in antiquity. Clement refers to them as one of the principal types of pagan diviner.<sup>4</sup> They were also called Eurykleidai from a notorious Eurykles,<sup>5</sup> sterno-

<sup>1</sup> See Abt, *op. cit.* p. 243; καταδίκῃ δὲ σφαγέντι ἀψάμενος εἰπὲ εἰς τὸ οὗς τοὺς στίχους, καὶ ὅσα θέλεις πάντα σοι ἐρεῖ, *Pap. Par.* 2164. He refers also to the scene in Heliodoros, *Aeth.* vi. 14, p. 176. 2 ff. (Bekker); cf. the scene, Apuleius, *Met.* ii. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Good examples are given by Haddon, *Anth. Essays*, p. 181 (Torres Straits), or Weeks, *J.A.I.* xl. p. 369 (Upper Congo).

<sup>3</sup> Witton Davies, *op. cit.* pp. 86-89.

<sup>4</sup> Clem. Alex. *Protrept.* i. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Aristophanes, *Wasps* 1019, with Scholia, Photius, *Bib.* 94,



manteis, and Pythones. Πύθων, like the Hebrew 'ōb, could mean equally the divining spirit or the diviner whom it possessed.<sup>1</sup> The familiar spirit which St. Paul cast out of the girl at Philippi is called πνεῦμα πύθωνα.<sup>2</sup> These diviners belong, of course, to the lowest grade of the profession, and were evidently for the most part ventriloquist quacks who drove a despised but perhaps profitable trade among the vulgar. So far as the nature of their familiar spirit is defined, it seems probable that it was supposed to be the ghost of a deceased person, though one would not look for clear definition or consistence of theory in this lowly branch of the art of divination. In most passages where they are mentioned they occur in close juxtaposition to the necromancers, and Philochoros evidently connected them with the art of divining by the dead.<sup>3</sup> In the Byzantine period diviners of this character appear to have retained their popularity, and they are said by Psellus, that expert in the ranks and categories of devils, to be possessed by the subterranean kinds of devil.<sup>4</sup>

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Bekker, p. 75, 241 R, who gives the name of Sakchouras, a Babylonian counterpart to Eurykles.

<sup>1</sup> Hesychios, s.v. πύθων ; Suidas, s.v. ἐγγαστρίμυθος.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Suidas, *loc. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Psellus, *De op. daem.* (Gaulminus), G 111, p. 55.



## CHAPTER XII

### AUGURY

Mirum unde, sed olim  
Hic honor alitibus, superae seu conditor aulae  
Sic dedit effusum chaos in nova semina texens,  
Seu quia mutatae nostraque ab origine versis  
Corporibus subiere notos, seu purior axis  
Amotumque nefas et rarum insistere terris  
Vera docent ; tibi, summe sator terraeque deumque,  
Scire licet.<sup>1</sup>

DIVINATION from the cries or movements of birds was widely practised in the Mediterranean area. Cicero mentions Phrygians, Pisidians, Cilicians, and Arabs,<sup>2</sup> and indeed in Arabia in Mahomet's time the art merited the prophet's censure. It is practised also by many savage peoples, and it may as well have originated independently among Greeks and Etruscans as have been learned or borrowed from an alien people. The differences in the

<sup>1</sup> Statius, *Theb.* iii. 482.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 41 (92).



various systems<sup>1</sup> would seem to support the hypothesis of their independent origin.

Flight and song, the objects of the augur's attention, give to birds a distinctive isolation in the animal kingdom. They seem markedly to attract the notice of primitive man. When a Melanesian founds a new society he gives it the name of "any object which may strike his fancy"; such associations, our author has previously noticed, are usually, as a matter of fact, named after birds.<sup>2</sup> One finds, too, that while in the matter of clans, totems, crests, etc., birds stand in the same kind of position as the rest of the animal world, they tend at the same time to be considered the most remarkable species within that genus.<sup>3</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the cry or flight of birds attracts the attention of primitive man and is regarded by him as ominous. He is terrified by the doleful hoot of the owl, or finds a suggestion of victory in the fierce swoop of the hawk.<sup>4</sup> In a fashion exactly analogous to the processes we have discussed,<sup>5</sup> the observation

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *op. cit.* ii. 36 (76).

<sup>2</sup> Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the tribes of the San Francisco district, Merriam, "Totemism in California," *American Anthropologist*, N.S. x. p. 561, or Melanesians of Papua, Seligmann, *op. cit.* p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> See Tylor, *Prim. Cult.*<sup>2</sup> i. pp. 119-120; Clodd, *Folklore*, vi. p. 64.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 164 foll.



of the omens given by birds will under favourable circumstances develop into a systematic science of divination. And the variety of their cries, and the facility of observing their flight and its orientation, will naturally assist the development of what becomes quite an elaborate science with countless rules and conflicting interests to be balanced.<sup>1</sup> The bird-lore of the Etruscan seers may almost compare in complexity with the science of extispication.

In Greece the meaning of the word *οἰωνός* bears witness to the importance which augury must have assumed in the early stages of divination. "You call every kind of omen a bird, we are your true mantic Apollo," claim the birds of Nephelokokkygia.<sup>2</sup> Hesiod's happy man is he who can divine by birds.<sup>3</sup> But, as a matter of fact, augury is of real importance only at the beginning and end of the history of Greek religion. In the "heroic" age it is practised by

<sup>1</sup> See Servius, *Aen.* i. 393. In the dispute between Romulus and Remus the rival claims of priority and quantity have to be adjusted, Val. Max. (*De auspicio*) i. 4.

<sup>2</sup> ὄρνιν τε νομίζετε πάνθ' ὅσα περ περὶ μαντείας διακρίνει·  
φήμη γ' ὑμῖν ὄρνις ἐστί, πταρμόν τ' ὄρνιθα καλεῖτε,  
ξύμβολον ὄρνιν, φωνήν ὄρνιν, θεράποντ' ὄρνιν, ὄνον ὄρνιν.  
ἄρ' οὐ φανερώς ἡμεῖς ὑμῖν ἐσμεν μαντεῖος Ἀπόλλων;

Aristoph. *Birds* 719; cf. Euripides, *Helena* 1051.

<sup>3</sup> Hesiod, *Op. et Di.* 826-828—

τάων εὐδαίμων τε καὶ ὀλβιος, ὃς τάδε πάντα  
εἰδὼς ἐργάζεται ἀναίτιος ἀθανάτοισιν  
ὄρνιθας κρίνων καὶ ὑπερβασίας ἀλεείνων.



the mythical heroes and seers, Teiresias, Melampus, and the like; it comes into fashion again with the spread of Pythagoreanism,<sup>1</sup> and that new development of Greek religious philosophy which was definitely a cast back to the primitive ideas of the lower stratum. Regarded merely as signs or indications exhibited by the Olympian gods, birds could not maintain their pre-eminent position against the encroachments of divination by entrails. Augury itself, as it was practised in the golden age of classical antiquity, appears to have taken on something of the colour of a sub-rite of sacrifice, if M. Bouché Leclerq is right in his explanation of the augural pre-eminence of carnivorous birds.<sup>2</sup> But alike in the dim past reflected by myth and in the age of Apollonios of Tyana augury is represented less as an hieratic art than as a magical power of understanding the language of birds,<sup>3</sup> a power which might be obtained in a mode readily intelligible to the Lower Culture—union by eating.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouché Leclerq, *op. cit.* i. p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* i. p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> καίτοι εἰ δεῖ πιστεύειν τοῖς παλαιοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἐφ' ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν πατέρων γεγονόσιν, εἰσὶν οἱ λέγονται ἐπακοῦσαι καὶ σύνεσιν ἔχειν τῆς τῶν ζώων φθέγγεως· ὥς ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν παλαιῶν ὁ Μελάμπους καὶ ὁ Τειρεσίας καὶ οἱ τοιοῦτοι, οὐ πρὸ πολλοῦ δὲ Ἀπολλώνιος ὁ Τυανεύς, Porphyry, *De abst.* iii. 3. Cf. *ib.* iii. 4; Philostratos, *Vit. Apoll.* i. 20, 21. Pythagoras used to converse with his eagle, Amm. Marc. xxii. 16. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Porphyry, *De abst.* ii. 48.



This magical power of understanding bird talk is regularly the way in which the seers of the myths obtain their information. Cassandra and Helenos,<sup>1</sup> Melampus,<sup>2</sup> Mopsos,<sup>3</sup> and Teiresias<sup>4</sup> possessed the gift; and it is usually obtained through the gratitude of snakes who lick the ears of the future prophet, and thereby endow him with the power of understanding.

This episode reminds us that the type of story with which we are dealing is not merely Greek but European. A great many heroes of European *Märchen* understand bird talk, and many again obtain the power in the same way that Melampus did.<sup>5</sup> And not only are there traces of the assumption of bird form by the old gods and goddesses of the North, but count-

<sup>1</sup> Tzetzes, *Arg. ad Lykophron*.

<sup>2</sup> Apollodoros i. 9. 11. 3; i. 9. 12. 6; Pliny, *N.H.* x. 49 (70). 136.

<sup>3</sup> Clem. Alex. *Strom.* i. 133.

<sup>4</sup> Pherekydes *ap.* Apollodoros iii. 6. 7. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology* (trans. Stallybrass), ii. p. 672; *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Nos. 6, 17; Preller, *Gr. Myth.*<sup>3</sup> ii. p. 473; cf. Stewart, *Superstitions of the Highlanders*, pp. 78-83; March, "The Mythology of Wise Birds," *J.A.I.* xxvii. p. 201 foll. Perhaps through their power of aerial locomotion, birds have everywhere in folklore a knowledge of everything. In classical mythology they sometimes inform even gods of events of which they were ignorant, e.g. Ovid, *Met.* ii. 531-632; Apuleius, *Met.* v. 28. Among the Klephts *πουλί* meant a spy. In folklore birds are acquainted with the knowledge of buried treasure and magic herbs; see Swainson, *Folklore of British Birds*, pp. 101-107; Aristophanes, *Birds* 559, 654; Arist. *De mir. ausc.* 87. Hence the play on *ἐποψ* and *ἐπόπτῃς*, Aischylos, *fr.* 297; Aristoph. *Birds* 45.



less indications exist in folklore of the magical powers of the bird. "Wenn du ein Vöglein siehst, so zeuch deinen Hut und sage: Glück zu!" said Luther.<sup>1</sup> And through the Teutonic English of his translator, Grimm bears witness for Northern Europe. "With birds the men of old lived on still more intimate terms, and their greater nimbleness seemed to bespeak more of the spiritual than was in quadrupeds."<sup>2</sup> The remarks which follow on the ritual feeding of birds afford a striking parallel to Sir Arthur Evans's explanation of the scene on a pyxis from Knossos.<sup>3</sup>

From different points of view Sir Arthur Evans,<sup>4</sup> Miss Harrison,<sup>5</sup> and August Fick<sup>6</sup> have all made suggestions as to the existence of bird cults or bird gods in the early religion of the Aegean basin. It is a line of investigation which will naturally claim the attention of anyone whose business lies with Picus, the king who was metamorphosed into a woodpecker or the mantis who kept a woodpecker, and the dove priestesses of Dodona. It is the

<sup>1</sup> Hopf, *Thierorakel und Orakelthiere*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Grimm, *Teut. Myth.* (Stallybrass) ii. p. 669.

<sup>3</sup> *J.H.S.* xxi. pp. 103-104.

<sup>4</sup> *J.H.S.* xxi. p. 99 foll.

<sup>5</sup> *Congress of Religions*, ii. p. 154 foll.

<sup>6</sup> *Vorgriechische Ortsnamen* and *Die Hattiden und Danubier in Griechenland*.



kind of problem, however, in which the negative aspect of comparative evidence carries more weight than what may prove to be chance coincidences, and the result of a very fairly systematic search has increased my doubts as to the existence of bird gods or bird cults in early Greek or pre-Hellenic history. The principal arguments for their existence rest (1) on the interpretation of certain monuments; (2) on a somewhat serious treatment of Aristophanes' *Birds*, backed by the citation of myths of metamorphosed deities and the contention that certain magical properties of birds in folklore are to be interpreted as survivals of an earlier divinity (a line of argument anticipated by Grimm and Mannhardt); (3) on the occurrence of bird-names among the heroes of Greek legends, and in one case the association of a cult practice with a series of stories whose chief characters have bird names or are metamorphosed into birds. There are, however, several considerations which suggest that the results of these lines of investigation should be received with great caution. In the first place, archaeology without the assistance of contemporary literary record must leave us in the dark on just the essential details. For example, the Kretan remains show us that birds and pillars play a



part in some religious ceremonies, but whether birds are the objects of cult or not, there is to my mind no satisfactory indication.<sup>1</sup> All the interpretations of the birds on the Agia Triádha sarcophagus are pure hypotheses, however plausible. Again, the argument that bird superstitions point to bird cults, of which they are degenerate survivals, rests on a postulate which is far from secure. In Europe Grimm was feeling back in precisely the same way through folklore to supposed cults of a remote past. My experience, however, has been that while in many lands a plausible case might be made out on the degeneration theory for the previous existence of bird cults, examples of the actual existence of such cults are extremely difficult to find. And further, it by no means follows that because a bird has what we may call a magical status that it is therefore the object of a cult. For example, among the Haida the raven plays a great part in the mythology and cosmogony of the people; ravens have certain magical powers, and people will sometimes leave food for a raven on the beach, but Mr. Swanton was quite definitely told that men did not sacrifice or pray to the raven "because it stole too much as it was."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am glad to find confirmation of my scepticism in Farnell, *Greece and Babylon*, p. 69 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton, "The Haida," *Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, v. 1, p. 28.



Similarly, it is surprisingly seldom that the eagle, despite its sanctity and its position in magical and religious ritual throughout the native tribes of North America, develops into the object of a definite cult. I know of one example only in which omen birds develop into a god who sometimes assumes bird shape.

The Kenyahs of Sarawak offer eggs to omen birds; the hawk Balli Flaki is a spirit and the messenger of Balli Penyalong who lives in the sky. It would appear that the conception of an universal is not clearly developed, and every individual hawk is Balli Flaki. Among their neighbours the Kayans, Laki Noho, the brown hawk, is a single power who manifests himself in every particular brown hawk. The Sea Dyaks or Ibans carry the development farther. Balli Flaki has become the material animal form of Singalong Burong, the god of war, who is thought of as a single human being living in a house. With this increasing centralisation the virtue has departed out of individual hawks. The omen birds are merely the servants or signs of Singalong Burong, just as the raven and hawk are servants of Apollo. And of this god we are told that he used to come to his feast in person like a man,



and fly away as a hawk.<sup>1</sup> This naturally suggests classical parallels :

ὥς ἄρα φωνήσας' ἀπέβη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη  
φήνη εἰδομένη· θάμβος δ' ἔλε πάντας ἰδόντας.<sup>2</sup>

Compare the epiphany of Athene and Apollo as vultures:

καὶ δ' ἄρ' Ἀθηναίη τε καὶ ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων  
ἔξέσθην ὄρνισιν εἰκότες αἰγυπιοῖσι  
φηγῶ ἐφ' ὑψηλῇ πατρὸς Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο  
ἀνδράσι τερπόμενοι.<sup>3</sup>

The Messenian seer saw the Dioscuri—offspring it will be remembered of Leda and the Swan—perched in a tree.<sup>4</sup> And there are, of course, the numerous amours of Zeus in bird form. Further, it may be suggested with Aristophanes that the bird adjuncts of Greek deities are traces of the supersession of Greek gods.

ὁ δὲ δεινότατόν γ' ἐστὶν ἀπάντων, ὁ Ζεὺς γὰρ ὁ νῦν  
βασιλεύων  
αἰετὸν ὄρνιν ἔστηκεν ἔχων ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς βασιλεὺς ὢν,  
ἣ δ' αὖ θυγάτηρ γλαῦχ', ὁ δ' Ἀπόλλων ὥσπερ θεράπων  
ἰέρακα.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hose and M'Dougall, *J.A.I.* xxxi. 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Odyssey* iii. 371; *Iliad* v. 778 αἱ δὲ βάτην τρήρωσι πελειάσιν ἰθμαθ' ὁμοῖαι; Aristoph. *Birds* 575; *Hom. Hymn. Del. Ap.* 114; cf. *Iliad* xv. 237, xviii. 616, xix. 350.

<sup>3</sup> *Iliad* vii. 59. Cf. Sleep perching as a bird on the pine-tree, *Iliad* xiv. 289. But Sleep falls naturally rather into the class of bird spirits, such as Muses, Sirens, and the like, than into that of bird divinities. The Sleep Bird is known also to Haida mythology, Swanton, *J.N.P.E.* v. 1, p. 216, *Masset Stories*, No. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Pausanias iv. 16. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Aristophanes, *Birds* 514.



Grimm suggests that Zywie, the Slav deity, and Zeus were both once cuckoo deities,<sup>1</sup> and that in Norse mythology the existence of bird divinities is reflected in stories of how gods and giants put on an eagle's coat and goddesses the skin of a falcon.<sup>2</sup>

Now it is true that there are one or two possible references to classical cults of divinities in bird form. Athene Aithyia of the Megarid is figured on a Korinthian aryballos as a human-headed bird.<sup>3</sup> In Attika there was an Artemis Kolainis,<sup>4</sup> and in Messenia a cult of Apollo the Crested Lark founded by Kolainos.<sup>5</sup> But nevertheless it is, I believe, impossible to adopt with any sense of security the line taken up by Grimm, or the arguments based on Aristophanes' jesting. The Sarawak parallel falls pat, but it is the only one which I have been able to find. The general tendency does not seem to lie in the direction of the development of bird cults, and to judge by analogies it by no means follows that the

<sup>1</sup> Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, ii. p. 680.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* ii. p. 669.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. i. 5. 3, 41. 6; Hesychios s.v. *ἐν δ' Αἰθυῖα*; Lykophron 359; Mayer, "Megarische Sagen," *Hermes*, xxvii. (1892) p. 480 foll.; Welcker, *Alt. Denk.* iii. Taf. vi.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Aristoph. *Birds* 872; Paus. i. 31. 4; *C.I.A.* ii. 575, iii. 216-275.

<sup>5</sup> Paus. iv. 34. 4. There is further an Apollo *Γυπαεὺς* at Ephesos and Athena *Ἀήδων* in Pamphylia.



epiphany of deities or spirits in bird form is necessarily a degenerate survival of the worship of birds.

As far as my anthropological investigations go, the evidence for the existence of bird gods is slight. Spiritual beings, muses, sirens, or the souls of the dead, seem generally to display a tendency towards the adoption of a bird form among other peoples besides the Greeks. Birds are associated with culture heroes,<sup>1</sup> and they figure largely in the mythology of Europe as well as in the cosmogonies of America in stories which deal with the acquisition of fire or water. In weather magic they are of high importance; their cries are magic songs; their feathers may conjure snow or rain clouds; the imitation of water fowl will bring rain. In shamanism birds play a distinguished part. The shaman often flies to attain his magic ends<sup>2</sup> in bird form, or sends birds as emissaries to perform his will.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> The association of birds and twins, Dioscuri, Molionids, etc., is noticed in Miss Harrison's paper. These twins, though our knowledge of them is sadly scanty, seem to have the same kind of status as the Thunder Boys, familiar figures in American Indian mythologies, and to be culture heroes rather than gods.

<sup>2</sup> A picture of a shaman ceremonially dressed as a bird, Swanton, *J.N.P.E.* v. 1, p. 41, Fig. 1. The soul of Aristeas of Prokonnesos was seen to fly out of his mouth in likeness of a raven, Pliny, *N.H.* vii. 52 (53). 173.

<sup>3</sup> In a Haida story a shaman uses a wooden bird to fly into people



associations of birds are always with the magic which controls the natural elements, with nature spirits, with culture heroes, with shamans or with kings rather than with "High Gods."

The connection of birds with the weather is not difficult to understand. Where calendars are not invented, the seasons are marked by the recurrence of natural phenomena, particularly by the advent of migratory birds. The swallow arrives at the beginning of spring; unsophisticated man believes that it brings the spring. Seasonal songs about the coming of birds are familiar in the folklore of modern Europe as in that of antiquity. The Pima have a song beginning—

Now the Swallow begins his singing (*bis*),  
And the women who are with me,  
The poor women begin to sing,<sup>1</sup>

which reminds us of the Rhodian swallow song.<sup>2</sup>

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and cause disease, Swanton, *J.N.P.E.* v. 1, p. 242 (Kaigani, No. 6). Similarly an African magician projects his mana in the form of a bird which enters his enemy's vitals, Miss Kingsley, *W. African Studies*,<sup>2</sup> pp. 210, 216.

<sup>1</sup> Russell, *A.R.A.B.E.* xxvi. p. 292 foll. It is described as "Song for fiestas that is accompanied by dancing"; the subject matter is concerned with black swallows and feathers which are clouds.

<sup>2</sup> Bergk, *P. Lyr.* iii. 671; cf. Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusai* 1, and Aristoph. (Dindorf) *Frag.* 499; Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* i. 6, 1098, and the scene depicted on the vase, *Monumenti dell' Inst.* ii. Pl. xxiv., *ἰδοὺ χελιδὼν κτλ.*



And if birds bring the seasons, on the same kind of ground they are held to bring the weather. Their actions, or in some cases the fancied meaning of their cries,<sup>1</sup> portend rain or drought.

Cras foliis nemus  
Multis et alga litus inutili  
Demissa tempestas ab Euro  
Sternet, aquae nisi fallit augur  
Annosa cornix.<sup>2</sup>

It is hardly necessary to illustrate from Hesiod or the *Georgics* the familiar fact that the behaviour of birds is an indication of the weather. But to early man or to the uneducated peasant birds are more than prophets, they cause the weather which follows their antics or cries. The natural phenomena are thought to be *propter hoc* not *post hoc*.

ἦν οὖν ἡμᾶς νομίσητε θεούς,  
ἔξετε χρῆσθαι μάντεσι Μούσαις  
αὔραις ὥραις χειμῶνι θέρει  
μετρίῳ πνίγει.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To attribute a meaning to the cry of birds is a task to which the fancy or superstition of man has always readily applied itself. For the *Giessvogel* type of story see below, p. 263.

<sup>2</sup> Horace, *Carm.* iii. 17; cf. Vergil, *Georg.* i. 388; Aelian, *N.A.* 77; Theophrastos ii. 1. 16; and the references given, Thompson, *Glossary of Greek Birds*, p. 94. It is perhaps as bringer of the rain that the crow became honoured by the practice of *κορωνίσματα* (Hesychius, s.v. *κορωνισται*). If so, the invocation at Greek weddings of the crow (see references, Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 94), who brings rain and therefore fertility, is perhaps intelligible.

<sup>3</sup> Aristophanes, *Birds* 723.



The phenomena of migration are further responsible for two curious superstitions which deserve mention. The migratory bird disappears at a certain time of year, and naturally the question arises as to what has become of it. One answer which is frequently supplied is that it has turned into something else. The confusion of species which is so marked a feature of classical bird-lore is due partly, of course, to mere faulty classification — Aëtos is just a generic term for all the larger birds of prey<sup>1</sup>—but partly no doubt to a misunderstanding of the facts of migration. The cuckoo has disappeared, and its absence is explained by supposing that it has turned into a hawk.

And the solution is no more ridiculous than the superstition of kindred origin that the migratory bird is hibernating. Carew in his *Survey of Cornwall* quotes Olaus Magnus: "For he saith that in the north parts of the

<sup>1</sup> Vulture, eagle, hawk were practically synonymous, and even many of the larger sea birds were loosely thought of as eagles. When the natural historians begin their classification, starting from the popular notions, they are driven to all kinds of absurdities. The haliaetos is a bastard kind of eagle, ἐξ ἀλιαέτων φήγη γίνεται, ἐκ δὲ τούτων περκνοὶ καὶ γῦπες, Aristot. *De mirab.* 60, 835 a; cf. Pliny, *N.H.* x. 3. 6-11, 8 (9). 21. In modern Greece the average peasant divides all birds which he does not eat into two classes; the larger ones are hawks and the smaller are "the little birds, God knows what"! Lawson, *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*, p. 234.



world, as soon as summer weareth out, they clap mouth to mouth, wing to wing, and legge to legge, and so, after a sweet singing fall downe into certain lakes or pools amongst the caves from whence at the next spring they receive a new resurrection."<sup>1</sup> Similarly the birds in Pontus were supposed to hibernate.<sup>2</sup> Often the birds are thought to hibernate in logs and trees, from which they are liberated by the burning of the log at a winter or spring festival.<sup>3</sup> In Mexico a bird, who was the spirit of summer warmth, was said to hibernate.<sup>4</sup> Once more birds are seen to play a part in the magical recall of spring and summer.

It is partly in connection with their function as signs of the seasons that birds become connected with the stars.

εὖτ' ἂν δ' ἐξήκοντα μετὰ τροπὰς ἡελίοιο  
χειμέρι' ἐκτελέσῃ Ζεὺς ἡματα, δὴ ῥα τότ' ἀστήρ  
'Αρκτοῦρος προλιπὼν ἱερὸν ῥόον Ὠκεανοῖο  
πρῶτον παμφαίνων ἐπιτέλλεται ἀκροκνέφαιος  
τὸν δὲ μετ', ὀρθρογόῃ Πανδιονὶς ὦρτο χελιδὼν  
εἰς φάος ἀνθρώποις, ἔαρος νέον ἱσταμένοιο.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hunt, *Drolls and Romances of the West of England*, 2nd series, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *De mir. ausc.* 64.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Towdenack Cuckoo Feast.

<sup>4</sup> Preuss, *Globus*, 86, p. 323. In the skin of this bird Uitzilopochtli was clothed.

<sup>5</sup> Hesiod, *Op. et Di.* 562. It is perhaps worth calling the attention



The reason that the Pleiads become *πελειάδες*, an identification at least as early as Aischylos,<sup>1</sup> is in part the fact that both are weather signs.

ὧς δ' αὖτως τρήρωσι πελειάσιν ὥπασε τιμήν,  
αἱ δὲ τοι θέρεος καὶ χείματος ἄγγελοι εἰσίν.<sup>2</sup>

In part bad etymology, such as that which made the Hyads, the stars of rain, into swine fleeing before Orion, helps these identifications. Again, the mere fact that birds fly high up in the heavens has something to do with the belief that stars are a kind of bird or that birds are connected with stars.

ὦ πταναὶ δολιχαύχενες  
σύννομοι νεφέων δρόμον,  
βᾶτε Πλειάδας ὑπὸ μέσας  
Ὠρίωνά τ' ἐννύχιον.<sup>3</sup>

The Cherokees know that stars are birds "because one fell down, and some Cherokees who looked for it found a little bird, about the size of a chicken, just hatched where it fell."<sup>4</sup>

of those who lean towards "mystical" interpretations to the fact that equally the snail is coupled with the stars a few lines farther on.

ἀλλ' ὅπῳτ' ἂν φερέοικος ἀπὸ χθονὸς ἄμ φυτὰ βαίνη,  
Πληϊάδας φεύγων, τότε δὴ σκάφος οὐκέτι οἰνέων,

Hesiod, *Op. et Di.* 571. Here at least they will hardly claim an esoteric connection between snails and stars!

<sup>1</sup> Aischylos, *Frag.* 298 (Dind.) ἔχουσι μορφὰς ἄπτεροι Πελειάδες.

<sup>2</sup> Moira *ap.* Athenaeum xi. 491 c.

<sup>3</sup> Euripides, *Helena* 1487.

<sup>4</sup> Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokees*, p. 442.



There is nothing mystical behind these associations, and it is well to be very careful to avoid the gratuitous anachronism of attributing the refinements of astrological folly to an early age. It must never be forgotten that the mythographers, from whom much of our information is derived, colour the association of birds and stars with their own religious philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Professor D'Arcy Thompson evidently leans towards the explanation of Hyginus and the Pseudo-Eratosthenes that the story of Apollo and the raven, who was sent to fetch water, has its origin in the juxtaposition of the constellations Corvus and Crater guarded by Hydra.<sup>2</sup> It is a good instance of the dangers which beset this line of interpretation. The story in question has nothing to do with stars, but forms one of the group of legends about water-seeking birds of which the tale of the *Giessvogel* and the *Lord Jesus* may be taken as a type.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the theory which explains the appearance on coin types not only of birds but of all animals

<sup>1</sup> The increasing popularity of astrology is the reason why so many of the later mythographers write *Katasterismoi* and explains the popularity of Aratos' work right through the Middle Ages.

<sup>2</sup> See Thompson, *Glossary*, s.v. κόραξ.

<sup>3</sup> Grimm, *Teut. Myth.* ii. pp. 673-674. Forms of this story, which explain why it is that certain birds call for rain, are to be found in almost every European country, in Russia and the Balkan group.



and some plants as due to their being symbols of constellations is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the view that likes to read symbolic meanings and the worship of the stars into the vestiges of early Greek religion.<sup>1</sup>

Birds, then, are not frequently the object of cults or recognised as gods ; they are, however, closely associated with culture heroes ; they are credited with the power of causing the seasons ; in weather magic they are of great importance ; and in mythology they figure in legends concerned with the possession or acquisition by man of fire or water. We turn, then, to the bird-named kings and heroes of Greek mythology, of whom I have given a rough list in the Appendix. So far as the list goes, one notices in the genealogies with which they are connected the frequent recurrence of solar names. But of course it must be admitted that the whole mass of evidence is of a very unsatisfactory kind. Much of it is preserved in very late, uncritical, and often unscrupulous compilers ; almost all has been systematised and distorted by Alexandrians. Far the most important appears to be the first group of names, to which Fick first drew attention, for

<sup>1</sup> Svoronos, " Sur la signification des types monétaires des anciens," *B.C.H.* xviii.



here the legends definitely link up with a cult practice of throwing a feathered man into the sea. In the stories it is sometimes a king or princess who is metamorphosed by being thrown into the sea. One thinks naturally of the weather-making kings of Professor Frazer and Mr. Cook, and is tempted to regard Picus as a medicine-man, who perhaps assumed the mask or dress, as many shamans do, of a bird. Picus was a king whom Circe turned into a woodpecker because he loved Pomona or Canens. After his metamorphosis he became oracular. He is described by Vergil as dressed in the *trabea* of an augur, holding in his right hand the *lituus*, alike the sceptre of royalty and the wand of magic, the *ancile* in his left. The more rationalistic commentator suggests that he was a mantis who kept a tame woodpecker, from which he learned the future.<sup>1</sup> This brings us to Dionysios of Halikarnassos, who alleges that at Matiene there was an aboriginal oracle of Mars exactly analogous to that at Dodona, except that the doves gave answer from the oak and the woodpecker from a wooden pillar.<sup>2</sup> At Dodona similarly "doves"

<sup>1</sup> Vergil, *Aeneid* vii. 187 foll., with Servius; Ovid, *Met.* xiv. 320; Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 21; Pliny, *N.H.* x. 18. The equation of Picus and Kretan Zeus, given, for instance, by Suidas s.v. Πῆκος, is, of course, pure Christian chronography.

<sup>2</sup> Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* i. 14. 5.



were said to give oracular responses. Unfortunately the procedure at Dodona was only a tradition for the classical authors who have given us an account of it. But such as it is tradition undoubtedly represents the Peleiai as actually giving the responses. It is true that the oak of Zeus was also said to give replies,<sup>1</sup> but if either method of divination was subordinate to the other, the balance of the evidence must lie on the side of the doves. In many passages the tree is almost neglected: "nam in Epiro dicitur nemus fuisse in quo responsa dabant columbae."<sup>2</sup> And it was the fact that the doves gave the oracles that puzzled ancient no less than modern historians of the early age of Greece. Herodotos, having to hand the theory of Egyptian origin, which was so popular in the fifth century B.C., and combining it with the familiar metaphor of the "bird-like" talk of foreigners, explains the doves as Egyptian priestesses.<sup>3</sup> Strabo says that at first, as Homer tells us, men were the prophets: ὕστερον δ' ἀπεδείχθησαν τρεῖς γραῖαι, ἐπειδὴ καὶ σύνναος τῷ Διὶ προσαπεδείχθη καὶ ἡ Διώνη.<sup>4</sup> In Thesprotian and Molossian dialect

<sup>1</sup> Thus a fragment of the oak prophesies to the Argonauts, Ap. Rhod. i. 526 with Schol., Apollod. i. 9. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Servius, *Ec.* ix. 13; Bode, *Mythog.* i. 96.

<sup>3</sup> Herod. ii. 54 foll.

<sup>4</sup> Strabo vi. 329.



γραῖαι are called πελῖαι and γέροντες πελίοι.<sup>1</sup> Servius says that in Thessaly "Peliades et columbae et vaticinatrices vocantur."<sup>2</sup> Robertson Smith put forward an ingenious theory. The Arabic soothsayers deliver their oracles in a crooning voice. The doves were so called not because they were foreigners, as Herodotos thought, but because oracular elocution consisted of cooing speech. He compares Deborah, "the Bee," with the Melissai who appear as Greek priestesses.<sup>3</sup> The question of Melissai need not here detain us. I would only suggest that the "bee priestesses" were not always oracular, and it seems to me a little doubtful if it is primarily *in her capacity as prophet* that the Pythia is called "bee."<sup>4</sup> As regards the doves two criticisms may be passed on his method. He assumes (p. 118) that the Peleiades and Pythia were the interpreters of the oracles. The Pythia at any rate certainly was not. Secondly, the possibility that they were doves is rejected by Robertson Smith because he cannot find corroborative

<sup>1</sup> Fragments of Strabo vi. 1a and 2 (Teubner, ii. p. 453).

<sup>2</sup> Servius, *Ec.* ix. 13; Bode, *Mythog.* i. 96.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal of Philology*, xiv. Forms of divination in Deut. xviii. 10, 11, part ii.

<sup>4</sup> Frazer's note *ad* Paus. viii. 13. I gives reference for the "bee" Pythia, bee priestesses of Demeter, Persephone, and the Great Mother, and the Essenes of Ephesian Artemis.



evidence of totemism. With the possible exception of an eminent French savant, no one now believes that, wherever a trace of a connection of cult with bird, beast, or fish is found, the solution must be *aut totemism aut nihil*.

The real difficulty in the whole matter is the fact that antiquity was as much in the dark about the actual procedure at these oracles as we are. We are building hypotheses with their hypotheses for foundation. But as the tradition stands, the most plausible explanation of Picus and the doves seems to me the supposition that an official wearing some kind of bird dress in each case gave the responses. And the connection of birds with weather-magic may not be unconnected with the kings and medicine-men of myth who bear bird names. While much of augury developed simply from omen observation, another element in its importance in the mythical period may have been supplied by the connection of birds with weather magic, by the belief in magicians who understood the speech of birds, and possibly by the existence of shamans who bore bird names and dressed as birds.

The augury of the historical Greek period seems to have been a science developed in the



same fashion as the sciences of *παλμικόν* or extispication, from the necessity of calling in experts to decide the true significance of an omen and the natural tendency of an art to emerge when a profession of interpreters is created. The Romans distinguished the science of augury from the chance occurrence of an omen given by a bird: "augurium petitur et certis avibus ostenditur, auspiciū qualibet avi demonstratur et non petitur."<sup>1</sup> The former is the science of the professional who retires to his observatory and deduces from the signs he observes the course of the future, or examines the messages of the gods which are vouchsafed at the solemn moment of sacrifice. Possibly there was such an observatory at the temple of Skiradian Athena,<sup>2</sup> and there seems to have been an "observatory of Teiresias" at Thebes.<sup>3</sup> The species of birds visible, their number, the orientation of their flight, its direction and even its detailed movements, claimed the attention of the diviner as well as their cries.<sup>4</sup> The principal birds, which were of importance in

<sup>1</sup> Servius, *Aen.* i. 398.

<sup>2</sup> Hesychios, s.v. *Σκιρόμαντις*; Photius, s.v. *Σκίρον*.

<sup>3</sup> Pausanias ix. 16. 1.

<sup>4</sup> We have as a matter of fact but little evidence directly from Greek sources. An inscription containing some of the rules for interpretation has been found at Ephesos, *C.I.G.* 2953.



the art, are the raven,<sup>1</sup> crow,<sup>2</sup> heron,<sup>3</sup> wren,<sup>4</sup> woodpecker,<sup>5</sup> dove,<sup>6</sup> hoopoe,<sup>7</sup> kingfisher,<sup>8</sup> and all birds of the hawk, eagle, or vulture kind which the ancients habitually classed together.<sup>9</sup> Greek augury apparently did not divide its field of vision into a *templum*, but took account merely of the right and left of the augur who stood facing north.

But indeed we know very little about the Greek science of divining from birds. Almost all the cases which occur in Homer are simply portents, and, despite the significant testimony of the word *οἰωνός*, in the historical period augury is one of the least important of the modes of divination. "La science augurale des Tirésias et des Calchas était déjà une science morte pour les anciens historiens eux-mêmes."<sup>10</sup> And when the learned Bouché Leclerq turns to the discussion of the Greek system his authorities for its classification are

<sup>1</sup> Aelian, *N.A.* i. 48; Fulgentius, *Mit.* i. 13; Bode, *Mythog.* i. 115, ii. 22; Pliny, *N.H.* x. 12, 15; Porphyry, *De abst.* ii. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero, *De div.* i. 39 (85).

<sup>3</sup> Plutarch, *Mor.* 405 D; Pausanias x. 29. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Plutarch, *Mor.* 405 D.

<sup>5</sup> See references for Picus, p. 265, and Pliny, *N.H.* x. 18.

<sup>6</sup> Servius, *Ec.* ix. 13.

<sup>7</sup> *Exc. Graec. Bart. Chron. Min.* (Frick) p. 239.

<sup>8</sup> Clem. Alex. *Strom.* i. 133.

<sup>9</sup> See D'Arcy Thompson's *Glossary of Greek Birds*.

<sup>10</sup> Bouché Leclerq, *op. cit.* i. p. 142.



Synesius and Michael Psellus! The revival of augury with the spread of Pythagoreanism drew, as might be expected, from many sources; besides the Etruscan and Greek systems, exotic disciplines from Arabia and elsewhere contributed to the art. Perhaps the most interesting historical record of an authentic case of divination from birds is an adventure narrated by Appian of his experiences in the Jewish war, probably that of 115 A.D., with an Arab guide. He was fleeing to a certain river where a boat was waiting to take him to Pelusium. A crow was heard and the guide said, "We have lost our way"; it croaked a second time, and signified that they were far out of their reckoning; a third croak restored the good spirits of the Arab, for it indicated that the mistake was to their advantage. And so indeed it proved, for they hit unexpectedly on another river in which they found a trireme which took Appian safely to Pelusium, and he learned afterwards that the boat which he had intended to reach had been captured by the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Fragment inédit d'Appian," *Revue Archéologique*, N.S., 1869, xix. pp. 102-110.



## CONCLUSION

WE have now surveyed the principal methods of Greek divination, and considered suggestions as to their origin and development. In general they may be grouped under two headings according as their affinity reveals itself on the one hand to a positive magic, or on the other hand to the interest aroused by unusual happenings and the increased sensitiveness to impressions of the normal man on unusual occasions. In both cases the development of divinatory methods is, I think, intelligible, and it should be remembered that while superstitions may be based on irrationality they are not therefore arbitrary creations, lacking natural causes or intelligible foundations. Much of the power possessed by the mantis or his oracular utterances even in degenerate days is an heritage from the time when he was expected to work magic for the welfare of his tribe and the confusion of the enemy. The ordeal again



has a remote and august ancestry in the fear which attaches to things or beings of power, before holy and accursed have become categories clearly separate or distinguished. Even possession is older than anthropomorphic gods. The so-called divinatory arts have no less a long pedigree behind them. They are not arbitrary inventions of learned folly suddenly imposed on a credulous people; they have deep roots; that is why they take so long to wither away. The anxiety engendered by solemn occasions, by the crises of existence, by abnormal occurrences, and, not least important, by the continuous consciousness of man, who cannot ignore the prospect of the future and live unheeding in the momentary sensations of a secure present, is the ultimate cause of the practice of kleromantic methods and divinatory sub-rites. The very elaboration of their art is testimony to the force and insistence of this anxiety. Man endeavours to wrest at any cost the maximum of information to guide him through the darkness that lies before him and is inevitably to be traversed. He tries to burst through the shackles of time and space by means of magic or divination. The impulse is vital and inevitable. Were its claims justified by reason or experience, the art of divination



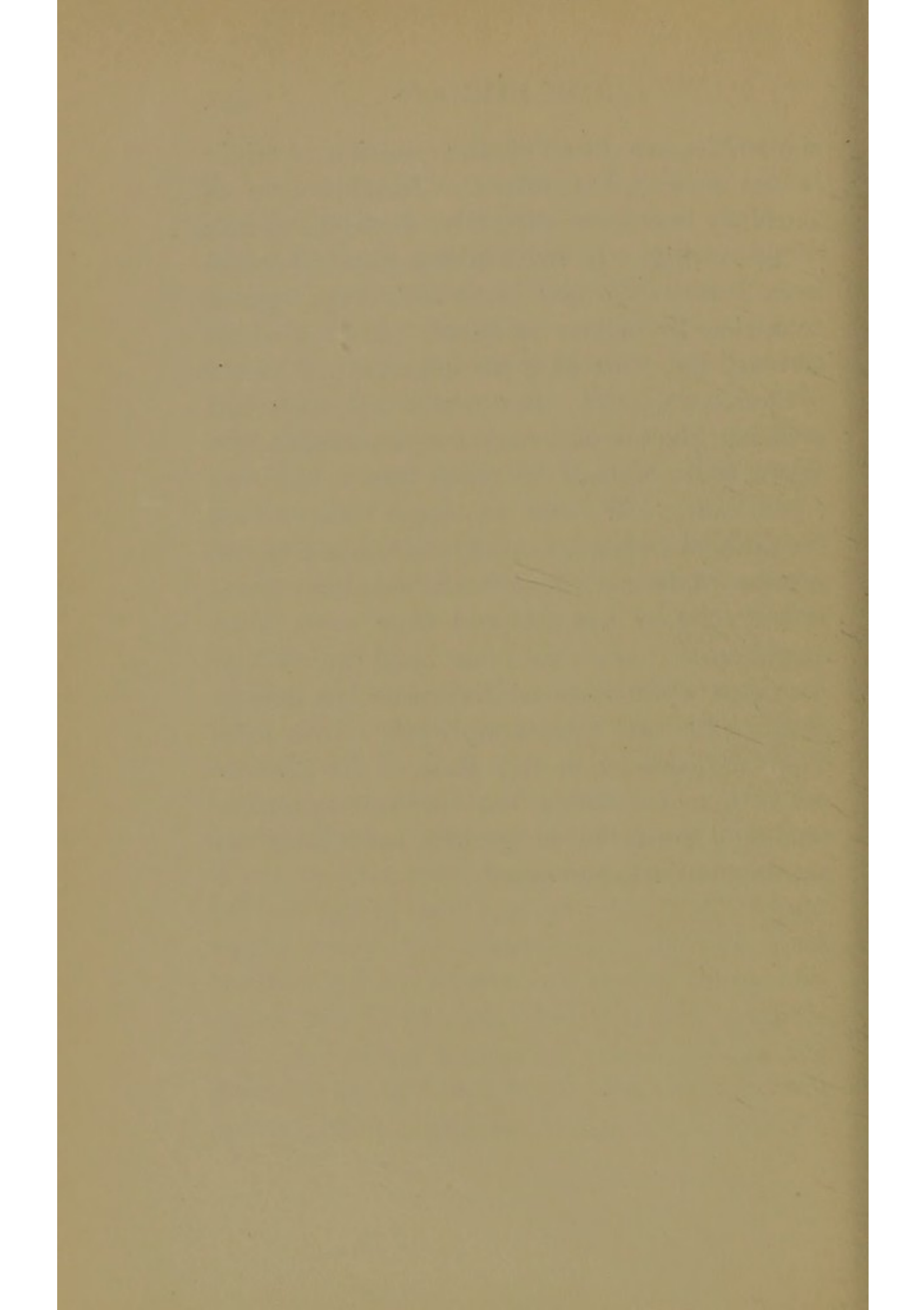
would be the most valuable of man's weapons in the struggle for existence. It is easily intelligible that he is loth to cast it away as useless. That is why divination is the longest lived of superstitions. That the presuppositions on which it rests are irrational is no fatal bar to longevity. How seldom in practical life is it possible to consider the ultimate presuppositions on which are based the theories embodied in our conduct—in political or social problems, for example! And the very elaboration to which some of the most puerile methods attain tends to obscure the weakness of the foundation in the imposing intricacy of the superstructure.

Now if there are these universal causes at work to produce divinatory arts, we shall naturally be chary of accounting for similarities between the practices of different nations as necessarily due to borrowing or transplantation. When two different peoples both divine from the entrails of sacrificial animals it will by no means follow immediately that the one must necessarily have borrowed from the other. Of course this is possible; but it is also possible that the natural tendencies which govern the development of the sub-rite of divination have independently inspired its practice. When



similarities are observed, the question of origin is not solved but raised. In the case of astrology we have certainly, I think, a case of borrowing. It reaches the classical world late ; it is always associated with those eastern countries in whose religion, unlike that of Greece, the stars play an important, if not a predominant, part. But where the historical evidence gives us no *terminus a quo*, independent origin must at least be taken into account as a possibility. We can no longer believe that the rational Greek invented in cold blood quasi-sciences of divination while all that is emotional in his religion was adopted from some alien neighbours ; nor on the other hand can we suppose that while inspired divination is a natural product, his arts were simply taken over from older civilisations in the East. *Ex Oriente lux* is a motto which has inspired some exceedingly fruitful investigations, but it must not become an exclusive creed.







## APPENDIX

### LIST OF BIRD NAMES

#### *Tribe and Place Names*

PICENTINES, Dryopians (Fick and Bechtel believe it means "Woodpeckers," but perhaps "Oakmen"), Meropes, Meropis, Aëropes (Troizen and Makedonia), "The Swallows" (an Illyrian tribe), Phlegyai.

The tradition that Sardinia was inhabited by big birds is possibly due to memories of a bird tribe; or perhaps the connection of birds and souls combined with the belief in an island Paradise in the West may account for the legend.<sup>1</sup>

In Phoenicia, between Tyre and Sidon, πολίχνιον ὀρνίθων πόλις λεγομένη (Strabo xvi. 2. 24, 758).

#### *Kings, Heroes, etc.*

The winged man who falls into the sea.

*Ikaros* connected Krete, Ikaria, and Attika; Fick connects with the legend of Hephaistos' fall.

*Ikarios*, father of *Penelope* [πηνέλοψ = Krickente, Fick and Bechtel, p. 418], and *Leda*, brother of Tyndareos, originally the Swan (Fick, *V.O.* pp. 114, 139).

*Ikaria* in Attika connected with the hanging festival and the story of Maira and Erigeneia (Fick, *V.O.* p. 139).

*Perdix*, sister or nephew of Daedalus, himself a son of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the birds of Achilles, "White Isle."



Merope. Hanged herself or was thrown over a precipice by his jealous uncle. The male Perdix is also called Talos and Ταλῶς ὁ ἥλιος (Fick, *H. und D.* 42).

*Nisos*, connected Megara and Krete. The story contains *motifs* of *The Faithless Maiden*, *The Purple Lock*, and *The Throwing into the Sea*. Possibly Skylla like Maira is the dog-star (?).

*Pterelaos* connected Leukas. The story contains *The Faithless Maiden* and *The Golden Lock*. (In one of the Grimm variants of the latter the phoenix feather takes the place of the lock.) Pterelas is the name of one of Aktaeon's hounds, possibly derived πτέρον ἐλαύνω, or possibly Pterelaos is king of the winged folk πτερελέως. Komaitho = Brandhaar, Fick, *V.O.* p. 138 (?).

Story of Pterelas and his lover Phaon (Φάων like Φαέθων a solar name, Fick, *V.O.* p. 139), connected with the cult practice of throwing a feathered man from the Leukadian rocks (Strabo 452). Farnell connects with this cult practice the magic Hyperborean Lake whose waters produced a growth of feathers on those who dipped in it. I doubt the explanation.

### *Alkyoneus*

The name and the stories in which it occurs seem connected with the two isthmuses of Pallene and Korinth, Thessaly, Attika, Argolis, Aitolia, Troizen, and Halikarnassos.

*Alkyonidai*, daughters of the giant, thrown into the sea at Pallene.

*Alkyone*, Attika, daughter of *Skiron*; her story tells of fornication (? ritual) and throwing into the sea.

*Alkyoneus*, Delphi, in a variant of the *Legend of Perseus*.

*Alkyoneus*, the giant connected with Herakles and the sun cattle.

*Alkyonian* lake: doorway to the underworld.

*Alkyone*, Atlantid, wife of Poseidon.



*Alkyone* and *Keux*, a royal pair who called themselves Zeus and Hera.

*Alkyone*, wife of Meleager. (The *Meleagrides* were guinea fowl.)

*Alkyoneus* in one story is the seducer of *Koronis*.

### *Merops, Aerops*

*Meropis*, the old name for Kos, *Merope* that of *Siphnos*. (It is interesting to note *μερούπα* for "birds" in the speech of modern Syra. Bent, *Cyclades*, p. 325.)

*Merops*, king of Kos, metamorphosed into an eagle. His descendants were opponents of the Olympian gods (Anton. Lib. xv.). According to Paton and Hicks, p. 361 foll., he is a sun-god.

*Merops*, the Ethiopian, has *Klymene* to wife and *Phaëthon* is his son.

*Merope* is the Okeanid mother of *Phaëthon* by *Klymenos*, or daughter of Helios and sister of *Phaëthon*.

*Merope*, Pleiad, wife of *Sisyphos* and mother of Glaukos.

*Merops* of Perkote, a king mantis, father of Amphios and Adrastos, Kleite and Arisbe. Arisbe marries Priam and has a son *Aisakos* (according to Fick and Bechtel, p. 418, a tree or bird name) who marries *Asterope* or Hesperia, the daughter of *Merope*, and was subsequently turned into a bird.

*Merope*, wife of Megareus and mother of Hippomenes.

*Merope*, daughter of Arkadian *Kypselos*.

*Merope*, *Aëdon*, and *Kleothera*, the three daughters of Pandareos who stole the golden dog (a sun mascot). In another version Merope is the mother of Pandareos.

*Merops*, son of Hyas, figures in a *Flood Myth*.

*Merope* or *Aërope*, daughter or wife of Oinopion, who was also called Stork.

*Aërope*, daughter of Katreus (possibly a bird name, see Hesychius, s.v.), who was son of Minos. One of her



sisters was named *Klymene*, and she gave the *golden lamb* (a sun mascot) to *Thyestes*.

*Aërope*, mother of Arkadian *Aëropos* by *Ares*.

*Aëropos*, brother of *Gauanes* and *Perdikkas* (possibly connected *Perdix*; he took the sun for wages from the Makedonian king). These are the three *Temenid* ancestors of the Makedonian royal house.

### *Aëtion, Eëtion*

A name connected with *ἀετός* (Fick and Bechtel, p. 314).

(1) *Aëtion*, also called *Iasion*, of Samothrake, son of *Elektra* the Atlantid, violated the image of *Demeter* and was killed by thunder.

(2) *Aëtion*, son of *Ieson*, guest friend of *Lykaon Priamides*, and ransomed him out of *Lemnos*.

(3) *Aëtion*, son of *Briseus*, king of *Pedasos*.

(4) *Aëtion*, of Cilicia, father of *Andromache*. (Also as Greek or Trojan name, Q. Smyrn. vi. 639; *Iliad* xvii. 575.)

(5) *Eëtion*, father of *Kypselos*.

(6) *Eëtion*, an Athenian hero.

### *The Crested Lark*

(1) *Kolainos*, prehistoric king of *Myrrhinos*, founded cult of *Apollo* the Crested Lark in *Messenia* (cf. *Artemis Kolainis*).

(2) *Korythos*, son of *Zeus*, husband of *Elektra* the Atlantid, father of *Iasios* and *Dardanos*.

(3) *Korythos*, foster-father to *Telephos*.

(4) *Korythos*, son of *Paris* and *Oenone*.

(5) An Iberian love of *Herakles*.

*Korythos* appears in *Ovid* and *Valerius Flaccus* as a name of warriors of the legendary period.

### *Swan*

(1) *Kyknos*, son of *Ares*, opponent of *Herakles*.

(2) *Kyknos*, a relation or lover of *Phaëthon*.



- (3) *Kyknos*, son of Apollo and Thyria.
- (4) *Kyknos*, son of Poseidon, killed by Achilles.
- (5) *Kyknos*, father of *Tennes*.

#### *Woodpeckers*

- (1) *Picus*, see p. 265.
- (2) *Keleos*, king of Eleusis, father of Triptolemos.
- (3) *Keleos*, one of the Kretans who violated the cave of Zeus.

#### *Crows and Ravens*

- (1) *Koroneus*, father of *Korone*, who was turned into a crow by Athene to save her from Apollo.
- (2) *Koroneus*, founder of *Koroneia* (an altar dedicated to a Koronios has been discovered).
- (3) *Korax* and *Koronos*, legendary kings of Sikyon.
- (4) *Koroneus*, father of *Asterie*, grandfather of *Idmon*.
- (5) *Koroneus*, son or father of Kaineus the Lapith.
- (6) *Koroneus*, father of Anaxiroë who married Epeus who won Elis in a horse race.
- (7) *Koronis*, mother of Asklepios.
- (8) *Koronis*, mother of *Podaleirios*.
- (9) *Koronis*, wife of Proteus, eponym of town *Korone* in Pallene.
- (10) *Koronis*, the *Hyad*.

#### *Hoopoe*

- (1) *Tereus*, worshipped in the Megarid.<sup>1</sup>
- (2) *Epopeus*, king of Sikyon, grandson of *Helios*, the human father of *Amphion* and *Zethos*. Zethos married *Aëdon*.
- (3) *Epopeus*, father of *Nyktimene*.
- (4) *Epops*, who killed Narkissos, son of Amaranthos.

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<sup>1</sup> See Mayer, "Megarische Sagen," *Hermes*, xxvii.



*Wren*

*Trochilos*, in one story the father of *Triptolemos*.

*Eagle kinds*

*Hierax*, who informed about Io and Argos.

*Hierax*, who saved Troy from famine and was turned into a hawk.

*Daedalion*, brother of *Keux*, turned into a hawk.

*Periphas* of Attika, turned into a hawk.<sup>1</sup>

*Mounichos* the Molossian, turned into a hawk.<sup>1</sup>

*Nisos*, turned into *haliaëtos*.

*Periklymenos*, turned into an eagle.

*Stork*

*Oinopion* of Chios, also named *Pelargos*.

*Doves*

*Kombe*, mother of the Kouretes, } metamorphosed.  
The daughters of Anios, }

Perhaps *Porphyryon*, one of the giants, is a bird name, and Ion is a son of *Xouthos*.

For the possible bird significance of the names Mermnadai and Gyges see Fick, *Hatt. und Dan.* p. 12.

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<sup>1</sup> Two of Mr. Cook's weather-making kings.



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<sup>1</sup> I have included in the Bibliography all works quoted at first hand with the exception of dictionaries, classical authors, the Fathers, and the biblical books.

<sup>2</sup> These valuable papers I owe to the generous gift of Miss L. C. Lloyd, besides much valuable information, and the privilege of consulting her *Bushman Folklore* in proof.



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## GENERAL INDEX

- Abas, 80  
 abnormal, fear of the, 28  
*abominari omen*, 50  
 acceptance of omens, 44, 47 foll.  
     by sneezing, 176  
 Acestes, 50  
 Acharaka, sanatorium at, 130  
 Acheloos, 117, 122  
 Acheron, 120, 240  
 Acherusian Lake, 120  
 Achilles, 17, 119, 237, 241  
     stream of, 135  
     horses of, 144  
 Acropolis, 52  
*ada wehi*, 13, 36  
 Adrasteia, 118  
 Adrestos, 63  
 adultery trial in Numbers v., 105  
 Aegospotami, 97  
 Aeneas, 50  
 Aëropos, 48  
 Aëthion, 56  
*ἀἰτός* includes all large birds, 260  
 Agamedes, 70, 71  
 Agamemnon, 67, 105, 118, 128  
 aggressor, success of a. in magical  
     conflict, 45  
 Agias, bronze statue of, 96  
*ἀγιάσματα*, 118, 135  
 Agia Triádha, sarcophagus from,  
     253  
 Ahab, 41  
 Aigai, 102, 106, 126, 129  
 Aischylos, 240, 262  
 Aison, 106  
 Aitolians, 90  
 Akarnanian manteis, 48, 95  
 Akesidas, 70  
 Akro-Korinth, spring on, 118  
 alchemists, 14  
*Alcheringa*, 21, 30  
 aleuromancy, 185  
 Alexander 49, 108, 229  
 Algazar, 33  
 Alkandros, 69  
 Alkathoos, 63  
 Alkyon, 66  
 Alkyonian Lake, 114, 120  
*ἄλοβον ἦπαρ*, 193  
*Alp*, the, 13  
 Alpheios, 119, 134  
 alphetomancy, 185  
 Althainos, 134  
 Alyssos, 134  
 Ambrakiote mantis, 95  
 Ammon, 132, 224  
 Amorgós, well at, 149  
 Amphiaraios, 69, 81, 90, 113, 129,  
     133, 135  
     oracle of, 132  
 Amphilochos, 69, 72, 74, 81  
 Amphilytos, 48  
 Amphitrite, 142  
 Ampyx, 69, 80  
 Amymone, 119  
*ἀναρπεῖν*, 211  
*ancile*, 265  
 Andros, 68, 81  
 Anigros, 61, 135  
 Anios, 68, 81  
 Antinous, 243  
 Antioch, 127



- Antipater, 108  
 Antium, 225  
 Anxiety prompts the invention of the sub-rite of divination, 136, 163 foll.  
*ἀπαντήσεις*, 173  
 Aphaka, divination at, 111  
 Apis, 231  
 Apollo, 6, 59, 61, 63, 64, 70, 72, 80, 81, 89, 90, 92, 96, 116, 127, 130, 143, 152, 210, 254, 255  
   vocal image of, engraved on a ring, 221  
   A. and the raven, 263  
   A. Ἀλευρόμαντις, 185  
   A. the Crested Lark, 256  
   A. Deiradiotes, 102, 126  
   A. Γυπαίεως, 256  
   A. Ismenios, 185, 232  
   Karnean A., 96  
   A. Μυρκαῖος, 227, 228  
   A. Philesios, 82  
   A. Spodios, 231  
 Apollonios of Tyana, 88, 249  
 Aponus, spring of, 149  
 Appian, 271  
 Appius, 237  
 Apuleius, 103, 153, 159  
   A.'s theory of purity, 161  
 Aratos, 263  
 Aretaeus, 198  
 Arethusa, 119  
 Argolis, 118  
 Argonauts, 266  
 Argos, 95, 120, 143, 224  
 Aristaeas, 257  
 Aristides, 128  
 Aristodemos, the sons of, 148  
 Aristomenes, 94  
 Aristophanes, 77, 97  
 Aristotle, 108, 220  
 Arkadia, 134  
 Artemidoros, 128, 171  
 Artemis, Ephesian, 267  
   A. Kolainis, 256  
   A. Orthia, 223  
 arts of divination, 8, 55  
   simple origin of, 183  
   practised by manteis of historical period, 92  
*arunquilha*, 20  
 Asia Minor, the home of astragalomancy, 213  
 Asklepiadai, 61  
 Asklepios, 64, 72, 89, 109  
   oracles of, 129  
   A. and healing springs, 135  
 Asopos, 118, 197  
 assertion, force of, in spells, 34 foll.  
 Asteria, 80  
 astragali in temples, 206 foll.  
   cast in front of a deity, 207 foll.  
 astragalomancy, system of, 213 foll.  
 astrology, 44, 172, 275  
 Atalanta, 119  
 Athena, 78, 93, 128, 255  
   A. and the Thriai, 210  
   A. Aëdon, 256  
   A. Aithyia, 256  
   A. Alea, 208  
   A. Phemia, 232  
   Skiradian A., 208, 209, 269  
 Athens, 48, 52, 61, 64, 91, 95, 117, 142  
   altar of PHEME at, 234  
   swearing on sacred stone at, 104  
 Atreus, 70  
 Aubrey, 31  
 Augilai, 130  
*augmenta*, 194  
*augurium* distinguished from *auspicium*, 269  
 augurs, 56, 72  
 augury, 246 foll.  
   in historical period a sacrificial sub-rite, 187, 249  
 Augustus, 136  
*auspicium* distinguished from *augurium*, 269  
 authority, appeal to a. in the interpretation of signs, 182  
 Avernus, a gate to Hades, 237  
 aversion of omens, 49  
 axinomancy, 219  
 Babylonian influence on Greek extispication, 188-197  
 Bakidai, 79, 93  
 Bakis, 52, 60, 76, 93, 139, 141  
 Balaam, 41, 51



- bee priestesses, 267  
 Bellerophon, 128  
 belomancy, 226  
 Bible, divination from verses of, 211  
 birds as totems or crests, 247  
   ritual feeding of, 251  
   in weather magic, 257, 259, 261  
   bring the seasons, 258  
   said to hibernate, 261  
   know everything, 250  
   emissaries of magicians, 60, 257, 258  
   associated with twins and culture heroes, 257  
   associated with Greek deities, 255, 256  
   alleged bird cults in the Aegean, 251  
   birds and pillars in Kretan art, 252, 253  
   the relation of birds to stars, 261 foll.  
   bird form of gods and goddesses, 250  
   bird form of water spirits, 138  
   epiphanies of Greek deities in bird form, 255  
   bird names of kings and heroes, 264 foll., 277-282  
   bird language, knowledge of, 83, 88, 249  
 Bisalti, 224  
 Black Agnes of Dunbar, 60  
 blind prophets, 77, 78, 79  
 blood of lamb drunk by priestess at Argos, 126  
   of bull at Aigai, 102, 106, 126  
   of witch drunk as charm, 46  
   divination by blood of victim, 186  
   use of blood in necromancy, 241, 242  
 blood-bond in witchcraft, 21  
 blood-guilt, cleansing of, 63  
 blood-letting as witchcraft charm, 21  
 Bomor, 63  
 book, prophetic, 93  
   traditional, 93  
*Book of the Dead*, 37  
 Boswell, 32  
 bottomless lakes, 121  
 Bouché Leclercq, 4, 58, 89, 143, 188, 221, 249, 270  
 Bourina, 119  
 bowl of liquid, divination in, 145  
   of water used in drawing lots, 148  
 boys as instruments in lekanomancy, 160 foll.  
 Branchos, 70, 82  
 Brizo, 133  
 Brunne, de, 23  
*Budjan*, 86  
 Bukerais, 119  
 bull's blood drunk by priestess at Aigai, 102, 106, 126  
   supposed to be poisonous, 106  
 Buraikos, 212  
 burial service as spell, 37  
 buried treasure known to birds, 250  
*Bürle, Das*, 38  
 Caere, kleromancy at, 216  
   story of name C., 229  
 Caesar, 199  
 cakes offered to rivers, 113  
 Canens, 265  
 canon of prophetic books, 93  
 Carmenta, 49  
 Carneades, 54  
 Cauldron of the Palikoi, 114  
 cave, Charonian cave at Acharaka, 130  
   Diktaian, 91  
   Idaeian, 92  
   of the Sphragitides, 139  
 Chaeronea, worship of sceptre at, 67  
 chained statues of deities, 17  
 Chalkedon, 117  
 Chalkon, 119  
 change of sex at initiation of shamans, 90  
   stories of change of sex, 71, 84  
 chanting of incantations, 24  
 Chariklo, 78, 80  
 charlatans, 28, 97  
 Charonian Cave at Acharaka, 130  
 Cheiron, 71  
 children born from springs, 122  
   divination from play of, 231  
 Chloris, 80



- Choaspes, 126  
 χρησμοί, 51, 52, 201  
     conditional efficacy of, 53  
 χρησμολόγοι, 62  
 Christian theory of extispication, 201  
 Christmas night, those born on, can see spirits, 31  
 Cicero, Quintus, 54  
 Circe, 70, 265  
 classification of manteis, 54 foll.  
 Clerk Saunders, 25  
 Clitumnian spring, 136  
 Code of Manu, 111  
 coins thrown into springs, 136  
 cold shudder, significance of, 177  
 communion, 19  
 complexity of augural science, 248  
 concealment of names of deities, 51  
 conditional efficacy of prophecy, 53  
 conflict of *manas*, 14 foll., 44, 45  
     of rival manteis, 73 foll.  
     of rival shamans, 74  
 confusion of bird species, 260  
 consuls examine entrails before entering office, 195  
 contact, magical, 17  
     with *mana* dangerous, 99 foll.  
     with *mana* a test of quality, 102  
     with power of water, 124  
 contagious qualities in magic, 15 foll.  
 "Contiguity, Laws of," 16  
 Cook, 66, 67  
 Coriolanus, 234  
 corpse, ghost summoned into, 243, 244  
 cosmogonies, birds in primitive, 257  
 Crawley, 45  
 Croesus, 63  
 crow invoked at Greek weddings, 259  
 crystal, magical power of, 12, 162  
 crystal-gazing, 150 foll.  
 cuckoo turns into hawk, 260  
 cults of Greek deities in bird form, evidence for, 256  
 culture heroes associated with birds, 57  
 Curtius, lake of, 136  
 Cynics, 199  
 Cyrus, 49, 95  
 Dactyls, 70, 92, 101, 132  
 daimones present in liver of victim, 201  
 daktyliomancy, 218 foll.  
 Danaai, 118  
 dances, mimetic, 35  
 danger of contact with *mana*, 99 foll.  
     incurred by those inspired, 106  
 Daphnis, 102, 140  
 Daramulun, 86  
 Dareios, 241  
 dead, divination by, 235 foll.  
     send dreams, 130  
 Deborah, 267  
 Deiphon, 79  
 Delos, 120, 141, 143, 195  
     dream oracle at, 133  
 Delphi, 52, 59, 63, 64, 65, 127, 129, 130, 185, 195  
     Poseidon at, 143  
     preliminary rites at, 184  
     thrioboly at, 210  
 Delphos, 143, 189  
 Demeter, bee priestess of, 267  
     divination at sanctuary of D. at Patrai, 151  
     patroness of σύμβολα, 173  
 δημοεργοί, 58, 61  
 deus, technical term in extispication, 200  
 development of sub-rites into sciences, 170 foll.  
 devil and witches, 16  
 dichotomy, characteristic of popular methods of divination, 171  
     in military extispication, 196  
 Didius Julianus, 146  
 Diktaian cave, 91  
 Diocletian, 202  
 Diomedes, 87  
 Dione, 65  
 Dionysos, 6, 100, 119, 129, 224  
 Dioscuri, 94, 257  
     appear perched in a tree, 94, 255



- Diphilos, 184  
 divination, relation of, to magic, 8, 40 foll.  
   held to modify future events, 42  
   two categories of, 7, 54 foll.  
   from acceptance of food by sacred animals, 90, 168  
   from acceptance or rejection of offerings, 112, 137  
   from dreams, 128 foll.  
   by dropping objects into a bowl of liquid, 146 foll.  
   from behaviour of horses, 144  
   from lips of the dying, 202-203, 243  
   by snakes, 89  
   by throwing barley loaves into water, 111  
 divinatory sub-rites developed at healing wells, 136  
 divine kings, 15, 66 foll.  
 divining rod, 226 foll.  
 Dodona, 65, 95, 127, 129, 132, 251, 265  
   procedure at, 266 foll.  
   kleromancy practised at, 212  
 dogs, fear of howling of, 166  
 dove priestesses of Dodona, 251 foll., 266  
 Dow Loch, 114  
 dream books, 128  
 dreams, divination by, 128 foll.  
   acquisition of power in, 90 foll.  
   sent by the dead, 130  
   sent by Earth, 129  
 drinking a method of union with *mana*, 125  
   sacred water at Apolline oracles, 127  
 drought of Greek lands and the divinity of water, 118  
 drunkenness as sign of possession, 128  
 Dryads, 138  
 Dryopis, 119  
*duppies*, 31  
 dying men in touch with both worlds, 202-3, 243  
 eagle of Pythagoras, 249  
 ear, significance of tingling of, 177  
 Earth, and fertility, 122  
   prophetic powers of, 129  
   sender of dreams, 129, 130  
   invoked in oaths, 116  
   connected with rivers, 121  
     with Delphi, 129, 130, 143  
     with Dodona, 129  
     with Olympia, 129  
     with the oracle at Aigai, 129  
 Echedoros, 109  
 Egeria, 157  
 egg, divination from white of e.  
   dropped into water, 147  
*ἐγγαστρίμυθοι*, 62, 244, 245  
 Egyptian kings, divination of, at beginning of a new day, 195  
 Egyptian kledonomancy, 231  
 Elatos, 80  
   river, 122  
 Elean manteis, 95  
 elements refuse to receive body of the wicked man, 111  
*ἐλεύθερον ὕδωρ*, 120  
 Eleusis, 97  
 Elis, 134  
 Elizabeth, Queen, 26  
 Elysios the Terinaean, 239  
 Empedokles, 111, 232  
 emperors, Roman, attitude towards  
   astrology, 44  
   to prophesy death of, a capital offence, 44  
*ἐμπύρων*, divination δι', 185  
*ἐμφυτος μαντική*, 57  
 Endor, the Witch of, 244  
*Ἐννησιᾶδες*, 139  
 Ennomos, 56, 69  
 entrails, divination by, 186 foll.  
   magical power of entrails of victim, 201  
   alleged foreign origin of Greek divination by, 188  
 Ephyra, 120  
 Epicureans, 199  
 Epidauros, 109  
   E. Limera, 111, 113, 133  
 Epimenides, 61, 71, 91, 92, 96  
 epiphanies of Greek deities in bird form, 255



- ἐπωδή, 59  
 Erechtheus, 87  
 ἔρμαια, 211  
 Essenes, 267  
 Etna, divination at, 112  
 Etruscan influence on Greek  
   methods of extispication, 188-  
   197  
 Euaimon, 100  
 Euboia, 97  
 Euboule, 223  
 Eueres, 80  
 euhemerism, 68  
 Eukrates, 221  
*Eumolpia*, 143  
 euphemism, 33, 38, 44  
 euphemistic names for nymphs, 139  
   character of fairy literature, 137  
 Euripides' grave, the two rivers at,  
   107  
 Eurydike, 240  
 Eurykleidai, 244  
 Eurymedon, 234  
 Eurypylos, 100  
 Eurystheus, 64  
 Eusebius, 201  
 Eustathius on gambling, 209  
 Euthynoos Italos, 239  
 Evans, Arise, 26  
   Sir Arthur, 251  
 Evenios, 76, 77, 79  
 Exekestos, 221  
*exsecrari omen*, 50  
*exta*, 194  
 External Soul, 15  
 extispication, 186 foll.  
   wide distribution of the practice  
   of, 190  
   theories as to the efficacy of,  
   198 foll.  
   alleged foreign origin of Greek  
   methods of, 188  
   *See also s.v.* entrails  
 ex-votos, 21  
  
 Fafnir, 88  
 fairies, 14, 33, 34, 40  
*fâl*, 229  
 Falerii, kleromancy at, 216  
 Farnell, 116  
  
 Faunus, 69, 133  
 Fauni, 71  
 fear of the abnormal, 28  
   of being named, 178  
 femininity of nature spirits, 138  
 fertility connected with water and  
   Earth, 122  
 festivals as bank holidays, 6  
 "fey," 203  
 Fick, 251  
*fissiculare*, 193  
 food, divination from acceptance  
   of, by sacred animal, 168  
 Fortunes at Antium, 225  
 Frazer, 26, 66, 104, 108  
 funeral rites are *rites de séparation*,  
   238  
  
 Gaeum at Olympia, 129  
 Gaia, 89  
 Galeotes, 69, 81  
 Galeots, 188, 192  
 gambling in temples, 209  
 game ceremonies, 35  
 Gauanes, 48  
 Gehazi, 109  
 Gelo, 90  
 Geryon, oracle of, 149, 217  
 gesture, 32, 33  
 ghost of Patroklos, 237  
   animals, 28  
*Giessvogel and the Lord Jesus*, the  
   story of, 263  
 Glaukos, 81, 83, 125, 142  
   G. and Nereids, oracle of, 141  
*γνώμαι μονόστιχοι*, 215  
 God present in liver of victim, 200  
 Gorgon's blood, 101  
 graves of heroes at sacred wells, 123  
   incubation on, 130, 239  
 Great Mother, 267  
 Greatraks, 26  
 Grimm, 252  
 guilds of manteis, 79  
  
 Hadrian, 44, 243  
 Haimos, 66  
 hair cut in honour of rivers, 122  
 hand, significance of tingling of,  
   177



- Harrison, Miss, 3, 7, 84, 251  
 head-hunting, 17  
 healing herbs known to snakes, 83  
   springs, 134  
 Hegesistratos, 49  
 Helenos, 52, 68, 70, 76, 83, 90,  
   250  
 Heliopolis, 225  
 Helios invoked in oaths, 116  
 Hephaistion, 229  
 Hera, 84, 224  
 Herakleia Pontika, 120  
 Herakles (*see* Hercules), 63, 64,  
   119, 142, 224  
   H. Buraikos, 212  
   τὰ λουτρά τὰ Ἡρακλέους, 119  
   Ἡράκλειος κρήνη, 118  
 Heraklids, 2, 53, 95  
 Herbert, George, 19  
 Hercules (*see* Herakles), 49  
   H. Somnialis, 129  
 Herkyna, 119, 127  
 Hermes, 210  
   patron of kledonomanancy at  
   Pharai, 230  
   Ἑρμῆς Κληδόνιος, 231  
   tongue sacred to H., 231  
 Hermione, 120  
 heroes associated with water, 123  
 hero oracles, incubation at, 128  
 Herodotos, 266  
 Herrick, 137  
 Hesiod, 58, 59, 60, 67, 75, 76,  
   108, 141, 259  
 hibernation of birds, 260  
 Hickson, James Moore, 26  
 Hierapolis, 132  
   oracle at, 225  
 Hierokles, 94, 97  
 Hilarius, 220  
 Himantis, 80  
 Hipparchos, 49  
 Hippias, 94  
 Hippokrene, 118, 119, 135  
 Hippolytos, 111  
 Hippolytus' *Ref. omn. haeres.*, 159  
 Hittites, 187  
 Hodson, 46  
 Homer, 58, 61, 62, 73, 75, 77,  
   138, 199, 270  
 Homer, apparition of ghosts in, 237  
   divination from verses of, 217  
   silence of H. about extispication,  
   189  
 Homeric manteis are inspired, 75  
   oracles, 94  
 Homeridai, 79, 93  
 hoof of horse or mule proof against  
   corrosion by Styx water, 108  
 horses, divination from, 144  
   of Achilles, 144  
 Horus, 37  
 Hosioi, 64  
 "House of Divination" at Phlius,  
   90  
 human entrails more efficacious than  
   animal, 200  
 human sacrifice to rivers, 117  
   in magical practice, 242, 243  
 Hunt, Robert, 40  
 husbands of nymphs or fairies, 140  
 Hyads, 262  
 hydromanteis, 146  
 Hypnos, 133  
 Hysiai, 127  
 Iamid, 94, 95, 185, 188  
 Iamos, 76, 82, 90  
 Iasios, 70  
 Idaean cave, 92  
   I. Dactyls. *See* Dactyls  
 identification of priestess with god  
   by drinking blood of victim,  
   126  
 Idmon, 56, 80  
*iecur sine capite*, 193  
*ιητήρ κακῶν*, 58, 60, 61, 63  
 images, use of, in witchcraft, 16  
   divination by, 222 foll.  
   of gods give signs, 224, 225  
 imagination supposed to affect  
   reality, 33  
*improbare omen*, 50  
*incantatio*, 59  
 incubation and healing, 129  
   at hero oracles, 128  
   at holy wells, 128 foll.  
   at ψυχοπομπεία, 239  
   by sacred fire, 131  
   on tomb or skull, 130



- "inductive arts" of divination, 8, 54  
 infant gods and heroes washed in rivers, 123  
 influence of Etruscan and Babylonian discipline on Greek divination, 188-197  
 initiation of shamans, 86  
 initiative in magical conflict, 45  
 Ino, water of, 111  
     I. Pasiphaë, dream oracle of, 133  
 "inoculation rites," 45  
 inspiration, 57  
     by drinking sacred water, 124  
     and art in poetry, 76  
 inspired manteis, 75  
 "intuitive" divination, 54  
 invocation of spirit in lekanomancy, 155  
 involuntary motions of body, divination from, 172 foll.  
 Iona, 32  
 Ionia, 2  
 Ionides, spring of, 134  
 Ismenos, 69, 116, 119  
 Issos, 49  
  
 Jevons, 59  
 Jonathan, 229  
 Joppa, 135  
 Jordan, 120  
 Joseph, 147  
 Julianus, 50  
 Jupiter, 54, 72  
  
*Kabēsaran*, 93  
 Kadmos, 52, 87  
*Κάδμου πούς*, 119  
 Kalauria, 143  
 Kalchas, 59, 67, 73, 75, 80, 249, 270  
     K. and Podaleirios, manteion of, 129, 132  
*καπναῦγαι*, 184  
 Karios, 140  
 Karneus, 96  
 Karnos, 96  
 Cassandra, 70, 76, 81, 82, 83, 90, 250  
 Kassotis, 127  
 Kastalia, 44, 119, 127  
     in Antioch, 127  
*καταβόθρα*, 119, 120  
 Katasterismoi, 263  
 katoptromancy, 150  
 Kekrops, 87  
 Kerameikos, 209  
 Kerberos, 142, 235  
 Keux, 66  
 Khonsu, 225  
 Killos, 238  
 kings, cleanse of spiritual evil, 63  
     possess *μαντοσύνη*, 67 foll.  
     relation of Homeric k. to spiritual authority, 67  
 king's evil, 25, 26  
 Kingsley, Miss, 60  
 Kithairon, 84, 139  
*κληδών*, 173, 229, 230, 232, 233  
     altars of, 232  
 Kledonas on St. John's Eve, 230  
*Κληδόνες*, sanctuary of, at Smyrna, 231  
 kledonomancy, 229 foll.  
 Kleodora, 80  
 Kleomenes I., 93, 96, 224, 233  
 Kleonike, 237, 240  
 Kleopompos, 80  
 Klytids, 95  
 Knossos, 96  
 knowledge possessed by birds, 250  
 Koiranos, 69  
 Kolainos, 256  
 Kolchian dragon, 87  
 Kolophon, water of inspiration at, 106, 125, 126  
 Korinth, 95, 119, 128  
 Koronis, 80  
*κορωνίσματα*, 259  
 Koronos, 80  
 Kos, 119  
 koskinomancy, 219  
 Kossinites, 125  
 Kotylia, lake of, 121  
 Kouretes, 64, 70, 90  
*κουροτρόφοι*, 122  
*kramat*, 18  
 Kresphontes, 148  
 Krete, 63, 95  
 Krios, 53, 96



- krithomancy, 185  
 Kroton, 95  
 Kyane, 120  
 Kyaneai, magic well at, 152  
 Kychreus, 87  
 Kydnos, 134  
 Kyllene, 84  
 Kyparissiai, 119  
 Kyphante, 119  
 Kyrene, 80  
  
 Laïos, 50  
 Λαῖου χρησμοί, 52  
 lakes, which suck down the unwary,  
     114  
     bottomless, 121  
 language of birds understood by  
     seers, 83, 88, 249, 250  
 Laodameia, 16  
 Lawson, 237  
 lead, divination from melted lead,  
     147  
 Lebadea, 119  
 Leda, 255  
 lekanomancy, 145 foll.  
     connection with holy wells, 145,  
         146, 149  
     personification of magical agency  
         in, 154  
     connection with necromancy, 157,  
         242  
 Lemnos, 133  
 Lenormant, 228  
 Leonidas, 47  
 Lethe, water of, 127  
 Leukas, 95  
 Leuktra, 224  
 Leutyichides, 48  
 libanomancy, 185  
 Life Token, 15  
 Lilly, 31, 43  
 Linus, 58, 122  
*litare*, 196  
 literature gives euphemistic account  
     of fairies, 137  
*lituus*, 67, 265  
 liver, bronze l. from Piacenza, 187  
     the supposed seat of life, 198  
 loaves thrown into water of Ino, 111  
 lot, divination by, 205 foll.  
 lot drawn in bowl of water, 148, 149  
 lotteries, state l. in Italy, 161  
 λουτρά τὰ Ἡρακλέους, τὰ, 119  
 λουτροφόρος on tombs of the  
     unmarried, 122  
 Lower World, rivers are gates to,  
     120  
 Lukian, 33, 127, 133  
 Lyco, 72  
 Lykaon, 66  
 Lykia, 152  
*lymphatici*, 140  
 Lysander, 97  
  
 Macedonia, 47, 107  
 Machaon, 80  
 magi, 146, 236  
 magic implies the exercise of non-  
     natural power, 10  
     efficacy does not lie in ritual, 26  
     a conflict of powers, 14  
     white m., 20  
     m. and divination, 8, 40 foll.  
     m. and religion, 19  
     extravagance of ritual of, 27, 28  
 magical herbs known to birds, 250  
     origin of springs, 118, 119  
     power of divinatory entrails, 201  
         of χρησμοί, 51 foll.  
     See also *mana*  
 magician possesses *mana*, 11 foll.  
 Μακρόβιοι, 139  
 male nature spirits, 138  
 Malea, 142  
 Mallos, 82  
*mana*, 11  
     acquisition of, 11 foll., 17  
     danger of contact with, 99  
     dual character of, 101  
     becomes qualitatively differenti-  
         ated, 20, 102 foll.  
     of mythical seers becomes inspira-  
         tion of Homeric, 74 foll.  
 Mannhardt, 252  
 manteis, classification of, 54 foll.  
 Mantinea, 117  
 mantis, relation to medicine-man,  
     56, 62  
     connected with weather and the  
         sun, 70



- mantis, parentage of, 80 foll.  
     responsible for victory, 96, 97  
     works magic on the enemy, 95  
     necessity of checking honesty of, 168  
     *provenance* in historical times, 95  
     inspired, 75  
     source of powers of, 77 foll.  
     cleanses of spiritual evil, 63  
 Manto, 69, 80  
 μαντοσύνη, qualifications for possessing, 77-90  
     connected with royalty, 67 foll.  
 mantras, 38  
 Manu, Code of, 111  
 Marcus Caedicius, 234  
 Mardonios, 47  
 market-place, σύμβολα of, 230  
 marriage, ritual use of water in, 122  
 Mars, oracle of, at Matiene, 265  
 Marsh, 14  
 Matiene, 265  
 Megara, 63, 117  
 Medea, 69, 70, 71  
 mediaeval science, 14  
 medicine-men, use of, in war, 95  
     and snakes, 86  
     sincerity of, 27  
 Megara, 95  
 Melampodidai, 63, 79, 80  
 Melampus, 61, 69, 80, 83, 88, 90, 92, 95, 249, 250  
     Περὶ παλμῶν, 174  
 Melias, 116  
 Melissai, 267  
 Mercury, 159  
 Merlin, 60  
 Merops, 69  
 Messenia, 134, 148  
 Micaiah, son of Imlah, 42  
 mid-day, dangers of, 140  
 Midé, 28  
 Midé wiwin, 12, 34  
 migis, 12  
 migratory birds bring the seasons, 258  
 mills, rendezvous for devils, 121  
 mimesis, 38  
 mimetic dances, 35  
     ritual, 26, 32  
 Minos, 66, 111  
 mirror, divination by, 150 foll.  
 Mithridatic War, 159  
 Mnemosyne, water of, 127  
 modes of contact in magic, 15 foll.  
     of expression, 22 foll.  
 molemo, 101  
 Molionids, 257  
 Monro, 75, 76  
 Mopsos, 69, 73, 74, 80, 83, 129, 250  
 moral distinction developed from the dual character of *mana*, 101  
     purity and ritual purity, 103, 161, 162  
 Mother and Maid, water sacred to, 122  
 Mounichos, 69  
 Musaios, 60, 93, 143  
 Muses, 59, 76, 77, 139, 140, 255  
 Murray, G. G. A., 93, 104  
 Mykale, 234  
 Mykonos, 117  
 mysteries, 6  
 mythology, worked over in antiquity, 2  
 Naaman, 135  
 Naiads, 138  
 name of deities concealed, 51  
     of power, 38  
 Napier, Sir Richard, 14  
 narrative spells, 35  
 Nasamonians, 130  
 natural death unknown in primitive societies, 60  
 nature spirits tend to be feminine, 138  
 Naupaktos, 95  
 Nebuchadnezzar, 167  
 necromancy, 235 foll.  
     relation to black magic, 235, 236, 242, 243  
     relation to lekanomancy, 157, 242  
 νεκνιομαντεία, 158  
 νεκνομαντεία, 236  
 Neleus, 63  
 Nemea, 118  
 Nemesis, 234



- Nereids, 138  
   N. and Glaukos, oracle of, 141  
 Nereus, 81, 142  
 Nero, 236  
 Nile, 120  
 nodding images, 224  
*non perlitare*, 196  
 Numa, 140, 157  
 Numerius Suffustius, 216  
*νυμφόληπτος*, 76, 140  
 Nymphaion at Malea, 142  
   in Apollonia, divination at, 112  
 nymphs, 137 foll.  
   called by euphemistic names, 139  
   ousted by heroes at sacred wells, 123, 124  
   *κουροτρόφοι*, 122  
  
 oak of Zeus at Dodona, 266  
 oath, ritual of Homeric, 104  
 observatory of diviners at Skiron, 209  
   of Teiresias at Thebes, 209, 269  
 Odysseus, 76, 158, 199, 235, 238, 239, 241  
 Oidipous, 52, 73, 74  
   stream of, 135  
 Oikles, 81  
 oil, divination from o. dropped into water, 147  
*οἰωνός*, 89, 248  
 Old Man of the Sea, 142  
 Olympia, 129, 185  
 Olympian gods, 5  
   antagonism of, towards mythical seers, 71 foll.  
 omen observance, element of induction in, 164, 165  
   prompted by fear of the abnormal, 165 foll.  
 omens, 8, 163 foll.  
   acceptance of, 44, 47 foll.  
   aversion of, 49  
 omoplatoscopy, 186  
*Ὀμφαίη*, 232  
*ὀμφή*, 232, 233  
 Onchestos, oracle at, 143  
 Onomakritos, 93  
 ooscopy, 185  
 Ophioneus, 76, 77  
  
 oracle, performs function of primitive "divine king," 64, 66  
   nature of questions asked of, 65  
   of Geryon, 149, 217  
   of Glaukos and Nereids, 141  
   of Trophonios, 89, 127  
 oracles of Bakis, 94  
   of Laïos, 52  
 ordeal, 99 foll.  
   ultimate basis of, is union with *mana*, 103  
   and the development of morality, 20  
   by proxy, 113  
   blood ordeal, 106  
   water ordeal, swimming test, 110 foll.  
   water ordeal, guilty party sinks, 114, 115  
*orenda*, 14, 15, 107  
 Oreos, 97  
 Orestes, 59, 63, 111, 135, 138  
 Orion, 262  
 Oropos, 83, 113, 117, 135, 152  
 Orphe, 72  
 Orpheus, 58, 71, 189, 240  
 orthodoxy, boundary between white magic and religion, 20  
 Osiris, 37  
*otgon*, 107  
 owl, fear of hooting of, 166  
  
 Paionios, 70  
 Palafkastro hymn, 6  
 Palikoi, 112, 114  
*παλμικόν*, 174 foll.  
 Pamisos, 134  
 Pan, 17  
 Panaetius, 54  
 Panagia, 17  
 paraphernalia, magical, 93  
 Parnassos, 80, 141, 143  
*pars familiaris*, 191  
*pars hostilis*, 191  
 Patara, 82, 135  
 Patrai, divination at spring at, 151  
 Patricius, 220  
 Patroklos, ghost of, 237  
 Paulus, L., 50  
 Pausanias, 54, 240



- Pausanias' ghost laid by *ψυχαγωγόι*, 237  
 Pawang, 63, 93  
 payment, a mode of magical contact, 16  
 Pegasos, 118  
 Peisistratids, 52  
     religious policy of, 93  
 Peisistratos, 48, 93  
 Peleiai, 266  
 Pelops, 238  
 Pelusium, 271  
 pendulum, divination by, 218 foll.  
 Perdikkas, 48  
 Periander, 239  
*περίγειοι δαίμονες*, 129  
 Periphas, 66  
 Persa, 50  
 Persephone, 267  
 Perseus, stream of, 135  
 Persian origin of lekanomancy, alleged, 146  
 personality, wide area of, in Lower Culture, 15  
 personification of magical agency  
     at holy wells, 123  
     in lekanomancy, 154  
 Peter Bersuire, 121  
 Pharai, divination at, 230  
 Pharaoh, 167  
*φάρμακον*, 101  
*φασγάνιον*, 120  
*φήμη*, 229, 232, 233, 234  
 PHEME, altar of, at Athens, 234  
     and Kledon, shrines of, 234  
 Phemios, 76  
 Phigalian *ψυχαγωγόι*, 237  
 Phineus, 69, 72, 77, 80  
 Phliasian Asopos, 118  
 Phlius, "house of divination" at, 90  
 Phokis, 95, 221  
 Phormio of Erythrai, 78  
 phyllomancy, 185  
 Piacenza, bronze liver from, 187  
 Picus, 67, 68, 69, 133, 251, 265, 268  
     and Faunus, oracle of, 132  
 pillars and birds in Kretan art, 252, 253  
*πίνακες ἀγυρτικοί*, 62  
 Pindar, 77  
 pins thrown into holy wells, 135  
 Pirene, 141  
 Pitane, 231  
 Plataia, 96, 119, 234  
 Plato, 54, 55, 61  
 Platonic theory of extispication, 202  
 Pleiads, 262  
 Plutarch, 30, 56, 106, 198  
 Pluto crowned with *φασγάνιον*, 120  
*πνεῦμα πύθωνα*, 245  
 Podaleirios, 80, 133, 134  
     and Kalchas, oracle of, 129  
 poetry, relation of, to prophecy, 58  
     foll., 76  
     recitation of, 23  
 poisonous streams, 107 foll.  
 political exploitation of mythology, 2  
     of oracles, 64  
 Polyidos, 64, 69, 81, 83, 88  
 Pomona, 265  
 Pontius Pilate, 111  
 Porphyry, 5, 200  
 portent, vagueness of significance of, 167  
 Poseidon, 80, 81, 119, 189  
     powers of, 142  
     conflict of, with other Olympians, 142  
     at Delphi, 143  
     the god of horses, 104, 143  
     P. Κρηνοῦχος, 142  
     P. Νυμφαγέτης, 142  
     P. Πρόφαντος, 143  
     P. Tainarios, 142  
 possession by nymphs, 139 foll.  
*ποτάμιος*, 117  
*ποταμός*, technical term of extispication, 191  
 Praeneste, sortes of, 161, 216  
 prayer, 19  
 pre-Olympian element in Greek religion, 4 foll.  
 Preuss, 132  
 professionals, influence of, in development of divinatory arts, 171  
 Proitos, 61, 69  
 Prometheus, 70, 189  
 prophecy, magical power of, 41 foll.  
 Protesilaos, 16



- Proteus, 68, 81, 142  
 proxy, use of, in ordeal, 113  
 Psamathe, 81  
 Psellus, 156, 271  
 ψυχαγωγοί, 236, 240, 241  
 ψυχομαντεῖον, 239, 240  
 ψυχοπομπεῖον, 142, 239, 240  
 πύλαι, technical term in extispication, 191  
 punishment of prophecy by Olympian gods, 71 foll.  
 purity of human instrument in lekanomancy, 103, 160 foll.  
     relation of moral to ritual, 103, 161, 162  
 Pylades, 138  
 Pyrkaoi, 185  
 Pyrkon, 185  
 Pyrrhichos, 118  
 Pythagoras, 71, 132, 198, 249  
 Pythia, 49, 54, 211, 267  
 Pythioi, 52  
 Pytho, 143  
 Python, 89  
 πύθωνες, 62, 245  
  
 questions, danger of replying to, 46  
  
 ῥάβδος, 59  
 Ragwells, 114  
 rain birds, 263  
 Rameses II., 18  
 Rameses III., 51  
 Rameses XII., 225  
 ratification of utterance by sneezing, 176  
 rebirth, ceremonial necessary for those reported dead, 37  
 refusal of omens, 49  
*refutare omen*, 50  
 Reinach, S., 2  
 reinterpretation of old rites, 21, 30  
 relics of famous persons, 15  
 religion and magic, 19  
 Remus, 248  
 restricted efficacy of magical springs in modern times, 125  
 revenants, 237  
  
 rhabdomancy, 226 foll.  
 rhapsodomancy, 217  
 Rhakios, 69, 80  
 Rhamnes, 56, 68  
 Rhodes, 117, 128  
 Rhodians, 139  
 Rhodope, 66  
 Rhoikos, 139  
 ring, divination by, 219, 221  
     magical, 221  
 rites of power, 22, 30 foll.  
 ritual provides an effective mode of expression, 22 foll.  
     elaboration of, varies with occasion, 25  
     of necromancy, 241  
     of oath in Homer and the Bible, 104, 105  
     of touching for king's evil, 26  
     feeding of birds, 251  
     purity and moral purity, 103, 161, 162  
 river cult at Chalkedon, 117  
 rivers of Greece, characteristics of, 118  
     underground connection of different rivers, 120  
     and fertility, 122  
     and evil spirits, 121  
     and Mother Earth, 121  
     gates to Lower World, 120  
     invoked in oaths, 116  
     hair cut in honour of, 122  
     infant gods washed in, 123  
     *See also s.vv.* springs, waters, wells  
 rod, divining, 226 foll.  
 Romulus, 248  
  
 sacrament, 20  
 sacrifice, 19, 100  
     divinatory sub-rites of, 184 foll.  
     to rivers, 117  
 St. Ansano of Siena, 196  
 St. Augustine, 157  
 St. Oswald's Well, 114  
 saka, 13, 104  
 Salamis, 209  
 Sallii, 71  
 Salmoneus, 37, 64, 66, 70



- salt springs supposed to be sea wells, 120  
 Samikon, 134  
 Samuel, 64, 67  
 sarcophagus from Agia Triádha, 253  
 satyrs, 138  
 Saul, 65, 67, 171  
 scapulomancy, 186  
 sceptre of kings and prophets, 67  
*sciomantia*, 239  
 Scipio, 49  
 scourging image of Pan, 17  
     boys before Orthia, 223  
 Scylla, 111  
 sea divinities and divination, 141 foll.  
 seasons brought by migratory birds, 258  
 second sight, 75  
 Selloi, 132  
 Semele, 81, 82  
 sexual act confers power of prophecy, 82  
     relation with nymphs, 140  
 shaman. *See* medicine-men  
 Sharp, Archbishop, 217  
 shoulder blade, divination by, 186  
 Sibyl, 82  
 Sicily, 117  
 Siegfried, 88  
 sieve and shears, 219, 221  
 signs given by images, 224  
 Silanos, 168  
 Silenos, 118  
 simple origin of divinatory arts, 183  
 Sinuessa, 122  
 Sirens, 255  
*Sir Tristrem*, 23  
 Sisypheos, 118, 189  
 Skamander, 154  
*σκηπτουχος βασιλεύς*, 67  
*σκήπτρον*, 59  
 skin of animal worn by the sleeper in incubation, 132  
 skins, divination by slitting, 185  
 Skiradian Athena, 209  
 Skiras, 209  
 Skiron, 111, 209  
     divination at, 209  
 Skirophorion, 209  
*σκήπος*, 209  
 Skotusai, 135  
 Skythians, 90  
 sleep of Epimenides, 91  
*Sleep, the Long*, story of, 91  
 Sleep Bird, 255  
 Smith, Mary, 40  
     Robertson, his theory of meaning of Peleiai, 267  
 smoke, divination by watching, 184  
 Smyrna, sanctuary of Κληδόνες at, 231  
*Snake and Healing Herb*, story of, 83, 88  
 snake kings and snake slayers, 87  
 snakes, generally revered, 84  
     connected with underworld and ghosts, 84  
     connected with Asklepios and healing, 89  
     connected with Earth, 85  
     belief that spinal marrow becomes a snake, 85  
     born of bird's blood, 88  
     divination by, 89  
     and seers, 82 foll.  
     and shamans, 86  
     confer magical powers by licking people's ears, 83  
     "Snake's Head," 83  
 sneezing, 175  
 Solomon, 38  
 Sophokles, 56  
 Sortes Biblicae, 217  
     Homericæ, 217  
     Praenestinae, 216, 217  
     Virgilianæ, 217  
 Sparta, 95, 96, 133  
 Spartans, 47, 52  
 speaking as a mode of magical contact, 46  
 speal-bone, divination by, 186  
 specialisation feature of all organic development, 8  
     of shamans, 62  
     effect of, on development of divination, 57, 62  
 spell in form of prediction, 40  
     in narrative form, 36



- Sphinx, 73  
 sphondylomancy, 219  
 Sphragitides, Cave of, 139  
 spirit invoked in lekanomancy, 155  
   foll.  
 spitting, power of prophecy conferred by, 81  
 springs of magical origin, 118, 119  
   of magical properties, 106, 134  
   birth of children from, 122  
   coins thrown into, 136  
   magic spring of Apollo at Kyaneai, 152  
   magic spring of Amphiaraos at Oropos, 113  
   magic spring at Tainaron, 152  
   *See also* rivers, waters, wells  
 stars and birds, 261 foll.  
 sternomanteis, 244  
 Stoic theory of extispication, 199  
 stone, swearing on sacred, 104  
   divination from weight of mantic, 223  
 strangers, fear of, 28  
 Styx, 107, 120  
   poisonous properties of, 108  
   used in poison ordeal, 108  
   κουροτρόφος, 109  
 submerged countries, 121  
 sub-rites of divination, 8, 163 foll.  
   at healing wells, 134, 136  
   of sacrifice, 184 foll.  
 Sulla, 201  
 σύμβολα, 173  
   of market-place, 230  
 sun mascots, 48  
 swallow songs, 258  
 swimming test in ordeal, 110  
 "sympathetic" magic, 15  
 Synesius, 271  
  
*Taghairm*, 131  
 Tainaron, 143  
   magic spring at, 152  
 Tankli, 12  
 Tantalos, 72  
 Teiresias, 71, 72, 76, 77, 78, 80, 84, 87, 97, 158, 249, 270  
   T.'s change of sex, 84, 90  
   observatory of, 209, 269  
 Telchines, 70  
 Telemos, 81  
 Telephos, 135  
 Telines, 90  
   τεμένη of rivers, 117  
 Temenid, 47  
 Temenus, 148  
 temples as national treasures, 6  
*templum*, 270  
 Teneros, 69, 116  
 teraphim, 226  
 texts of Koran administered in solution for medical purposes, 125  
 Thamyris, 69, 73  
 Thebes, 52, 95, 135, 185, 209, 269  
   θήλεα νοῦσος, 90  
 Themistokles, 106  
 Theodoros, 220  
 Theokles, 53, 94  
 Theoklymenos, 75, 81  
 Theonoë, 69, 81  
 theories of extispication, 198 foll.  
   θεῖς, technical term in extispication, 200  
 Thespios, 63, 64  
 Thesprotia, 240  
 Thessalian ψυχαγωγοί, 236  
 Thestor, 80, 81  
 Thetis, 108  
 Thibii of Pontos, 111  
 Thomas of Ercildoune, 23, 60, 140  
 Thrasyboulos, 192  
 Thriai, 210, 211  
 throwing of objects into healing wells, 113, 135  
 Thurii, 143  
 Tiberius, 149  
 tiger's whiskers, 17  
*Tilek*, 169  
 Tilphusa, 154  
 Tisamenos, 96  
*tollere sortes*, 211  
 tombs, incubation on, 130, 239  
 tongue sacred to Hermes, 231  
 totemism, 3, 268  
 touching for king's evil, 25, 26  
*trabea*, 265  
 tradition gives sanctity to rites, 30  
 trees, sacred, 19  
 tricks of medicine-men, 28



- Troad, 119  
 Troizen, 118, 119  
 Trophonios, 70  
     oracle of, 89, 127  
 Troy, 52, 88  
 Trygaïos, 94  
 twins, feared or revered, 28  
     associated with birds, 257  
 Tyana, 109  
  
 Ulysses, 52  
 underground course of Greek rivers,  
     118, 119  
 union with mystical power, 19  
     with healing wells or trees, 19,  
         21, 113, 135  
     with *mana* the ultimate basis of  
         the ordeal, 103 foll.  
     with god confers prophetic power,  
         82  
 Urim and Thummim, 205  
  
 Vates, 58  
 Valens, 220  
 Valerian, 82  
 Vatinius, 242  
 Vaughan, Henry, 19  
 Veii, 53, 201  
 Veline lake, 124  
 ventriloquist diviners, 245  
*Verwünschen*, 13  
 Vicarello, hot springs of, 136  
 victim, divination from movements  
     of, 184  
*victimarii*, 194  
 Virgil, 59  
     divination from verses of, 217  
 virgin priestess of Apollo Deiradiotes,  
     102  
 virgins as instruments in lekano-  
     mancy, 160  
*virus*, 101  
 Vitruvius' theory of extispication,  
     203, 204  
 volcanoes, sacrifices to, 113  
 volition, the essence of magical  
     action, 13  
  
 wand of poets, prophets and kings,  
     59  
  
 warriors casting astragali, 208  
 water of Ino, divination at, 111  
 water spirits which drown the  
     unwary, 114  
     in form of birds or women, 138  
 waters, sacred in Greece, 116 foll.  
     invoked in oaths, 116  
     offerings and sacrifices to, 117  
     connected with fertility, 122  
     connected with heroes, 123  
     in marriage and puberty initia-  
         tions, 123  
     contact with power of, 124  
     dedicated to Mother and Maid,  
         122  
     cause sterility, 122  
     cause madness, 124  
     *See also* rivers, springs, wells  
 wax, divination from w. dropped  
     into water, 147  
 weather, foretold by cries of birds,  
     259  
     magic, birds in, 257 foll.  
 weather-making kings, 5  
 weight, divination by, 222, 223  
 Welcker, 133  
 wells, sacred, 19  
     discovered by heroes or saints,  
         118  
     objects thrown into, 113, 135  
     katoptromantic divination at,  
         151, 153  
     of Demeter at Patrai, 151  
 white magic, 20  
 white men, fear of, 28  
 Willox, 153  
 Wirajuri kangaroo, 86  
 Witch of Endor, 244  
 witchcraft, 14, 16, 46  
 witch-swimming, 110  
 wives of god prophesy, 82  
 wolves, 46  
 words of power, 22, 50  
  
 Xenophon, 168  
 Xerxes, 47  
 Xouthos, 173  
  
*Yaka*, 41  
 Yeats, 23



- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Zakynthos, 95                                 | Z. Κληδόνιος, 232                 |
| Zedekiah, son of Chenaanah, 41                | Z. Kouros, 6                      |
| Zeus, 64, 84, 128, 185, 210, 255,<br>261, 266 | Z. Naos, 65                       |
| and the cuckoo, 256                           | Z. Panomphaios, 232               |
| Z. Ελλαπιναστής, 188                          | Z. Phemios, 232                   |
| Z. Euphemios, 232                             | Z. Σπλαγχνοτόμος, 188             |
| Z. Horkios, 109                               | <i>Zuckungsbücher</i> , 174 foll. |
|   | Zywie, 256                        |

THE END



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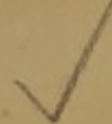
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*Greek Divination.* By W. R. HALLIDAY. (Macmillan. 1913.)  
5s. net.

THE sub-title of this work states that it is a study of the methods and principles of Greek Divination, but in the preface it is explained that the essay is concerned not merely with the principles of the methods of divination practised in ancient Greece but also with the origins of those methods. And, in effect, the interest of the book lies mainly in the suggestions made as to the origin of divination. Mr. Halliday starts from the close and intimate relation between Divination and Magic, quoting the words in which Mr. Witton Davies, speaking of the Hebrews, says 'the future is not so much foretold as made or constituted by the art of the magician'; and he refers to Numbers xxii. 2 and 2 Chron. xviii as illustrating the confusion between the act of making the future and that of predicting it. The idea, however, Mr. Halliday goes on to maintain, that divination is possible assumes that the future is fixed—otherwise it could not be divined—yet the only purpose for which divination is practised is that of altering what, by the assumption on which divination is based, is fixed and unalterable. On the whole, Mr. Halliday fails to convince us that there is any intimate relation between Divination and Magic: if, by magic or otherwise, I set to work to bring about something, I may foresee and foretell the result, but I do not divine it. ~~I divine what will be done by others~~—men or gods—not by me. Indeed Mr. Halliday himself, when he says that 'a large part of divination is derived directly from magic,' admits that there is some divination which is not derived—directly, at any rate—from magic. Whether he would admit that there is some which is not derived from magic at all, is not quite clear. But, to begin with, there is certainly some, not so derived: it is in trance or vision that the future is specially supposed to be revealed, and trance or vision is not a form of magic, even if a spaeman at one time sees visions and at another does magic. Mr. Halliday, however, as he announces in the preface, 'does not attempt to deal with oracles,' and consequently we do not know whether, if he did, he would derive them from magic, directly or indirectly. But he does deal with augury and omens, from which man has commonly sought to divine the future. And it is obvious that the flight and song of birds have nothing to do with magic. Primitive man may be 'terrified by the doleful hoot of the owl, or find a suggestion of victory in the fierce swoop of the hawk,' but no magician plays any part in the proceeding. It is in the same way obvious that, in the case of omens, no magician either appears or is supposed to have anything to do with them. Why this omen should fill a man with foreboding, or that with hope, is a question which it may or may not be possible to answer; but there is no need to drag in the magician, who is not there, and no advantage in doing so.

To maintain that magic is the sole source of human folly is unduly to restrict the capacity of man.



To maintain that magic is the sole source of human life  
is going so.

The magician, who is not there, and no advantage  
it may or may not be possible to answer; but there is no  
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thing there is some which is not derived from magic at all,  
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