

way toward the notion of a causal order that is nonpurposive in character—indifferent to all volition, whether human or divine. But before thought could attain this conception it had to pass through the stage of conceiving the single, pervasive order as a moral law binding on gods and men alike.

Homer order of Universe was vaguely

Because

some times

God and Nature in Hesiod

So things seem to happen for no predictable reason.

- ① fate ruled gods
- ② Gods ruled fate
- ③ there is regularity in nature
- ④ there are inter-raptions of that regularity

Hesiod took an important step in this direction. Just as Homer's theology expressed the social structure of Greece in his period, Hesiod's was a product of a later period—probably the eighth century B.C.—and reflects the changed circumstances of the "time of troubles" that developed when economic pressures forced the small farmer to choose between serfdom and emigration.

Hesiod may have been such a small farmer. At least he wrote bitterly against grasping nobles who oppressed the poor. *Works and Days* describes how his brother Perses, by bribing one of these unjust lords, was able to steal Hesiod's inheritance from their father. As he raised his voice in protest, Hesiod envisaged an order that would correct such abuses. For him Zeus was not a hotheaded, magnified edition of Agamemnon or the other Homeric kings; he was the fashioner of a rule of justice that sooner or later would right wrongs, correct abuses, lift up the downtrodden, and punish the wicked and unjust.

This was a new conception. In Homer divine punishment had been directed less against human wrongdoing than against human insolence, against the man who set himself up as equal or superior to the gods. Here, of course, Homer had merely given expression to the warrior code of those among whom he lived. In a military system insubordination is the vilest of crimes, for the very existence of the system depends on every member's recognition and acceptance of his place. With Hesiod the moral life was differently conceived. Expressing the sentiments of the lower classes, who were not warriors but farmers, he considered the supreme offense to be oppression of the weak by the strong.

At the same time that Hesiod deepened the conception of wrongdoing, he radically changed the way in which the sanctions against immoral conduct operated. For Homer these sanctions had operated, on the whole, capriciously: Zeus was virtually at the mercy of whichever relative happened to catch his ear. For Hesiod, on the contrary, Zeus had the moral integrity to choose, and the power to enforce, the rule of law. The law that he promulgated for man operated with complete certainty and regularity to reward the good for their goodness and to punish the wicked for their wickedness. It may be said, indeed, that Hesiod took over the old notion of fate and that, while retaining the notion of absolute necessity, he refined it by rejecting its indifference to humanity. In his hands fate became the concept of a pervasive moral law.

Works and Days, for instance

Through him mortal as great Zeus wills. For man low; easily he hum straightens the crooked the will of Zeus. . . .

Listen to right and by on the other side to at length to the end of

For those who practice of Cronos, ordains a p man who sins and dev great trouble upon the perish away, and their few, through the contr the son of Cronos either an end of their ships o

You princes, mark w are near among men crooked judgments, and teous earth Zeus has t and these keep watch o in mist, all over the e make straight your judg altogether from your th

Lay up these things altogether to think of v for men, that fishes and for right is not in them best. For whoever know gives him prosperity; b swears himself, and so generation is left obscu

The last sentences express a rest of nature; he has an obligation to do certain acts and to abstain they felt in being human (a privilege with a sense of *noblesse oblige*: This is quite different from feudal commands.

These notions connect with as the Greeks thought of it, is a

3 See pp. 5 and 62.

Works and Days, for instance, begins with this praise for Father Zeus:

Through him mortal men are famed or unfamed, sung or unsung alike, as great Zeus wills. For easily he makes strong, and easily he brings the strong man low; easily he humbles the proud and raises the obscure, and easily he straightens the crooked and blasts the proud. . . . So is there no way to escape the will of Zeus. . . .

Listen to right and do not foster violence. . . . The better path is to go by on the other side towards justice; for Justice beats Outrage when she comes at length to the end of the race. . . .

For those who practise violence and cruel deeds far-seeing Zeus, the son of Cronos, ordains a punishment. Often even a whole city suffers for a bad man who sins and devises presumptuous deeds, and the son of Cronos lays great trouble upon the people, famine and plague together, so that the men perish away, and their women do not bear children, and their houses become few, through the contriving of Olympian Zeus. And again, at another time, the son of Cronos either destroys their wide army, or their walls, or else makes an end of their ships on the sea.

You princes, mark well this punishment you also; for the deathless gods are near among men and mark all those who oppress their fellows with crooked judgments, and reckon not the anger of the gods. For upon the bounteous earth Zeus has thrice ten thousand spirits, watchers of mortal men, and these keep watch on judgments and deeds of wrong as they roam, clothed in mist, all over the earth. . . . Keep watch against this, you princes, and make straight your judgments, you who devour bribes; put crooked judgments altogether from your thoughts. . . .

Lay up these things within your heart and listen now to right, ceasing altogether to think of violence. For the son of Cronos has ordained this law for men, that fishes and beasts and winged fowls should devour one another, for right is not in them; but to mankind he gives right which proves far the best. For whoever knows the right and is ready to speak it, far-seeing Zeus gives him prosperity; but whoever deliberately lies in his witness and forswears himself, and so hurts Justice and sins beyond repair, that man's generation is left obscure thereafter.⁴

The last sentences express a typically Greek view: Man is different from the rest of nature; he has an obligation to live in a characteristically human way, to do certain acts and to abstain from doing others. The Greeks coupled the pride they felt in being human (a pride that the Hebrews, for instance, did not share) with a sense of *noblesse oblige*: Man must live up to his responsibilities as man. This is quite different from feeling that man must obey a divine overlord's commands.

These notions connect with another key concept, moderation.³ Moderation, as the Greeks thought of it, is a peculiarly human trait. No one expects animals

³ See pp. 5 and 62.

to temper their violent impulses; the law for them is such that they must devour one another in order to survive. But men are capable of an inner discipline, a self-restraint in their dealings with one another. They ought to live by this uniquely human law; when they do not, they sooner or later pay for their violations, as Achilles did.

Further, the operation of this moral law is no longer conceived of as being in the hands of an arbitrary and temperamental divinity. In Homer there had usually been a "way to escape the will of Zeus," either by bribery or cajolery. Moreover, Zeus himself seemed not to know the extent of his will or whether it would be efficacious. Though Hesiod still speaks of the will of Zeus, it has now become a force operating uniformly, regularly, and pervasively throughout nature.

Despite these innovations, the *Theogony* shows that Hesiod retained much of the way of thinking of his predecessors. Hesiod's cosmogony—his account of the process by which the world came into existence—is still anthropomorphic:

Tell how the first gods and earth came to be, and rivers, and the boundless sea with its raging swell, and the gleaming stars, and the wide heaven above, and the gods who were born of them, givers of good things. . . . These things declare to us from the beginning, ye Muses who dwell in the house of Olympus, and tell me which of them first came to be.

Verily at first Chaos came to be, but next wide-bosomed Earth . . . and Eros [Love], fairest among the deathless gods. . . . From Chaos came forth Erebus and black Night: of Night were born Aether [the upper air] and Day. . . . Earth first bare the starry Heaven, equal to herself, to cover her on every side. . . . And she brought forth long Hills, forceful haunts of the goddess-Nymphs. . . . She bare also the fruitless deep with his raging swell. . . .^e

Indeed, Hesiod's *Theogony* is a kind of divine *Burke's Peerage* that describes at once the genealogies of the gods and the process by which the world as we know it came to be. It is an indication of the mythic level of Hesiod's thought that for him these undertakings were identical.

Thales

Thales lived in Miletus, a Greek colony in Ionia on the coast of Asia. He is said to have predicted an eclipse that modern astronomers have calculated to have occurred in 585 B.C. According to Aristotle, who lived almost two hundred and fifty years later, Thales believed that water is the cause of all things and that all things are filled with gods. This is virtually all that is known about Thales, but it clearly shows that he conceived of the world process in natural terms. With Thales, cosmogony had not yet become science, but it was no longer a genealogy of the gods. It had become something that could (and eventually did) develop into science.

Thales must have been impressed by the numerous physical transformations

water is capable of—from ice phenomena as evaporation, rain, springs gushing forth from the earth. . . . In the process of the transformation water "becomes" air, and in the formation of a delta, water becomes land. . . . The process in which earth becomes water is a natural process and a strong presupposition of the assertion that the cause of every

To reach this conclusion he must have had a principle (it is not too far-fetched to say that the religious past) and, second, a principle not in divine doings.

It is almost impossible to express this point of view. In the *Theogony*, the process of natural occurrences; what happens in the spirit. Successive generations of myths, or more morally refined myths, have developed the poetic process of development of the poetic process, an aesthetic competence—not increasing in the myths not only failed to increase. As long as the causes of events were of meteorology, for instance, were supernatural explanations (for events) conditions that actually determined the outset. Instead of a science of divination, which process of science of divination, which process of how we might effect changes in the world.

With Thales we reach an advance in natural science which an advance in natural science, indeed *theories*—public assertions about the world that are the basis of their internal consistency. Criteria for evaluating theories is itself a process. Adequate criteria is itself a process. Criteria. But this dual and reciprocal process somewhere and sometime. As in Ionia, and it is associated with

Thales' name is remembered. We know to have answered in nature as they do?" But there is a method of philosophy. His question implies the kind of answer called for—"begin?" implies assumptions that assumptions determined the whole