Introductory lecture

Autor(en): **Rose, H.J.**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique**

Band (Jahr): **1 (1954)**

PDF erstellt am: **14.09.2024**

Persistenter Link: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-660612

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I

H.J. ROSE

Introductory Lecture

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

WHEN trying to trace the development of the idea of God in Greece we are handicapped, as is so often the case when we study the great peoples of history, by our defective knowledge of their origins. Contrast, for instance, the comparative ease with which we can trace the development of Christian theology in the major European nations. We know in some detail when the new faith came to them, who brought it, in what form it was taught, what its ritual was like, what conflicts and compromises it had with the existing paganism. We know, with full documentary evidence, what movements arose afterwards, what heretics, reformers, counter-reformers sprang up and succeeded or failed. And knowing all this we can give good historical reasons why an English, a French, a German theist of to-day, be he Christian or not, conceives of God in the way he does, and not in some other fashion. But for Greece we are almost as defectively informed as we should be if we knew nothing of English religious belief and thought earlier than Henry VIII, nothing of German Christianity before Luther. Thus we are cut off from a great part of the history of the formation of Greek habits of mind, and have no ready answer, for instance, to the question why they were almost invariably anthropomorphists in their attempts to imagine Deity, why the relative importance of female as against male powers seems to have declined, why their gods seem never to create, or why there was so little in their persons and activities that savoured of the mysterious or even magical.

For what do we know of the early days of Greek religion, that is of religion in the country we call Greece and in those parts of the neighbouring countries which at fairly early dates became the homes of Hellenic settlers who brought

with them their language and customs? A certain amount, yes; but not nearly enough. We have one venerable document, the Homeric poems, which I would date to the tenth century B. C., although many would put it, or part of it, later. But suppose I am right; the bearers of the Greek language seem to have begun to enter Greece about the twentieth century before our era; what was happening to them in the meantime? We know a little of their material history and civilisation, very little of their thought, religious or other. Greece was not uninhabited when they came; what manner of powers did the Thessalian and Helladic cultures believe in? The brilliant civilisation of Minoan Crete certainly influenced the mainland before and after the formation of the Mycenaean culture, and we have but to consult Nilsson's great work[1] to see how much of the picture of Cretan religion and its mainland developments is faded past all certain restoration, since for us the Minoan monuments are dumb and even if we could read their script there is little left to read, hardly more than what seem to be labels and seal-mottoes, except the isolated Phaistos disk. A few things we can make out. It is a plausible theory that the mainlanders worshipped a power of fertility, quite likely an earth-goddess; we can even guess with some show of reason that her name, or pet name at least, was Da. Goddesses were certainly prominent in the Minoan cults, though we know none too much about their functions and nature, certainly not enough to warrant us in supposing that they were all variants of one female power. Some of these pre-Achaian goddesses we can find with more or less certainty in the Homeric and post-Homeric world, Artemis quite probably, Athena undoubtedly, Helen possibly at least, others more vaguely, for the line between heroine and 'faded' goddess is not always easy to draw, but at least the daughters

1. *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion*, 2, Lund 1950.

of Kekrops seem to be minor powers of fertility, and their Greek names might be secondary. As for the Achaians themselves, we can hardly say more than that they worshipped Zeus. Of his sons, Apollo is beyond doubt a foreigner, wherever his Greek votaries first came across him; Ares seems to be a Thracian, Dionysos is apparently Phrygian and in any case comparatively a late comer; Homer has just heard of him and it seems to be the received opinion that he and Apollo came to an agreement about the seventh century B. C. Hephaistos is plainly an Asianic immigrant, though of fairly early date. Zeus' wife and daughters are but doubtfully his. The former is the great Lady (*Hera*) of Argos, whose cult clearly preceded his both there and at Olympia. The latter include Artemis, Athena, and the Cyprian immigrant Aphrodite. Hestia his sister is little more than a shadow, the hearth personified and never very personal; Demeter's name has been variously explained, but only its second element is certainly Greek. Kore-Persephone assuredly has non-Greek connections, and even when she is Kore the corn-maiden and not the queen of ghosts, she is part and parcel of a very ancient rite at Eleusis which can be traced to Mycenaean days at least. Of his brothers, the name of Poseidon is a happy hunting-ground for conjectural etymologies, and the most elaborately argued reconstruction of his origin and growth[2] makes him a god, so to say, of mixed blood, husband of the somewhat hypothetical goddess Da. It seems just now to be the fashion to deny that Hades is the Unseen One, although I for one am content with the old etymology. But in any case the divine family is a very mixed group, especially when we add to it Hekate the Karian, with her strange character which varies from that of a deity strong to aid her worshippers in all their needs to a disreputable figure worshipped in holes and corners by

2. Fr. Schachermeyr, *Poseidon und die Entstehung des griechischen Götterglaubens*, Bern 1950.

witches or placed outside a house as a spiritual scarecrow to keep other bogeys away. And outside this select body we have the *plebs superum*, the innumerable little local powers, Nymphs, satyrs, Seilenoi, Panes, with one comparatively great god Pan apparently crystallising out of them, Artemides now and again, with Hermes the daimon of the cairn by the wayside (if that is what he truly was to begin with) on the border-line between lesser and greater, also numerous objects of the worship of some small community who have no names but only epithets, and strange groups such as the Kabeiroi and the Great Gods of Samothrace, to whom I shall have to return presently.

As far back, therefore, as we can go, we find the inhabitants of Greece worshipping a bewildering number of gods and godlings, very far from homogeneous in origin and conceived, it would appear, in a number of different ways. We know, or at least guess intelligently and plausibly, that the chief reason for this was that the population consisted of at least two strata, the older inhabitants, whom the classical Greeks knew as Pelasgoi, and the bringers of the Greek language, whom it is perhaps most convenient to call Achaians. We must not, however, forget that there is another stratification, one primarily economic. In the earliest society we can learn anything about there were, in Greece as in other countries, men comparatively rich, owners (or perhaps rather trustees) of fairly large tracts of land and of the produce thereof, who were known by titles which we generally render by 'king' or 'prince', though those are rather too high words for these rulers of small groups of subjects, and men much poorer, owners or tenants of small pieces of ground from which they wrung a bare living under conditions such as Hesiod describes. Finally there were the thralls, *thetes*, who might be in the service of wealthy men and so be comparatively comfortable, or in that condition which the ghost of Achilles seems to think the most

miserable on earth, under a master who had no estate, *kleros*, of his own, presumably a small tenant-farmer.[3] It is therefore not to be wondered at if the better-off were less afraid of the power of any gods, seeing that they were 'honoured even as gods' themselves by their vassals, while the poorer folk, knowing how completely they were at the mercy of forces quite beyond their control, liable for instance to be reduced from a meagre living to sheer starvation by one or two bad seasons, peopled their surroundings with a host of unseen beings who were dangerous if angered, quick to take offence at small slights, and to be propitiated by observances generally simple and often betraying a survival of something like savage thought and custom. And it is to be observed that, again judging by what Hesiod has to tell us, these unprivileged believers were by no means all of the aboriginal population, for they included men like the poet himself, who were of as good Greek stock as any of their richer fellow-countrymen. We cannot make a facile division of Greek beliefs and practices into higher and lower, or Olympian and chthonian, or polytheistic and polydaimonistic, and then equate the two halves of the antithesis with Achaian and Pelasgian, or northerners (if the Achaians were northerners) and Mediterraneans. Fusion of the different strains seems to have begun at an early date, must indeed have done so, for it is most unlikely, and also contrary to tradition, that the invaders brought many of their women with them, and so intermarriages would take place practically from the beginning, especially but not only among the lower orders. And the language spoken by the descendants of these mixed marriages was regularly Greek, the old speech dying out, save perhaps for a few small enclaves here and there as late as Herodotos' time,[4] and leaving traces only in place-names, names of some deities, and words signifying various kinds of plants and so forth.

3. *Odyssey*, XI, 489-951. 4. Herodotos, I, 57.

The most, therefore, that we can do is to distinguish between the religious attitudes of the higher and lower classes of Greek society, putting on one side the question of their ethnical composition, although it is nowise improbable that the lower orders had in their ancestry a larger share of the old local strain, of Helladic as opposed to Achaian blood. Here we have some material to go upon, starting from the lucky chance which gave us in our oldest documents the compositions of a court bard and a small farmer, who approached their poetical profession from very different angles. Let us sketch their points of view and see if we can draw therefrom any materials for explaining why later Greeks thought as they did concerning the supernatural.

Homer, as is well known, gives us a glimpse into what he does not formally describe, the religion of a singularly enlightened aristocracy, living under material conditions not very unlike those of the feudal epoch in Europe but with a mental attitude which would have surprised the nobles of the Middle Ages and horrified their clergy. The Homeric barons clearly believed firmly in their gods and regarded religious practices as an essential part of their lives: all men, says good old Nestor, have need of the gods.[5] But there is a noteworthy absence of any profound awe in the presence, even the visible presence, of these revered beings. Still to take Nestor as our example, when Athena, who had been standing by and speaking to him under a human disguise, suddenly turns herself into a bird and flies away, Homer tells us indeed that 'the old man was surprised' and that 'surprise took hold of them all when they saw it', but no one is overcome; Nestor at once comments to Telemachos on what has happened, utters a short prayer to the goddess, and promises her a sacrifice, which he proceeds to arrange for.[6] Achilles looks over his shoulder straight into the terrible

5. *Odyssey*, III, 48. 6. *Ibid.*, 371 sqq.

eyes of the same deity, but is fully self-possessed and asks her in a matter-of-fact way why she has come, going on at once to voice his grievance against Agamemnon.[7] Contrast, for instance, the attitude of Elijah during the theophany on Mt. Horeb, who on hearing the *sibilus aurae tenuis*, as the Vulgate has it,[8] which announced the presence of Yahweh, 'wrapped his face in his mantle' before going out to hear the message from the deity. On occasion one of the greater heroes will not only, like Diomedes, attack one god because he is supported by another,[9] but criticise him as sharply as if he were a god himself. We hear not only the complaint of a very minor goddess, Kalypso, when her affaire with Odysseus is interfered with by command of Zeus,

σχέτλιοι ἐστέ, θεοί, ζηλήμονες.

('Full of wicked jealousy are ye gods', *Odyssey* v, 118), but the most open criticism of Apollo to his face by Achilles, in language which Plato was to consider unfit to be heard by the young and impressionable,

ἔβλαψάς μ' ἑκάεργε, θεῶν ὀλοώτατε πάντων...
ἦ σ'ἂν τεισαιμην, εἴ μοι δύναμίς γε παρείη.

('Thou hast harmed me, Far-Darter, most cruel of all gods ... truly I would take revenge on thee, had I the power', *Iliad* xxii, 15, 20, cf. Plato, *Repub.* 391a).

It is at the very opposite end of the scale from such an attitude as is expressed in St. Jerome's dictum, one of hundreds of like tone which might be cited from Jewish or Christian sources, *sciendum quod iudicium Dei humana non possit scire fragilitas* ('you must know that frail humanity cannot comprehend the judgement of God', *Comm. in Isaiam* viii, p. 337d Vallarsi). Humanity, frail or not, which held to the tradition of the Achaian gentry in its religious

7. *Iliad*, I, 199 sqq. 8. 3 Reg., 19, 12. 9. *Iliad*, V, 330 sqq., 855 sqq.

attitude was ready to criticise, because it felt itself perfectly capable of knowing, such divine judgements as affected it. Long after Homer, Theognis was to puzzle himself over what has proved a serious problem to more philosophical men than he, how to reconcile the prosperity of the wicked with the omnipotence of God; but his reflection took the form of a direct protest to Zeus himself, whom he tells that he is much surprised at his inconsistent behaviour.[10] Such an enquirer would not have been so quickly silenced as Job was by a reminder that not being a god himself he should not expect to understand deity.[11] Yet, with all their lack of humility in face of their gods, the upholders of this part of Greek tradition seem to have been of one mind in considering the gap between gods and men unbridgeable; for the gods are immortal and have unlimited power, whereas men die and their powers, at best, have clearly defined limits. It is to this tradition that two of the most famous sayings of antiquity belong, the maxim of Pindar, 'seek not to become Zeus', and the tale of Diagoras' friend, who, when the old athlete's sons won distinction at Olympia, bade him die, because he would never ascend to heaven.[12]

'There is', says Professor Macbeath (*Experiments in Living*, London 1952, p. 327) 'a tendency both for the concept of the supernatural to become moralised and for morality to acquire a religious sanction; but the latter tendency, at least, is by no means universal.' If we examine the Homeric or aristocratic tradition in Greece, we find both tendencies present, although not very marked. The Epic gods are not without a moral side to their nature, far though they may be from ethical perfection. For instance, Zeus is sufficiently interested in moral conduct to send a special warning to Aigisthos to refrain from murder and adultery; and he is susceptible to an argument based on the principle of fair

10. Theognis 373-80. 11. Job 38, 1-42, 6. 12. Pindar, *Isth.* v, 14, cf. *Olymp.* v, 2; Cicero, *Tusc. disput.* i, 111; Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 34.

play. Odysseus, Athena reminds him, has always behaved piously towards Zeus, and therefore has a claim to divine assistance in his troubles. Zeus acknowledges that this is so, and therefore determines that the enmity which Poseidon feels towards the hero shall be overruled by a majority vote of the other gods and Odysseus helped to return to his own kingdom. Poseidon himself is not actuated by mere spite; Odysseus has blinded the Cyclops, who is Poseidon's son, and revenge is fully allowable by contemporary codes of morals, indeed there are occasions when it becomes a duty.[13] First Chryses and then Achilles appeal successfully to celestial powers to punish those who have wronged them; and a virtuous king may normally expect that his land will be fruitful and his subjects will prosper.[14] The gods' own interrelations, however, do not seem to be governed by any very definite code, except that they on occasion show gratitude to one another for favours received, as when Hephaistos exerts his skill for the benefit of Eurynome and Thetis and later for Thetis' son, because they had rescued and sheltered him when Hera cast him out, while Zeus himself is moved to revenge Achilles chiefly because Thetis has a claim on him for aiding him against rebels of his own household. Generally, subject to obedience to the overriding will of Zeus, which he justifies on no higher grounds than his own vastly superior might, they seem to do much as they please to one another, again within the limits imposed by respect for each other's powers or cunning.[15] They are in fact much like human nobles, in whom respect for any sort of international code, or even the feeling that such a code ought to exist, seems to have been very little developed in Homeric times. The kingdom, or barony, was for most purposes completely sovran and independent, unless of course it was conquered and became a subject 'city' which

13. *Odyssey*, I, 68–79. 14. *Iliad*, I, 37 sqq., *Odyssey*, XIX, 109 sqq. 15. *Iliad*, XVIII, 394 sqq., I, 395 sqq., 503 sqq.

could, if the overlord chose, be cleared of its inhabitants and handed over to new-comers, as Menelaos suggested doing by way of inducing Odysseus to come and settle near him in the Peloponnesos.[16] And being independent and sovran, it so completely had its own laws, or customs, that a woman (Helen is the classical instance) could be simultaneously the legal wife of two different men in two realms.

If now we turn to the beliefs of the lower orders, starting from Hesiod, we find a very different tone. His Zeus is the author of justice, which is the great distinction between men and beasts; mythologically, she is his daughter, her mother being Themis and her sisters Eunomia and Eirene.[17] Theologically, he rewards the just and punishes the unjust and the perjured. There is nothing here which Homer would have denied; he too believes in deities who punish perjurers, although they or some of them are not Olympian but chthonian. But the emphasis is different, Hesiod dwelling on the justice of Zeus in a way foreign to Epic. It may be said that this is the opinion of one man, a poet of theological interests; but side by side with his conception, destined to be expanded and made still more impressive by Aeschylus, we find, still in the religion of the lower rather than the higher orders, a machinery for punishing at least some forms of injustice, those forms which are most widely resented, because they strike at the fundamental structure of the family itself. I refer of course to the Erinyes, whose non-Greek name seems to guarantee their ancientry. Homer is indeed acquainted with these grim beings, but his attitude towards them is the result of what seems to be comparatively cool and almost philosophic reflexion on their nature and functions, not the fervid and awestruck belief in them which much later was to find supreme dramatic expression in the

16. *Odyssey*, IV, 174 sqq. 17. Hesiod, *O. D.*, 356 sqq.; *Theog.*, 901-02.

Eumenides of Aeschylus. He does indeed attribute to them, or to an Erinys, the traditional function of avenging a wrong done to the next of kin; the 'Erinys that walks in darkness' hears Althaia when she prays for death for her son (*Iliad* ix, 571), but we are told no details; Meleagros was dead by the date of the Trojan War (*Iliad* ii, 642), that is all. Elsewhere, the Erinyes of his unwittingly injured mother inflict 'many woes' on Oidipus. But it was an Erinys who, in Agamemnon's opinion, made him so forget himself as to wrong Achilles (*Iliad* xix, 87), that is, a man who was none of his kin. And it is the Erinyes who stop Xanthos from speaking any further to his master (*ibid.*, 418), in other words they do something very like what Herakleitos[18] says they would do if the sun turned off his proper course; they maintain the normal workings of nature, which do not include human speech in a horse's mouth. It seems to me that we are here already a long way from the embodied curses which the primitive Erinyes probably are.

On the whole, then, these lower-class worshippers conceived of their gods as more directly and actively interested in morals than did their social superiors. At the same time, again to judge by their earliest spokesman, they did not set so great a gap between mortals and immortals as was usual with the gentry. As is well known, the long history of the word δαίμων as something other than a vaguer synonym of θεός begins in the *Works and Days*, which tells us (122) that the men of the Golden Age, who were mortals like ourselves, although morally far superior, became and now are daimones, guardians of mortal men and givers of prosperity. This passage, it is plain, early excited interest, for someone inserted into the description two lines from further on in the poem, to identify these beings with the innumerable spies of Zeus who, in 252 foll., walk the earth invisible and observe the

18. Herakleitos frag. 29 Bywater, 94 Diels-Kranz.

doings of mankind. Of course we must not read into the poet the elaborate daemonology which the scholia find in him, but the commentators are so far right that this is, so far as we know, the beginning of those ingenious speculations which flourished especially from the last days of Plato's life onwards. Mr. Guthrie has rightly said (*The Greeks and their Gods*, London 1950, 113-16) that it is a central problem whether the gulf between men and gods is unbridgeable or not, in Greek opinion. So far as it goes, the evidence of Hesiod tends to indicate that the latter view was taken by at least some of the lower-class Greeks of early days, or at all events, they had ideas which might be not illogically developed in that direction. Hero-cult is, I think, another step on the same road. It is worth remarking that to call a potent ghost a *heros*, that is to say a gentleman or noble, hints pretty strongly that the cult was of plebeian origin. If the *heroes* of Homer's time had had such a worship, which by all indications they had not, they surely would have called the objects of it by some name which differentiated them more clearly from their own living equals. I hold that the vassals of Homeric nobles on occasion continued to 'honour, even as a god' some chieftain whose power and abilities as a ruler had impressed them, and to hold, contrary to what seems to have been the aristocratic belief, that even among the dead he was something more than a shadow and could, at least in the immediate neighbourhood of his mortal remains, influence the living for good or ill. That on occasion the veneration might go further than such local worship is clear at all events from the apotheosis of Herakles, who, whether he ever really existed or not, clearly was originally conceived as a man and no god, as his name plainly testifies.

But, leaving Hesiod and most of our literary evidence on one side, we have in and about the classical Greek world a class of cults which have been expounded in recent times

especially by those learned investigators Fernand Chapouthier and Bengt Hemberg.[19] Every here and there we find as objects of worship, not single deities but groups, sometimes of definite number, as in the case of *les Dioscures au service d'une déesse*, sometimes not so. In all such cases, apart from patent borrowings from the mythology of other beings (as when the males of the group are identified with Kastor and Polydeukes), we hear of very little in the way of legends concerning these vague figures; yet it is plain that in many cases at least the group was fervently worshipped and often referred to by highly complimentary titles, as the Great, the Powerful and so on. I think we can find analogies for these cults which go at all events some way towards explaining whence they came.

An early religious phenomenon, whether primitive or not fortunately does not matter for our purpose, is beyond reasonable doubt the concept of a power, *numen*, *mana*, *wakanda*, *orenda*, according as we choose to call it by a Latin, a Polynesian or an Amerindian name, which is more than human, at all events beyond that of ordinary humanity, commoners having little or none of it, great men and holders of important offices a good deal, in their persons, their regalia or their ritual formulae, gods and ghosts a very considerable amount; though it may also be found in unpromising places, for example in an oddly-shaped stone, if on trial that stone is found to possess the very desirable quality of making the gardens bear better than usual. It would appear that there is a stage of religious development at which believers in such *mana* conclude that where there is a power there must be someone to exercise it, but go little, if at all, further in their reasoning. The most familiar example of this stage is the earlier religion of Rome, so far as we can reconstruct it. Here, leaving out of count the multitude of

19. F. Chapouthier, *Les Dioscures au service d'une déesse*, Paris 1935; B. Hemberg, *Die Kabiren*, Uppsala 1950.

Sondergötter, justly suspect ever since Wissowa's famous essay of being the product of more or less educated or specialist reflexion, not of genuine popular thought, we have such groups as the Lares, conventionally two in number, which I take to be no more than a naïve expression of plurality (if I may adduce a parallel from another kind of naïveté, I know young children in whose mouths the word 'two' means simply 'more than one'), the Semunes, whatever their origin and functions may be, the Nouuensides, and, perhaps the best illustration of all, the Indigetes, almost certainly 'they who are active in' some sphere as yet undetermined by modern research. So far as our information goes, none of these groups ever had any mythology, or any kind of differentiation within the group, save that the Lares projected the Lar Familiaris, i.e., that one of the plurality who is specially concerned with the *familia*: and even here, one would like to be sure that such a Greek figure as the ἥρως οἰκουρός did not affect the development. In several cases, we do not know the etymology of the name by which the group is called, and cannot be certain that it is originally Latin, or even that it is Wiro (a term I prefer to 'Indo-Germanic' or 'Indo-European', because it begs no ethnological questions). Now one of the most interesting facts for ancient Italy is that, so far as we can discover, these ancient but vague groups are contemporary with, or at all events belong to the same religious system as, such comparatively clear-cut and personal figures as Juppiter and Mars, whom we cannot trace back to anything less than the status of high gods, having wide functions and worshipped over a large territory; Juppiter in particular was assuredly the sky-god of some or all of those invaders of early date (whoever exactly they may have been) who brought Latin and its cognates with them to the peninsula. Thus, whatever may be the ethnological reason for it, we have in Rome at all events a clear instance of the double form of religious

thought (if it can be called by so intellectual a term at that stage) whereof we find traces in Greece.

Returning now to the Greek phenomena, we find at a date certainly not later than the sixth century B. C. the complicated religious movement which for want of a better name we style Orphism. I do not now wish to discuss the many and difficult questions relevant to this movement, such as the age of the various doctrines belonging to it, the extent, if any, to which it ever was one body of doctrine such as might conceivably have been embodied in some kind of creed, its relations to Pythagoreanism, and so forth. Let me keep to the one undoubted fact, that from as far back as we can trace the movement there were current, perhaps never among the bulk of the populace, but certainly among a considerable portion of it, speculations concerning the origin and government of the universe and the destiny of man, and that these were frequently embodied in poems written somewhat after the manner of Hesiod and borrowing freely from him, but attributed to the mythical Orpheus or to alleged contemporaries and associates of his, notably Musaios. The form of the speculations was, as could hardly have been otherwise at that time, mythological and genealogical, the myths, as far back as we can trace them, having a strange and wild form, full of absurdities and immoralities (i.e., alleged departures on the part of the gods from what any Greek would normally recognise as praiseworthy conduct), and a little reminiscent of those stories in the Hesiodic tradition which we feel most alien to ordinary Hellenic mythology (for instance, the fantastic relations between Kronos and his family) and therefore assign to some source other than the kind of imagination which furnished Homer with his material.

The question of the origin of these speculations has been debated, and it is the opinion of Mr. Guthrie that Orphism as a whole is not only Greek but upper-class Greek, whereas

most scholars think of it rather as a popular movement and some detect foreign influence. I incline to think that both sides are, in a sense, right. First, as to the origin of the ideas, it seems to be true that no religious movement of any importance has come from the lower strata of any people. Mohammed was a man of some social position, though apparently not the highest; Buddha was a prince; Zarathustra was at least the protégé of an influential noble; the father of Jesus seems to have been a master-carpenter, a man of some substance who claimed very high descent, and one of his brothers, James, was rather prominent among his own people. Of later movements, Francis of Assissi was highborn; Methodism owed its beginning largely to a Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, a man well educated and of very respectable upper middle-class parents, although his family was far from wealthy. By such analogies as these it is not at all improbable that Orphism, or some of its doctrines, sprang from the activities of a man, or men, at least not of the lowest grade of Greek society, possessed of some means and leisure. But again by these same analogies, we need not be surprised if many of its adherents were, like the bulk of St. Paul's, St. Francis' and John Wesley's converts, of the 'unprivileged' classes. Plato may be right when he attributes the doctrine of reincarnation in one of its Orphic or Orphic-Pythagorean forms to those priests and priestesses 'who care to be able to give a reason for their practices' (*Meno* 81a), and priests and priestesses were often members of very good families; but the idea that a virtuous man, however poor and humble in this life, might find acceptance in another world and be reborn to a high station here, is certainly one which would find a warm welcome among many of the decent poor in those troubled centuries which saw the rise of so many interesting religious phenomena, Orphism, Pythagoreanism (so far as that was a religious and not a philosophic movement), *Wundermänner* such as Epimenides of Crete, the

Sibyls, and lastly that strange creature, born out of due time, Empedokles of Sicily, who looks at once backward to the age of inspired prophets and teachers of religion and forward to the development of philosophical and scientific theory.

Let us then attempt to put all these facts together and see if we can estimate the legacy which the earlier times left to those who formed European theology in its main lines. On the one hand, the ideas which we have seen associated with the Homeric aristocracy and its successors contributed, we may perhaps say, the rudiments of a transcendental Deity. Between the least gods and the greatest men there is the double gulf of the greater power of the former and their immortality. Once a man is dead, he becomes an insignificant, 'strengthless' shadow, and remains so. There is one small class of exceptions; a few favoured individuals are transported to the Elysian Plain at the ends of the earth, and there, apparently, they do not die, but continue their earthly life under ideal conditions, especially of climate. On the other hand, if (which is doubtful) we can take the Nekyia as belonging to normal Homeric belief, a few others who have directly and unforgivably offended the gods are eternally tormented.[20] With these exceptions, punishments for sin take the form of earthly misfortune more or less severe, or of untimely death; while the inhabitants of Elysion are nowhere stated to have gained entrance by reason of exceptional virtue, Menelaos in particular being plainly told that his title to bliss is that he has married Helen and therefore is son-in-law of Zeus. Along with this contribution such as it is there is the persistent anthropomorphism of Homeric and most post-Homeric pictures of the gods; they are glorified men and women and not morally superior to their earthly models. They possess almost no powers which are

20. *Odyssey*, IV, 561 sqq., XI, 576 sqq.

mysterious or different in kind from those of human beings; the only important exceptions are that they can fly through the air (there may be some connection between this and the bird-form which Minoan deities seem on occasion to have taken), that they are generally invisible to human eyes, which have a 'mist' over them preventing them seeing a god or goddess, that they can take any visible shape they choose, at least any visible human shape, and that at all events some of them can alter the appearance of a human being or make him invisible altogether; Athena, it may be noted, is prominent in this kind of activity. It is perhaps especially noteworthy that they never create anything. Kalypso for instance has no magic boat to give Odysseus when she lets him go from her island; she provides materials and tools and leaves him to contrive the best makeshift craft he can put together. It certainly is true that they are far from immaterial; thus Athena again, visible only to Diomedes of all the warriors engaged, nevertheless is almost too great a load for his chariot when she takes the place of Sthenelos beside him, and she catches Ares' spear in her hand as he thrusts at Diomedes.[21]

Hence, when Greek theology of a philosophic kind began to develop, men like Xenophanes had a hard battle to fight and a long time to wait for any measure of success when they protested that God is not at all like human beings in body or mind (even in Xenophanes he has a sort of body, apparently) and accomplishes his purposes without physical effort or movement.[22] Even the highly transcendental god of the *Timaeus* does not create *ex nihilo*, and the gods whom he creates are not even essentially immortal, but kept in being by his will, which does not alter.[23] We may perhaps recollect that Homeric gods, although they never do die, yet under certain circumstances might do so, as nearly happened to

21. *Odyssey*, v, 160 sqq.; *Iliad*, v, 835 sqq. 22. Xenophanes frags. 19-22 Diehl. 23. Plato, *Tim.*, 31b; 41 a-b.

Ares when he was shut up in a chest for thirteen months and therefore cut off from the divine food which makes the gods immortal.[24] Even when anthropomorphism is got rid of, the typical Greek ideals of deity distinctly involve a personal god, not an impersonal force, and regularly leave room for a plurality of other beings more or less completely divine, however inferior to the supreme being. 'Exclusive' monotheism was never Greek.

Of some importance it seems to me, for the future development of Greek ideas of God is the fact that Zeus is regularly referred to as a father, πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, from Homer on. This of course, given the Greek use of πατήρ, long ago drawn attention to by Fustel de Coulanges,[25] means simply that he enjoys natural authority comparable to that of the head of a normal household; but it was an idea capable of further development. At least it had the negative aspect that we do not normally find the relation of God and man paralleled to that of master and slave; it is rather that of the senior and junior members of a family.

An outstanding characteristic, perhaps the most important of all, of this upper-class religion was that there never was a powerful priestly caste. Priests were normally persons who, without necessarily quitting any of their secular activities, were engaged in the ritual pertaining to this or that cult, and civil magistrates had regularly some priestly duties. Hence the authority of the Greek priesthood was simply that enjoyed by any expert, for example a physician, in his own sphere. Even Delphoi at the height of its influence was hardly more than a much respected advisory body, and stories of its advice being disregarded (with disastrous results, however, according at least to those accounts which we may suspect of being influenced by the personnel of the oracle), or of measures being taken to induce Apollo to

24. *Iliad*, v, 385 sqq., cf. 341-42. 25. *La cité antique*, p. 97.

change his advice and substitute something more in accordance with the consultant's wishes are quite common. Theological speculation, therefore, had no all-powerful orthodoxy to contend with. Trials for impiety did indeed take place, but it seems to me that they reduce to two types, those of Anaxagoras and of Sokrates being good examples. A physical scientist was in some danger from heresy-hunters if he came to the sound conclusion that what had long been regarded as a divine being, in his case the sun, was really an inanimate body, governed by mechanical laws and not by any will of its own. The last century saw a parallel in the rage of bigots against those scientists, first geologists and then biologists, whose discoveries incidentally put into its proper place the mythology which Christianity, like all other religions, had in course of time accumulated. Sokrates' indictment, in so far as it was not concerned with purely political matters (for clearly the notorious 'corruption of youth' meant the training up of anti-democrats) specified interference with the established State cults and alleged an attempt to introduce new and unauthorised forms of worship directed to strange objects. Only the former of these trials can properly be said to involve a theological objection to the doctrines taught by the accused.

Passing now to the question of what lasting contribution, if any, the lower orders made to theological developments, we have first to recognise that their attitude of mind must have been in some ways a hindrance to sound reasoning in this sphere. I am much inclined to think that the particularism which so strongly marks popular Greek religion is not wholly due to the fact that the country was split up into a multitude of petty city-states and political union was never effectively achieved, but in part at least to the tendency of the uneducated mind, if religious at all, to look for an object of worship as local as its own interests. We know that in modern Greece the widespread cult of the Virgin Mary splits into

scores of local worships, not without rivalry between them, of course not in the official teaching of the Orthodox Church, but in popular belief and feeling. In like manner we find in antiquity prominent cults, associated with local sites and their legends (Athena at Athens is the classical instance), which actually push into the background others which lack local ties and aim at a more nearly universal appeal. The strongest instance of this is the comparative neglect of the worship of Zeus outside his own chief shrines such at those at Olympia and Dodona. All this is the precise opposite of the trend of the best Greek thought, so far as that was theistic at all. Thus we have the strange paradox that the very city which, in Aeschylus, found the noblest poetical expression of belief in the righteous government of the universe by a supreme god to whom all others were subordinate, had an ecclesiastical calendar, so to call it, in which the modern enquirer has to search rather carefully to find evidence that that god was worshipped at all. Athena's temple was the glory of Greek architecture; that of Olympian Zeus was left for Hadrian to finish. It seems to be natural for the less intelligent dwellers by the Mediterranean to be polytheists and worshippers of powers close at hand; nearly two millennia of a strongly monotheistic religion with a transcendental theology have not eradicated this.

At the same time, there were elements in this lower-class religion which were capable of developing into something much higher. The very pettiness of many of the familiar objects of worship, such as the Nymphs, would naturally result in a religion which could not remain content with so abstract and far-off a deity as, for instance, the Unmoved First Mover of Aristotelian speculation. It is a very far cry from such an attitude to conceiving a God who is omnipresent, but it seems just possible that the two are not wholly unconnected. What is more nearly certain is that any acceptable deity must be interested in man's welfare, as the familiar

gods and goddesses of the countryside were, and also in his conduct, for surely such complaints as I have cited from Theognis are too common for them not to have been popular. Furthermore, as I have pointed out, some of the lower-class beliefs were not far removed from the conception of an impersonal *mana*, which may manifest itself in all manner of ways; and such an idea as this surely has in it possibilities of development into the notion of a divine activity not too closely tied to a nameable figure, associated with myths of not always edifying nature, and so in time into a genuinely spiritual theology. It is a not uninteresting speculation to wonder if some remnant of this conception may not lie behind the development, in Hellenistic days, of the idea of δύναμις. However, this is outside the chronological limits of our discussions.

Putting together what we can gather of the two classes of religious thought and practice traceable in early times in Greece, we may perhaps list the following features which were to prove of importance for future speculation. Firstly, divine figures, clear-cut, definite, imposing in their splendour and power but not overwhelmingly awful, divided from man by their immortality and almost if not wholly unlimited might, yet sufficiently like human beings to be interesting and intelligible, so much so that the most varied and fascinating mythology in the world gathered about them. Secondly, a way of conceiving of such beings which was never wholly dissociated from the moral ideas then current. On the whole, Homeric gods behave reasonably enough, as reasonably as the Homeric barons who believed in them; certainly none of them is deliberately wicked, although some, notably Ares, do things which meet with general disapproval from the other gods. Thirdly, a deep-rooted belief, more emphatic among the lower orders who had more need of justice, that at least the chief god is just; and as ethical thought developed, this belief grew in definiteness, till some few superior minds

conceived the idea that there is but one moral law and all, gods or men, should conform to it. This, however, was in part a reflection of the changing condition of society, especially in the most articulate State, Athens; if, generally speaking, all citizens had the same rights and duties with regard to the State, it was a much more obvious conclusion that what was right or wrong for one moral being was so for another. The feeling epigrammatically summed up by Ovid in the saying *sunt superis sua iura*[26] belonged, when it was taken seriously, to the times when nobles might do things which commoners might not. Ovid of course uses it of deities who are mere characters in a story, beings in whom he has no belief.

I am aware that I have omitted, in this brief survey, much that could have been said. There are for example endless matters concerning ritual, which must have influenced thought, at least subconsciously, to a perceptible extent; we still have, complete or in fragments, more than one work which concerns itself with ritual and asks what ideas underlie the traditional acts and words, and wildly unscientific though the explanations are from a historical point of view, they are interesting as showing what the writers' notions of religion and its relation to theology were. There are the important currents of feeling and practice associated respectively with the names of Apollo and Dionysos and representing the nearest approach the generally sane and individualistic Greeks made to rigid legalism on the one hand and enthusiastic fanaticism on the other. There is the question, not yet fully decided, of why the mysteries, especially of course the famous cult at Eleusis, came to be 'mysterious', and hedged about with secrecy, and the closely related problem, whether or not there ever existed in early times anything like persecution by the new-comers to Greece of the cults, or the gods, of the

26. Ovid, *Met.*, IX, 499.

earlier inhabitants. Much, again, might be said of the curious mixtures of higher and lower religious thought exemplified especially by Pythagoreanism, with its lofty philosophy and serious attempts at scientific investigation of the universe side by side with its clutter of savage tabus, its important advances in geometry and its childish numerical mysticism. I have left on one side the whole complicated business of the allegorical interpretation of myths, which was to bear such a wild harvest in later centuries, and the related question of the extent to which real allegories were current in early times. There is, I think, yet to be made a thorough investigation of yet another related phenomenon, the question of personification, which is so entirely different from ours. A modern poet, Spenser for instance, may make an abstract idea into a concrete figure, Holiness and Error appearing as a knight errant and a dragon. He will keep up the symbolism throughout, the knight always acting as a man conceivably might, the monster always dangerous in a material way, even when its horrible vomit clearly stands for the dissemination of false doctrine through the press of the time. At any time during the last century or so he will, if he writes in English or French, mark off his personifications from the ordinary use of the words by spelling them with an initial capital. A Greek poet, Pindar notably, can in one and the same clause say that Themis (with a capital letter, according to our fashion) is assessor of Zeus and that *themis* without a capital (to the confusion of modern editors, who cannot print the same word in two different ways at once) is practised zealously in Aigina.[27] I can but mention this paradox in passing; to analyse it fully would, I believe, help us considerably to understand how a Greek thought when he let his mind dwell in that border region between objective and rational contemplation of problems and free imagining which is surely one

27. Pindar, *Ol.*, VIII, 21-22.

of the chief breeding-grounds of religious ideas. No doubt some of these matters will be dealt with by later speakers, to whose utterances I look forward with expectant interest; but I hope I have touched on enough of the principal points to strike a not utterly inadequate or discordant keynote to their symphony.

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DISCUSSION

M. Chantraine: Je remercie M. Rose de cet exposé qui se pose si nettement tant de problèmes, et je demande qui désire prendre la parole.

M. Verdenius: You have related the differences between Homeric and Hesiodic religion to a difference of character between the higher and the lower classes of the population. You have also mentioned some contradictions within Homeric religion itself. On the one hand we find a certain familiarity and even similarity between gods and men, on the other hand there is a strong sense of a gap separating the two worlds. On the one hand the gods are interested in the morality of men, but on the other hand their own relations are not ruled by morality. Here the question suggests itself, whether these contradictions are to be traced back to the different characters of the classes which constituted the Homeric world.

Mr. Rose: If we were dealing with philosophic doctrines, I think we should be obliged to say that these conflicting ideas came from different sources, perhaps even different nationalities. But we are dealing largely with imaginative works, containing comparatively little that is strictly rational.

I should like to answer the two questions separately. First, as to the Homeric ἄνακτες. Homer's Achaians are on easy, even familiar terms with their gods, and yet conscious that a great gap separates them from themselves. Let us try to reconstruct the mental

attitude of a Homeric βασιλεύς. He knows that he is powerful; he can conceive of a more powerful being, but hardly of one fundamentally different. Zeus or Apollo is a kind of βασιλεύς like himself, stronger no doubt, but not overwhelmingly terrible. The earthly king will at most feel obliged to address his divine counterpart respectfully. On the other hand, he knows that his father and more remote ancestors worshipped that god, and he knows that they are dead, and that he himself cannot live forever. But the god is not dead, he has survived these generations of worshippers and there is no reason to suppose he will ever die. This gives him an undoubted superiority. Again, the βασιλεύς knows that he cannot in a moment transport himself where he will, but he believes in a constant going and coming of the gods. He therefore supposes that, in this and in many other directions, their powers have no limits, or none that he can ascertain, whereas his own are limited. As to the two different aspects, we are not obliged to suppose two different sources; let us remember that two conflicting ideas can be and sometimes are held simultaneously. I may take as an example the attitude of many moderns towards their dead. The survivor generally performs some little ceremony, such as the deposit of flowers now and again, on the grave of the dead, as though his friend or kinsman were there and could take pleasure in his attentions. And yet officially he believes that the dead man's soul is elsewhere, in Heaven he hopes. The same inconsistency, of believing, or at least acting as if one believed, simultaneously that the dead kinsman is in his grave and that he has gone away to the world of souls is to be found among many peoples. Logically, these views are quite contradictory; in practice, many individuals, from savages up to members of modern civilisations, can entertain them at one and the same time.

Again, as regards the conflicting views concerning the gods, illustrated on the one hand by occasional statements of belief, on the other by myths. Many peoples, in fact practically all who have any idea of a 'high' god and especially of a sky- or weather-

god, conceive that he takes some interest in human conduct, rewarding the good and punishing the bad, at least in some cases. This certainly was true of the Greeks, in both Homer's and Hesiod's days. But when it comes to picturing to himself the relations of the gods towards each other, questions arise which the human enquirer has really no means of answering. He knows, or thinks he knows, for instance, that Artemis helps women in childbed. But are Artemis and Zeus on such good terms as a father and daughter should be? Is Hera affectionate towards her or not? Here he is entirely at the mercy of what the poets tell him, on the basis of their supposed superior knowledge, given them by the Muses. An Artemis who is a powerful and kindly helper and an Artemis who is scolded and beaten by Hera like a naughty little girl are certainly very different figures, but I do not think it necessary to suppose that they come from different strata of the population, nor from different peoples.

M. Verdenius: Your answer leads me to a further question. The distinctive features you found in Hesiod's religion were that the moral character of the gods has strengthened, that their moral interest has increased, and that the gap between gods and men has been narrowed. This development has its origins in the antinomies of Homeric religion which we have just been discussing. Now if these antinomies did not arise from social differences, but belong to one common religious fund, it may be asked whether the Hesiodic development of these ideas is not to be explained in the same way, viz. from a purely religious point of view without recurring to social influences.

Mr. Rose: I suppose it is possible, but it seems to me most easily explained if you take into account the difference of social standards. A βασιλεύς has no social superior on earth, although of course an individual of his own class may be more distinguished in war or council or rule over more subjects, in fact be βασιλεύτερος. Above him is but one class, the gods. But a peasant farmer like Hesiod knows that above him there is the class of nobles, while he himself is the superior of the θῆτες who on occasion work for

him; he has his place in a hierarchy of social classes. Might not a thoughtful man such as Hesiod undoubtedly was, conceive of a more complex ascending order of classes, with *daimones* intervening between nobles and gods, *daimones* who may originally have been very superior men, like those of the Golden Age, so much better than his own contemporaries that, unlike them, they did not die but moved to a higher status?

M. Chapouthier: Les questions si intéressantes que vient de poser M. Verdenius concernaient l'aspect logique des notions religieuses; elles les atteignaient, si je puis dire, en dehors du temps, dans leur valeur absolue. Je me placerai à un autre point de vue. L'exposé de M. Rose, plein d'une si riche expérience, permet de soulever de grands problèmes généraux concernant l'évolution de ces notions dans le temps. Nous allons avoir à nous occuper, dans ces entretiens, des aspects variés pris par la notion de Dieu dans des écrivains successifs, d'Homère à Platon. Il me plairait que ces aspects fussent reliés l'un à l'autre: Homère, Hésiode, Euripide doivent être considérés comme des documents sur une évolution qui en un certain sens les dépasse; car de même qu'il y a des problèmes philosophiques antérieurs aux philosophes et des problèmes littéraires antérieurs aux littérateurs, la notion de Dieu se transmet et se précise à travers des œuvres et grâce à des écrivains qui ne sont pas libres de les modifier à leur gré. L'histoire des genres littéraires est indépendante en quelque sorte des écrivains qui en permettent l'étude. La notion du divin et ses progrès dans le cours des siècles doit ainsi apparaître au premier plan et se détacher sur l'arrière-plan des documents qui servent de base à l'enquête. De ce point de vue, le riche exposé d'introduction qui vient de nous être présenté fait naître en moi les trois questions suivantes.

A quel moment et par quelle voie la notion de dieu est-elle arrivée en Grèce? On croit d'ordinaire, et je le croirais volontiers, que cette notion est inhérente à toute forme de civilisation; mais je vois que certains érudits le contestent. Je viens de lire dans le *Journal de Romain Rolland*, p. 207 que, d'après Albert Rémusat,

'les Chinois, Tartares et Mongols n'ont pas de mot dans leur langue pour exprimer l'idée de Dieu'. Dans un article de Lévy-Brühl parue dans la *Nouvelle Revue française* de juillet 1934 'les indigènes de l'Australie et de la Nouvelle Guinée ne connaissent ni dieux, ni déesses, ni divinités d'un ordre inférieur, – bref rien qui rappelle, même de loin, le panthéon grec, égyptien ou indou'. Il semblerait donc que ce ne soit pas une notion qui existe partout. La question reste alors ouverte de savoir si les civilisations de l'Égée, plus jeunes que les civilisations environnantes n'ont pas reçu d'ailleurs la notion même de divinité. Le problème, si problème il y a, échappe peut-être d'ailleurs à la compétence de l'historien.

On peut se demander en outre à quelle époque la notion de la suprématie de Zeus s'est établie? Fut-ce dès l'époque mycénienne? On doit convenir alors que les résultats de l'exploration archéologique n'en fournissent pas la constatation. Il faut pourtant que la primauté du grand dieu du ciel soit apparue à un moment donné.

D'une façon plus générale, peut-on préciser le moment où certaines notions, certains aspects de l'idée de dieu apparaissent dans la littérature grecque comme des acquisitions nouvelles qui ne seront plus abandonnées, même quand la conception ancienne subsiste à côté d'elles? Voici quelques exemples: le mot δαίμων désignant des divinités d'un rang inférieur apparaît-il chez Hésiode? est-il une création d'Hésiode? On cite volontiers le passage que vous avez mentionné sur les δαίμονες πλουτοδόται, mais on ne s'accorde pas sur la traduction: certains lui donnent le sens de 'dieu' comme dans Homère; d'autre celui de 'génie', de démon d'ordre inférieur. Les épithètes que portent les dieux ont dû apparaître aussi à des dates diverses; l'épithète de φίλιος semble dater d'un moment où la crainte à l'égard du divin avait perdu de son intensité.

Ces dernières questions ne sont pas tant adressées à M. Rose qu'à nous-mêmes; je voudrais que dans la suite des exposés nous ne perdions pas de vue que ce qui est au premier plan, ce ne sont

pas des états d'âme ou des théories successives d'écrivains, mais l'évolution d'une notion qui s'accroît et s'enrichit progressivement.

Mr. Rose: These are comparatively easy questions to ask, but very hard to answer. When did the idea of God reach Greece? Frankly, I have no notion. We must, however, beware of statements that this or that people had no such idea. It may for instance be true that in the Australian languages there is no word which exactly translates 'God', or precisely expresses what we mean by that word, i.e., the conception of divinity which we, with our intellectual heritage of Jewish and Christian thought, possess. It is, however, also true that the native Australians do worship gods, even high gods, such as Baiame, who created the first men, or Daramulun, who is quite an exalted deity. It therefore may well be that the original inhabitants of Greece had high gods of their own, or perhaps high goddesses, though it is equally possible that they worshipped only minor local deities; we simply do not know.

When, then, did Zeus become the chief deity? We may say with certainty that it was before Homer. This of course leads to the further question, 'When did Homer live?', and the answer to that is far from certain. But it is clear that the idea of Zeus as 'father' of gods and men, that is to say head of their family, clan or tribe, is perfectly familiar. Another question to which we do not know the answer is, why we find no trace on Mycenaean sites of a cult of Zeus. I would suggest as a possible solution that there was such a cult but it was aniconic, with no idols, perhaps no altars, for us to find; it has even been suggested that the altar as we know it from later antiquity is no older than the Dorian invasion. However, Homer is familiar with sacrifices, therefore with some kind of holy places and presumably some kind of altars, very likely non-permanent ones, like the turf altars of early Rome.

In general, can we date exactly the arrival of any idea in Greece? We can indeed say, on the basis of the materials we have, that such-and-such a conception is not later than Homer, Hesiod or

some other author. We can even say that certain concepts appear unfamiliar at a given date, because the author in question takes the trouble to explain them. We have only, for instance, to look at the *Phaedo* to see that the idea of the immortality of the soul was not generally accepted in Plato's time, for his Sokrates is obliged to expound it at length. But that no one before Sokrates or Plato had had such a notion is, I would not say improbable, but next door to impossible. Similarly, if we find in Hesiod, but not before him, the word *daimon* used to denote a sort of inferior god, intermediate between the great gods and mankind, we cannot be sure that Hesiod invented such a use of the word, indeed I do not think it probable that he did, for he uses it quite simply; the men of the Golden Age δαίμονές εἰσι (*W. D.* 122), and he does not go into elaborate explanations of what the word means or how it differs from θεοί.

M. Chantraine: Je voudrais indiquer, à propos de ce qui vient d'être dit, que l'idée que Zeus est le *pater*, ne signifie pas qu'il a donné la vie, mais qu'il est chef de famille, chef de la société des dieux et des hommes (Ce qui est dit d'une autre façon dans la formule *Zeus basileus*).

Cette idée-là, nous pouvons la dater relativement, et elle apparaît extrêmement ancienne. Elle appartient au monde indo-européen archaïque comme l'étymologie nous l'enseigne. Nous avons en sanskrit *Dyaus pità* et en latin *Juppiter:* c'est le Zeus pater. La correspondance est évidente et fait remonter à l'Indo-Européen l'association de *Zeus* et *pater*.

M. Gigon: Drei Bemerkungen scheinen mir hier notwendig zu sein. Erstens: von grösster Wichtigkeit ist (was schon Mr. Rose hervorgehoben hat), dass öfters Gedanken, die wir als widersprüchlich empfinden, bei den Griechen neben einander haben bestehen können. Diese Beobachtung ist für das Verständnis der Probleme, die uns beschäftigen, so grundlegend, dass ich in aller Kürze drei Beispiele anführen möchte.

a. Wir haben schon von dem Verhältnis gesprochen, das bei Homer und Hesiod zwischen der Gottheit und den ethischen

Kategorien zu bestehen scheint. Gerade bei Hesiod hat in diesem Punkte (für den antiken Leser noch mehr als für uns) eine erstaunliche Zwiespältigkeit existiert. Nehmen wir sein Werk im Ganzen, so kann nicht zweifelhaft sein, dass die Theogonie den endlichen Sieg des Zeus als einen Sieg der gerechten Ordnung über die wüste Unordnung der Vorzeit auffasst; die Erga wiederum appellieren an die Gerechtigkeit des Zeus in der Not des menschlichen Lebens. Wenn aber Xenophanes und das klassische Athen von Hesiod reden, so meinen sie durchaus nicht diesen Aspekt seiner Dichtung, sondern so gut wie ausschliesslich die skandalösen Geschichten, mit denen die Theogonie beginnt. Hesiod gilt als einer der Dichter, die den Göttern die menschliche Unsittlichkeit angedichtet haben; junge Menschen, die ihre Väter zu beleidigen oder zu misshandeln gesonnen sind, berufen sich auf ihn. Anzuerkennen ist, dass sich Hesiod über die Moralität der Geschichten, die er von den Göttern erzählt, keine sonderlichen Gedanken gemacht zu haben scheint. Die Untaten eines Uranos, Kronos und Zeus werden zwar motiviert, aber schwerlich gerechtfertigt.

b. Nicht weniger bedeutungsvoll und eigentümlich ist das Folgende: Wenn Homer und Hesiod die Musen anrufen und sich von ihnen belehren lassen, so besagt dies, dass sie grundsätzlich die Wahrheit berichten wollen. Die Intervention der Musen kann nur bedeuten, dass sie dem Dichter Dinge über die Vorzeit und über die Götter mitteilen, die dieser als kurzlebiges menschliches Wesen unmöglich aus eigener Erfahrung wissen kann. Auch die Geschichten selbst sind (zumal bei Homer) so stilisiert, dass sie strikte dem Gesetz des εἰκός folgen d. h., dass sie so ablaufen, wie sie hätten wirklich ablaufen können. Die Illusion des historischen Berichts wird also konsequent festgehalten. Dennoch wird man schwer glauben, dass sich die Zuhörer der epischen Vorträge nicht im klaren darüber gewesen seien, in welchem Umfange die gehörten Rhapsodien freie Erfindung waren, und dass das System der Götter, das Hesiod darbot, eine (wenn auch sinnvolle) persönliche Konstruktion Hesiods darstellte. Wie Dich-

ter und Hörer des 7. und 6. Jhd. mit diesen widerstreitenden Faktoren: Wahrheitsanspruch und Fiktivität, zurecht kamen, wissen wir nicht.

c. Endlich eine für unsern Gegenstand unmittelbar bedeutsame Einzelheit. Zu den sehr wenigen für Anaximander von Milet selbst gesicherten Begriffen gehört τὸ ἄπειρον. Das ist ein substantiviertes neutrales Adjektiv. Wenn Anaximander diese Bildung gewählt hat, so ist es unzweifelhaft geschehen, um eine durchaus unpersönliche, unmythische Wesenheit zu bezeichnen. Auf der andern Seite aber findet sich unter den zuverlässig bezeugten Begriffen das Verbum κυβερνᾶν, ausgesagt vom Apeiron. Dies Verbum muss in so früher Zeit (Mitte des 6. Jhd.) noch in seiner ganzen kräftigen Anschaulichkeit verstanden werden. Das Apeiron steuert die Welt, wie wenn sie ein Schiff wäre (bei Thales war der Kosmos in der Tat mit einem Schiff verglichen). Damit haben wir aber par excellence die Tätigkeit einer verantwortlich planenden und handelnden Person. Der Widerspruch ist unaufhebbar und anzuerkennen.

Zweitens: M. Chapouthier hat mit Recht gefragt, wie alt die Vorstellung von der Oberherrschaft des Zeus sei. Diese Frage geht zum grössten Teile auf in ein viel weiteres Problem, wo und seit wann die Versuche begonnen werden, die Götterwelt zu systematisieren. In der Urzeit ist ohne jeden Zweifel die Zahl der Götter, die die einzelne Polis, der einzelne Magistrat, Krieger oder Handwerker anrief, eine sehr beschränkte gewesen. Erst mit der Zeit stellt sich das Bedürfnis nach praktischem Ausgleich und spekulativer Ordnung ein, am fassbarsten für uns bei Hesiod und in den sonstigen alten Theogonien, in Spuren aber auch in späten Teilen Homers. Das Streben nach rationaler τάξις ist ja einer der Grundzüge des griechischen Geistes. Wann aber dies Streben auf die Gottheit übergreift und sie damit der unmittelbaren Religiosität wie der Poesie zu einem guten Teil entzieht, das müssten wir genau wissen.

Drittens: Aus dem soeben Gesagten entspringt eine weitere Frage, die dem Religionshistoriker zu stellen ist: Besteht überhaupt zwischen den seit Hesiod fassbaren Götterkatalogen und den Ver-

hältnissen des Kultes irgendein sicherer Zusammenhang? Die Frage ist seit Jahrzehnten akut an der Gestalt des Eros. Stammt er wirklich von dem thespischen Lokalkult? Ist er ein spekulativ entwickeltes Gebilde? Oder wäre es gar so, dass der 'uralte' thespische Eros erst aus Hesiods Theogonie abgeleitet ist, etwa so wie allem Anscheine nach der troizenische Hippolytos-kultus und was dazu gehört weitgehend erst auf Grund der euripideischen Tragödien ins Leben gerufen wurde? Die Beziehungen zwischen theogonischer Spekulation und konkretem Kultus sind, wie mir scheint, noch ausserordentlich undurchsichtlich und bedürfen dringend einer vorsichtigen Klärung.

Mr. Rose: Let us try to put ourselves at the ancients' point of view. It is perfectly true that there are mutually contradictory ideas in both Homer and Hesiod, but how did they come about? What was the view then taken of the poetical function? If we look at a typical modern imaginative author, say a novelist, perhaps our nearest parallel to the epic poet of those days, we have our own explanation of his procedure in writing a historical romance. He selects an episode, it may be from the history of Great Britain, France or Germany, and to the facts he has got from the historians he adds details from his own imagination, a character here, a conversation there, and so on. There really was, we say, a rising in 1745 led by Prince Charles Edward, but Waverley and his adventures are unhistorical, the product of Scott's imagination. But this apparently was not so for those who listened to Homer, nor for Homer himself. It was generally known that there had been a Trojan War, and that the Greeks had won it; how and why they had won and by what steps their victory was hastened or delayed was not known, save to the all-knowing Muses:

> ἔσπετε νῦν μοι, Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι,
> ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε πάρεστέ τε ἴστέ τε πάντα,
> ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν.
>
> (B 484-86).

It was they who informed Homer of the wrath of Achilles, the death of Hektor and so forth. But now look at the Hesiodic meeting with the Muses. They do not profess to be solely inspirers of truth; they tell him frankly that they know how to utter many lies which seem like truth, but also how to tell the truth when they wish (*Theog.*, 27-28). Poetry has taken a new turn; the contrast between truth and what we now call imaginative fiction has occurred to Hesiod. But it still is the Muses who inspire, whether to truth or falsehood; in other words, the pattern of both thought and language was mythological, not only in such a writer as Hesiod, for whom the only possible way of setting forth his views of the universe was in the form of a genealogy of the gods, but for a philosopher like Anaximandros, whose ἄπειρον, neuter and impersonal though it is, is yet divine and 'steers' the universe as a helmsman does his ship (Anax. *ap.* Arist., *Phys.* 203b11). Equally, neither the poet nor the philosopher could refrain from systematising.

The relation of all this mythologising to cult is obscure: I think the connexion between the two is slight. From very early times there were holy places, with or without anything which we could call a temple, where sacrifices and other rites were carried on κατὰ τὰ πάτρια. Clearly, such ceremonies were pleasing to the gods, but taught nothing concerning their nature; that was set forth in the myths. At a later date, but considerably earlier than the age of Plato, reflexion on the myths began, and the question arose whether the Zeus or Apollo who was traditionally worshipped at Olympia, Dodona or Delos, if he had really behaved as the myths said, was worthy of worship or respect at all. Apparently such a question had not yet arisen for the contemporaries of Homer or of Hesiod, but Pindar was conscious of it and it was much to the fore in Plato's time. However, the whole matter is very complex and difficult, and I do not imagine that I have a complete answer to it.

M. Lameere: Reprenons un instant, si vous le permettez, ce que monsieur Chantraine évoquait tout à l'heure au sujet de l'une des épithètes de Zeus.

La linguistique indo-européenne est un guide infaillible, avouons-le, pour ce qui est du cheminement de cet aspect de l'idée de dieu, à retracer ici depuis une époque assez éloignée des temps historiques jusqu'à celle où nous pouvons l'analyser à l'aide des documents écrits, dans le cadre particulier de la religion grecque. Mais monsieur Rose ne croit-il pas qu'il faudrait tenir compte aussi d'un autre courant religieux, et cela en dehors de la tradition des peuples indo-européens, pour ce qui est de l'origine de l'idée de dieu en général? Je songe ici aux textes de langue hittite, mais de provenance hourrite, que l'on a découverts en Asie Mineure, et que monsieur Hans Gustav Güterbock a mis récemment à la portée des profanes.[1] Dans ces textes on relève des analogies tout à fait curieuses entre certains éléments de la *Théogonie* d'Hésiode et l'histoire des dieux hourrites. Or ces légendes ont été très certainement connues des Hellènes, et cela notamment par l'intermédiaire des Phéniciens. Nous voici reportés au second millénaire avant Jésus-Christ, outre le fait que ces écrits d'Asie Mineure s'inspirent d'une notion relativement élevée de la puissance divine. Par conséquent, sur ce point précis, il se pourrait fort bien qu'à l'influence de la tradition indo-européenne, attestée par la linguistique, soit venue se superposer, par l'intermédiaire des Phéniciens, une influence proprement asianique, sans parler des grands dieux de la civilisation minoenne.

Je voudrais présenter aussi une observation au sujet de la royauté homérique. Le βασιλεύς n'est pas seulement un personnage dont les rapports avec les dieux sont connus. Chez Hésiode (et sur ce point le chantre d'Ascra s'inspire vraisemblablement d'une tradition très ancienne), les rois ont quelque affinité, semble-t-il, avec les hommes de la race d'or, ou plus exactement avec les hommes divinisés de la race d'or, ces δαίμονες qu'Hésiode a qualifiés de πλουτοδόται, non sans préciser aussitôt

καὶ τοῦτο γέρας βασιλήιον ἔσχον[2]

1. *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. LII, 1948, pp. 123-134. 2. *Trav.*, v. 126.

J'ai souvent pensé que l'épithète βασιλήιον, appliquée ici au privilège qu'ont les démons de la race d'or d'être πλουτοδόται, n'était pas simplement une épithète ornementale. Il faut, je crois, lui garder ici tout son sens, ce qui suggère un rapport à examiner de plus près entre la conception de ces δαίμονες et les éléments religieux de la royauté homérique. Parmi ceux qui ont commenté ce vers des *Travaux*, Wilamowitz-Moellendorff est le seul à ma connaissance qui ait souligné ce rapport.[3]

Mr. Rose: These are very interesting questions. I would not venture to deny the possibility of a considerable religious influence from the East, whether through the Phoenicians or by some other route, perhaps as early as, or earlier than, the days of Homer. We may gradually get to know and analyse that influence as our knowledge of the Orient increases. It would indeed be very strange if Greek settlers in Asia Minor, Achaians or other, had remained proof against such influences. It thus is possible, though in the present state of our knowledge we cannot affirm it, that the idea of Zeus as king and father was at least in part a product of non-Hellenic religious thought.

The δαίμονες πλουτοδόται are very interesting. πλοῦτος is of course primarily the natural wealth coming from the soil. A principal function of these *daimones* is therefore the giving of abundant harvests, and Hesiod particularises that this is a royal function, γέρας βασιλήιον. For a commentary on this we may surely look to the description of the good king in the *Odyssey* (τ 109 *sqq.*), in whose time all natural products, vegetable and animal, are plentiful. A function therefore of the king is to ensure plenty for his people. May we not say that the Hesiodic *daimones* in this respect much resemble the heroes, and speculate as to the possibility of the cult of the latter being due to the idea that their royal function of securing prosperous harvests, &c., continued after their death? I wish we could speak to Hesiod and ask him precisely what he meant by βασιλήιον and how he conceived

3. *Hesiod Erga. – Erklärt von* U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Berlin, Weidmann, 1928, p. 56.

the connection, or likeness, between his beneficent *daimones* and an earthly, or perhaps a divine king. For once more, I do not imagine that I can furnish a complete answer to the questions involved.

Mr. Kitto: M. Gigon has mentioned the anomaly that the gods who treated each other with such ἀδικία were regarded as being themselves the guarantors of δίκη. It is an odd situation, but perhaps another odd thing may help to explain it. The other odd thing is that the Greek gods were everlasting but not eternal: I mean, they were not everlasting in both directions, backwards as well as forwards, because there was a time when the gods did not yet exist. In Hebrew mythology – or theology – God created Heaven and Earth, but in Greek mythology Heaven and Earth created the gods. But if the gods are not eternal, what is? The idea of Order – as M. Gigon said: κόσμος, ἀνάγκη, μοῖρα. Here is the ultimate, the eternal, reality; and it is one which could be thought of as a power superior to the gods, or it could be identified with the gods.

Now, early Greek thought attributes different natural phenomena to different gods – a way of thought which of course is common enough. As for these powers of nature, we can see for ourselves that they fight with each other; we can still speak of the wind vexing the sea. But it is just as evident that these conflicts are subordinated to a larger unity; in the long run, Nature is regular. The mythical expression of this is that there are certain limits which the individual god cannot transgress. These limits can be thought of either as some shadowy power superior to the gods – μοῖρα or ἀνάγκη – or as a supreme god who, perhaps with difficulty, controls the others, or as the collective will of the gods.

Therefore – especially when we remember how easy it is for unphilosophical man to entertain contradictory ideas at the same time – it is perhaps not difficult to understand how the idea of Justice should be attributed to gods who practise Injustice among themselves. Individually, the gods fight with each other; collect-

ively, they keep the cosmos running in an orderly way. Individual ἀδικία appears quite manifestly to be consonant with collective δίκη.

Mr. Rose: In Homer we find Zeus wishing, at least for a moment, to save his son Sarpedon from death in battle; Hera reproves him for desiring to save 'a mortal man, long ago assigned to his *aisa*', his allotted portion of good and evil, which includes this death (Π 431 sqq.). This *aisa* is something which has been determined, apparently by none other than the gods themselves; Zeus would do wrong if he wantonly reversed the decision once taken, but is not, as in the *Prometheus*, weaker than an impersonal Destiny. He could, if he chose, take this unconstitutional step, as a human king might go against the traditional θέμιστες.

In Homer also we see something like a first beginning of the idea of opposing forces within a single universe in the quarrels of the gods; but it is only a first beginning, an adumbration. No Greek of Homer's age had deliberately planned out the universe as a whole and assigned its component parts to sundry powers who on occasion acted against each other.

M. Chantraine: Je voudrais ajouter quelques mots à ce qui vient d'être dit, parce que dans cette introduction nous avons évoqué des notions qui devront être étudiées plus tard. Ce problème du destin, je me le suis posé moi-même, et je le poserai demain dans mon exposé. M. Rose a eu le mérite d'en fournir les données philologiques en citant les expressions mêmes d'Homère. Je voudrais attirer l'attention sur un ou deux points. D'abord la notion d'ἀνάγκη. Le mot, au sens religieux de destin, n'est pas attesté chez Homère; il signifie seulement nécessité. D'autre part il y a le terme μοῖρα qui, lui, est d'une importance capitale et qui désigne la part qui revient à un homme: du point de vue humain cette notion est très claire. Mais les rapports de la μοῖρα avec les dieux ne vont pas sans difficultés; la μοῖρα est parfois le résultat de l'action des dieux: on dit μοῖρα, αἶσα Διός; toutefois il y a des passages où un conflit semble survenir entre la μοῖρα et Zeus. C'est le cas dans le passage de la mort de Sarpédon,

et également dans un passage du chant XXII de l'*Iliade* où l'antinomie ressort nettement. M. Rose a bien montré les contradictions, les antinomies qu'il faudrait tenter de résoudre. Cette antinomie, en ce qui concerne les rapports des dieux et de Zeus avec le destin est rare, mais elle embarrasse le poète.

Toutefois je crois que nous aurons l'occasion de reprendre l'examen de ce problème au cours de nos entretiens.

M. Snell: Ich hatte ungefähr dasselbe zu sagen. Diese Frage ist ausserordentlich schwierig. Ich glaube dass es besser wäre, nach diesem einleitenden Vortrag nicht weiter in eine Diskussion zu treten, da wir uns der Gefahr aussetzen, dem vorzugreifen, was später noch im Laufe der anderen Vorträge gesagt wird. Ich schlage deswegen vor, dass wir jetzt abschliessen, und dass wir vielleicht heute Abend noch einmal auf diese Fragen zurückkommen.

M. Verdenius: I should like to return once more to the social aspects of ancient Greek religion. Homer is generally considered as representing the aristocratic point of view and Hesiod as expressing the belief of the lower classes. Yet one of Hesiod's greatest achievements, the combination of the central position of Zeus with the idea of justice, seems to presuppose a more embracing view of the world than could originate from the minds of the lower people. So Hesiod must have been different from the common man. This also follows from the free and self-conscious tone he takes with the aristocrats. A man who dares to call his rulers and judges 'bribe-swallowing fools' (*Works* 39-40) and admonishes them to mend their ways (*Works* 202-212, 248-266) can hardly be regarded as the mouthpiece of the lower classes.

Mr. Rose: We have good grounds for saying that Hesiod was a very exceptional man, of unusual intellectual powers. Although he is generally thought of as representing the lower class, and indeed his original status was low, yet he seems to have inherited something from his father and to have been impoverished by the action of his brother, which reduced him to supporting himself.

But somehow he must have found leisure to study and master the technique of a professional poet. He is the mouthpiece of the small peasant farmer, but this does not mean that he was not of as good Greek descent as the βασιλῆες themselves, to whom he speaks, not indeed as a social equal, but also not as a serf.

M. Verdenius: Probably the distinction between upper class and lower class was not so sharp as it is often thought. Homer describes an aristocratic world to which he is commonly said not to belong himself. Yet his description is so close and sympathetic that he cannot have felt himself a stranger in this sphere.

Mr. Rose: I quite agree; Homer stands for the aristocrats. It does not therefore follow that he was one himself. For instance, take his attitude towards fish. His *heroes* think of them simply as nasty, not to be eaten save as a last resort; but Homer himself knows a good deal about fishing, and also styles fish ἱεροί, i.e., uncanny, tabu, a very different thing from merely nasty. It follows that he knew something at least of the life of the lower classes. No doubt there were a good many intermediate degrees.

M. Verdenius: One often gets the impression that Odysseus is such an intermediary figure, a king but bearing many features of the common man, building his own ship and his own bedroom and feeling himself quite at home in his beggar's rôle.

Mr. Rose: Yes; Odysseus builds his own ship and is a good reaper and a good ploughman. He is perhaps not a pure-blood Achaian; his name yields no Greek etymology. A wealthy man and a local potentate, no doubt employing a number of helpers on occasion, he is probably not the social equal of a Nestor or a Menelaos.