VII.—Genealogies of Ethical Concepts from Hesiod to Bacchylides

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This paper is summarized in the final paragraph.

The early Greek poets [1] were forced to represent their gods as anthropomorphic, for in acting with humankind the gods became involved in and subjected to the artistic necessities of expression.[2] Similarly, the virtues and vices are in essence as difficult for the poet to represent as are the gods whom they please or displease. We can picture to ourselves a just man, a brave hero, or a coward; we are not so happy when we attempt to visualize such abstractions as justice, bravery or cowardice. In such a case we must either resort to metaphor and epithet, or represent the ethical concept by its effects, or deify it in the sense of an attribute of Zeus, such as Zeus Xenios or Zeus Hikesios, or personify it and delineate it in action. For the Greek, who had already conceived his gods in the likeness of men, it was not a difficult step to conceive Justice and Orderliness, Surfeit and Insolence in a similar way. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the literary treatment given to certain religious beliefs by the early Greek poets, especially by the personification of such abstractions as peace, orderliness, insolence, surfeit and others, and the establishment of ethical genealogies. The study will not include consideration of the allegorical debate, such as is found in the delineation of Aristophanes' Just and Unjust Arguments,[3] or in the personification of Love and Hate by Empedocles.[4] This discussion is also to be distinguished from direct deification, in the sense that at times the names of the gods are used to represent opposing abstractions, such as the identification of wisdom with Athene and folly with Ares.[5] It is also to be dis-

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[1] References to Greek authors are made from the following standard texts: *Homeri Opera*, Munro and Allen, 1908; *Hesiodou Erga Kai Hemerai*, T. A. Sinclair, 1932; *Hesiodi Carmina*, F. Jacoby, 1930; *The Elegies of Theognis*, T. Hudson-Williams, 1910; *Pindari Carmina*, Bowra, 1935; *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*, E. Diehl, I (1936), II (1925).

[2] G. M. Calhoun, "Homer's Gods—Prolegomena," *TAPhA* 68 (1937) 19.

[3] *Clouds* 889–1104.

[4] Diehls, H, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Empedocles) Fr. 20.

[5] Schol. Venet. ad Y 67.

tinguished from semi-deification, in the sense that certain virtues, such as hospitality, are identified with Zeus in the character of Zeus Xenios. This study confines itself to the direct genealogical personification of certain abstract nouns which represent ethical concepts.

It is pertinent to note that Hesiod, in the *Works and Days*, pictures Strife ("Ἔρις) by means of a personification involving family relationships. There are upon the earth, says Hesiod, not one family of Strife, but two. Of these, one is evil and fosters war and battle. The other is represented as the elder daughter, whose function is to stir up "even the shiftless to work"; she is the Strife that is "good for men." [6] This picturization of the two Strife sisters seems to be the earliest attempt to explain, through the medium of personification, the riddle that what is good may also be bad. Hesiod solves the riddle by the begetting of two sisters, the elder of whom is good; and in this he reflects the common notion of the Greek family, namely, that an elder child is wise and good [7] and the younger is the scamp or ne'er-do-well. In Homer, Zeus is the eldest son of Cronus,[8] and it is particularly pertinent to note that Hesiod by his personification of strife seems to be relating ethical ideas to notions of family life, since the Homeric relationship of Zeus to his fellow-gods has been explained, not on the pattern of a king and his subjects, but on that of the father and children.[9]

The genealogical personification employed by the poets may at times be expressly stated—Vice "A" being the mother of Vice "B," [10] or Virtues "A," "B," and "C" being sisters.[11] At other times Virtue "A" will be spoken of as "giving birth to" Virtue "B." [12] Again there may be no definite word which can be translated as "giving birth to." In its stead there will be such synonymous expressions as "appearing out of" [13] or "coming to be from" some virtue or vice. The genealogical personification is not an isolated phenomenon, nor restricted to one generation. The family trees evolve until there appears a grandmother of the virtues and a great-grandfather of the vices. In some instances also an original

[6] *Works and Days* 11–24.
[7] Cf. *Iliad* 13.429–432, where Hippodameia is so described.
[8] Cf. *Iliad* 13.355, where Zeus is older than Poseidon, Hades not mentioned.
[9] G. M. Calhoun, "Zeus the Father in Homer," *TAPhA* 66 (1935) 1–17.
[10] Pindar *Olympia* 13.10.
[11] Pindar *Olympia* 13.6–8.
[12] *Theogony* 901–903.
[13] Theognis 231.

nature genealogy has been supplanted by an ethical genealogy; thus in the Hesiodic *Theogony* [14] and in Homer [15] Wealth is represented as being the offspring of the nature goddess, Demeter; in Bacchylides, Wealth is the child of Peace.[16] This genealogical personification, while most prominent among the early Greek poets, has ramifications which extend throughout classical literature. Thus Cicero is found to exclaim: In urbe luxuries creatur, ex luxuria exsistat avaritia necesse est; ex avaritia erumpat audacia, inde omnia scelera ac maleficia gignuntur.[17] In fact, even as late as the seventeenth century Sarbieski calls upon Themis, asking Social Justice to constrain him and his friends from giving too much attention to Minerva.[18]

In studying the genealogical personification of the vices it is interesting and important to note that the Greeks viewed this family of evils in a two-fold aspect. The early Greek poets realized that the problem of the source of evil was not a simple one. Injustice and wrong-doing could arise equally as well from poverty as from affluence; the man who was in the dire straits of penury was impelled just as inexorably to vice as the man whose treasures rivalled in numbers the sands of the sea. Vice ever lay in the extremes; virtue in the mean. Thus, in their genealogical personifications of vice the early Greek poets express the phenomenon of a two-fold generation of evil, one which may be considered as developing from the positive pole, the other from the negative.

At the positive pole of vicious generation there is found a family which has its roots in the abstractions of Wealth and Prosperity. Briefly summarized the dogma was as follows: The goods of this world which men enjoy are the gifts of the gods. When, however, Heaven gives this prosperity (Ὄλβος) or wealth (Πλοῦτος) to men, these gifts produce in a man a feeling of fullness or satiety or surfeit (Κόρος). This feeling of fullness makes man grasping and there is born from it a presumptuous and over-riding insolence

[14] *Theogony* 969–974.
[15] *Odyssey* 5.125–129.
[16] Bacchylides *Paeans* 1.1–2.
[17] *Rosc. Amer.* 75.
[18] Sarbieski, C., *Ad Amicos* 3.32:

> "O quae coruscantum atria siderum
> Servas, et aurei leve perambulas
> Mundi pavimentum, modestae
> Pelle, Themi, studium Minervae."

and outrage in action ("Ὕβρις) which brings in its wake mental and moral blindness ("Ἄτη). No single one of the early poets is solely responsible for the development of this branch of the family. The seeds from which the genealogy might germinate were already present in Homer,[19] although Homer does not contribute anything to the doctrine aside from giving direction and definition to the terms.

The doctrine of "Ἄτη which we find in Homer [20] is, in fact, directly at variance with the doctrine of the later genealogical personification. This bright-tressed daughter of Zeus, in the memorable scene in *Iliad* XIX, stands forth as one of the first principles of vice, whereas in the later poets the concept of "Ἄτη is that of the culmination of vice. In the genealogical personification it develops from other vices; it is the final, not the efficient, cause of wrongdoing. In Homer, on the other hand, it does not develop out of ὕβρις; just as the characteristic of a hardened character, ἀτασθαλίη, is causal, so too is ἄτη the cause and not the effect of wanton insolence. In Homer she is an evil spirit, employed by Zeus to blind men's minds, a very Devil incarnate who causes man to commit acts of violence and presumption.

Hesiod also has little contribution to make to the positive branch of the family of Vice, aside from the emphasis which he lays upon ὕβρις.[21] For him there are two principal opponents of Justice, namely ὕβρις and Force (βίη), but his use of ὕβρις offers nothing new in development of or in contrast to the Homeric concept.[22]

When we come to the early elegiac poets, however, we find that the doctrine is well-formulated. Solon, the poet-statesman, who was vitally interested in the problems of wealth and its currently inequitable distribution, was the first to give it ample expression, and was the first to declare explicitly the doctrine of the birth of "Ὕβρις from Κόρος.[23] Theognis, with his aristocratic bias and with the Dorian ideal of the importance of the family, took over the

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[19] Cf. *Odyssey* 1.368; 15.329 for the connection of Olbos, Koros and Hybris. Cf. *Iliad* 13.636–637 for the universal sway of Koros. Cf. *Iliad* 16.596 and *Odyssey* 14.206, for the coupling of Ploutos and Olbos.

[20] *Iliad* 19.87–137.

[21] *Works and Days* 236–239.

[22] M. Hoffmann, *Ethische Terminologie bei Homer, den alten Elegikern und Jambographen* (Tubingen, 1914) 107.

[23] Solon, Fr. 5.9f.:

$$\text{τίκτει γὰρ χόρος ὕβριν, ὅταν πολὺς ὄλβος ἔπηται}$$
$$\text{ἀνθρώποισιν ὅσοις μὴ νόος ἄρτιος ᾖ.}$$

doctrine from Solon and particularized the Athenian's maxims to suit his own purposes. Furthermore, besides adopting the traditional four sins from Solon, Theognis added two new members to the family. The first of these is Human Folly ('Αφροσύνη). This term, even as early as Homer, has an ethical application, two instances of which are cited by Hoffmann from the *Odyssey*.[24] Theognis, in adapting the final lines of Solon's Fragment I, keeps Πλοῦτος, Κόρος and "Ἄτη in the genealogy, but substitutes 'Αφροσύνη in place of "Ὕβρις. "Possessions," he says, "come to be Folly (ἀφροσύνη) for men, and moral blindness (ἄτη) is revealed from it." [25] The second abstraction to be personalized and made a member of the family by Theognis is Wickedness (Κακότης). He uses this term in place of "Ἄτη in a passage in which he is extolling the power of the human mind. He states that "good judgment" (Γνώμη) is much better than "destructive pride" and "dolorous surfeit," and that these are among "ills than which there are no worse, for all Wickedness (Κακότης) comes from them." [26]

Pindar, in the first *Olympian*, made use of the traditional family of Πλοῦτος-Κόρος-"Ἄτη although he omits "Ὕβρις, in speaking of the sin of Tantalus.[27] In the second *Pythian* while speaking of Ixion he again uses three of the four traditional members, this time omitting Κόρος,[28] and in the beginning of the third *Isthmian* again brings out the connection between Πλοῦτος and Κόρος.[29] In the thirteenth *Olympian* Pindar introduces what seems to be a contradiction when he speaks of "Ὕβρις as "the bold-tongued *mother* of Surfeit," [30] whereas previous poets speak of "Ὕβρις as her daughter. Professor Gildersleeve had a neat answer for this apparent difficulty; he merely cited the fact that according to Greek custom grandmother and grand-daughter often bore the same name.[31] In other words, the more insolent outrage a man commits, the more he gives birth to that same feeling of fullness which prompted his initial transgression.

This positive branch of the family is paralleled by a negative

[24] M. Hoffmann, *op. cit.* (note 22) 56.
[25] Theognis 227–231.
[26] Theognis 1175f.
[27] Pindar *Olympia* 1.54–57.
[28] Pindar *Pythia* 2.25–29.
[29] Pindar *Isthmia* 3.1–3.
[30] Pindar *Olympia* 13.10.
[31] B. L. Gildersleeve, *Olympian and Pythian Odes* 229, n. 10.

generation of Vice which derives from the concept of Penury.   This negative branch is solely the creation of the pessimistic Theognis, although earlier elegiac poets, such as Tyrtaeus [32] and Mimnermus,[33] mention penury as a source of evil and sow the seeds from which the negative branch of the family can later germinate.   The members of this family are Penury, Perplexity, Necessity and Evil-Doing.[34]   Earlier than Theognis, Alcaeus had combined Penury and Perplexity in a genealogical personification, but the family relationship mentioned by Alcaeus is different from that of Theognis. Alcaeus speaks of Penury as being "a grievous, unbearable evil, which with thy *Sister*, Perplexity, subdues a great people." [35]   There is no evidence that Pindar recognized or made use of this negative branch of the family, but this circumstance is not surprising. Pindar was not writing about the poor and the dispossessed, as was Theognis; his ambition was "to consort with the victors" for all his days.[36]

Turning from the vices to the virtues, we find that the author of the Hesiodic *Theogony* made use of a genealogical personification which established a family for all later poets.   He makes Θέμις the ancestor of a family of three daughters (all sired by Zeus): Δίκη, Εὐνομίη, and Εἰρήνη.[37]   If Jane Harrison's analysis of these terms can be trusted [38] it would seem that Θέμις can best be defined as Social Justice and Δίκη as Natural Right.   In an ordered society, such as that represented by the reign of Zeus, social justice should normally predominate over what an individual might selfishly consider his own natural way of doing things.   The term Εὐνομίη is best defined as Orderliness or Good Government; Εἰρήνη is Peace. From Hesiod to the days of Pindar and Bacchylides, however, there is little mention of this family of the virtues.[39]   The early elegiac poets were poets of strife and storm and trouble.   The governments about which they wrote were not good; there was precious little

[32] Tyrtaeus Fr. 10.7–10.

[33] Mimnermus Fr. 2.9–12.

[34] Theognis 383–392.   The Greek terms personified are: Πενίη, 'Αμηχανίη, 'Ανάγχη, 'Αμπλακίη.   Note that there is also a personification but no family tree for Χρημοσύνη (Want).

[35] Alcaeus *Hymns* Fr. 142.

[36] Pindar *Olympia* 1.115f.

[37] *Theogony* 901–903.

[38] J. E. Harrison, *Themis* (Cambridge University Press, 1912) 516f.

[39] According to Strabo and Aristotle, Tyrtaeus wrote for the Spartans a poem on Εὐνομίη.   Solon also relies upon Εὐνομίη to put all the vices to rout.   Cf. Fr. 3.33–36.

peace, little consideration of natural rights, and, certainly for
Theognis, no social justice in the world at all.

In Pindar, however, this Hesiodic family is frequently found,[40]
and in the great poets of the national festivals these virtues are the
virtues of society as a whole; they are co-operative or group virtues,
not those of the individual man except insofar as he was a member
of the group. They are employed to compliment the city of the
victor and to create a setting of happiness, prosperity and peace.
They are not strictly subjective virtues which the individual man
might employ as a safeguard against his own wrongdoing. Pindar,
furthermore, added the personality of Tranquillity ('Ησυχία) to this
family of Virtue. In the eighth *Pythian* she is mentioned as the
"daughter of Natural Right, who makes cities great and holds the
master keys of counsels and of wars." [41] She becomes the first
grandchild of the family, and in carrying the master keys of counsels
and wars she performs the same functions which her grandmother,
Social Justice, performed in Homer when calling and dismissing
the assemblies of men.[42]

The second grandchild of the family comes to light in the works
of Baccylides. The opening lines of his first *Paean*, "On Peace,"
are: "And great Peace brings forth for men Wealth and the flowers
of honey-tongued songs." [43] Generally, Bacchylides treats this
family precisely as Pindar does, in making it suggest the atmosphere
of prosperity. He also follows the orthodox pattern traced by
Hesiod and Solon when he sets up the members of the family in
opposition to Presumption or Insolence.[44] But his addition of
Wealth to the genealogy is most significant for it places Πλοῦτος in
both the family of Virtue and the family of Vice. The old difficulty
that what is good may also be bad has arisen again, for that family
which is the embodiment of the concepts representing the corporate
blessings of the state has as its last offspring Πλοῦτος, the one
personage from whom all the poets agree that manifold evils arise.

It has been pointed out that both Pindar and Bacchylides made
additions to the original Hesiodic family, but it is interesting to

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[40] Pindar *Olympia* 9.14–16; *Olympia* 13.6–8.
[41] Pindar *Pythia* 8.1–4.
[42] *Odyssey* 2.68f.
[43]   τίκτει δέ τε θνατοῖσιν Εἰρήνα μεγάλα
                 Πλοῦτον μελιγλώσσων τ' ἀοιδᾶν ἄνθεα.
[44] Bacchylides *Dithyrambs* 14.57.

note that of the three sisters of the Hesiodic triad, only Εὐνομίη is left childless by the later poets. This sterility of Orderliness is remarkable, for with all the Greek insistence on the Golden Mean it would not have strained the imagination to conceive Σωφροσύνη as the daughter of Orderliness, particularly since Bacchylides does actually address Orderliness as σάοφρων.[45]

Nevertheless, to have embarked upon such a wave of genealogical personification would have been to cast the family of Virtue on the reefs of confusion. Social Justice, Peace and Orderliness were conceived as the virtues of cities, not of individuals. They were virtues which depended upon the co-operation of the citizens; a peaceful man or a good governor needed the help of his fellows if peace and orderliness were to reign. These virtues were then in a sense beyond the individual man; they were almost superhuman since no man could wholly obtain them alone. In them flowed the ichor of divinity, dignified as they were with Olympian parentage. On the other hand, Self-Control, Judgment, and Respect for the rights of our fellow man—virtues such as these depended solely upon the individual. Now, there was an absolute necessity, if society was to prosper and be happy, that Social Justice and her daughters prevail over the members of the family of Vice. Yet, how could the family of Virtue hope to prevail over Πλοῦτος who was not only the great-grandfather of all vice, but the fond grandchild of virtue as well? Evidently in such a dilemma the Family of Virtue needed help, a help which could come only through the co-operation of the individual with his fellow men, a help which required the auxiliary force of additional virtues.

These auxiliary virtues which the individual man possessed, Γνώμη, Αἰδώς, and Σωφροσύνη are very seldom personified. There is no actual need for it; they are already closely associated with man himself; they live with him and help him in his daily battle with the forces of evil. They cannot be considered in the same class as the Olympian virtues of Society as a whole. Great as they are, they still bear the same relation to Social Justice and her daughters as the Titans bore to the son of Cronus. This is precisely the relationship which Pindar brings out in the seventh *Olympian*, in which he personifies Respect-for-Others (Αἰδώς) as the daughter of the great Titan, Prometheus, who was man's legendary helper.[46]

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[45] Bacchylides *Epinicia* 12.186.

[46] Pindar *Olympia* 7.43f.

This same idea of the companionship of the personal virtues appears in a personification of Fidelity (Πίστις) and Σωφροσύνη which appears in Theognis. In adapting Hesiod's tale of the myth of Pandora, Theognis substitutes Fidelity for the Νέμεσις of Hesiod and Self-Control for the Αἰδώς of the earlier poet.[47] This substitution by Theognis is important when we recall that for him the two noblest virtues are Self-Control and Fidelity-to-Friends, and hence should be the last to leave him alone in a wicked world as they depart to the abode of the immortals. In another couplet Theognis personifies Good Judgment (Γνώμη) and Αἰδώς. "Judgment and Respect-for-Others," he says, "are the companions of good men." [48] They are not strangers to him; these virtues "accompany him." Tyrtaeus, it may be noted, had previously employed this type of descriptive personification in speaking of the troubles arising from Penury.[49] Like Theognis, he employed the verb ἕπεται, the cognate of the noun ὀπάων, which has a meaning of a "companion in war." And just as in Tyrtaeus there seems to be involved the idea of the θεράπων or warrior-squire, so when Theognis speaks of Γνώμη and Αἰδώς as being companions of the good man he may well be employing the same figure. Viewed in this light then, these auxiliary virtues become man's sturdy squires in the battle of virtue and vice; it is only with their assistance that man can observe the Golden Mean and can carry on, regardless of the circumstances in which he may be placed.

To sum up therefore, we may state that early Greek poetry presents the conflict of good and evil through the genealogical personification. It presents a positive family of Vice comprised of six members representing four generations: Πλοῦτος in the first, Κόρος in the second, Ὕβρις and 'Αφροσύνη in the third, and Ἄτη and Κακότης in the fourth. A negative family of Vice, found in Theognis, also numbers four generations, its members being Πενίη, 'Αμηχανίη, 'Ανάγκη, and 'Αμπλακίη. The social or group virtues are represented by a family numbering three generations. The grandmother, Social Justice, has three daughters, Natural Right, Orderliness and Peace, and two grandchildren, Tranquility and Wealth. The auxiliary virtues of the individual man, such as Self-Control and Good Judg-

47 Theognis 1135–1138.
48 Theognis 635f.
49 Tyrtaeus Fr. 10.7–10.

ment, are not made members of this family of the social or group
virtues, any more than personal vices, such as robbery or parricide,
are made members of the family of vice.   The auxiliary virtues are
rather personified as the "warrior squires" of the good man.   Thus,
although they are not related by flesh and blood ties to the family
of Virtue, they are still in the ethical "familia," for they are "serv-
ant" virtues, and, as such, are entitled at least to a place in the
household.