ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF HOMER

Allegorical Interpretation of Homer.

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Contents

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INTRODUCTION.

It is the purpose of this treatise to deal with the practice of allegorical interpretation as applied to the Homeric poems, tracing the gradual development of the habit, insofar as it may be gleaned from extant Greek literature, from the earliest times down to its final associations with pagan philosophy in the Neo-Platonic movement of the third and fourth centuries, A. D. As, however, the tendency has never been limited to any particular race, exclusively identified with any one mode of thought, or still less confined to a single epoch in the history of literary criticism, we shall, in the latter part of this dissertation, glance at a few of its reappearances in more modern guise. Allegory itself, which is of very rare occurrence in the Iliad and the Odyssey, became a quite common feature of Hesiod's works: and this fact, combined with the fondness of Greek writers for such figures of speech as personification, and the extensive use made by them of etymologizing, would have alone been doubtless sufficient to explain the rise of the phenomenon in question. But there was another factor that must be ranked as one of its

principal causes - namely, the crying need for a new approach to the exegesis of Homeric mythology. The method of allegorical interpretation, then, was in the first instance evolved mainly for the purpose of countering the violent attacks made on Homer by hostile critics.

Plato's attitude towards the allegorists may be deduced from the Phaedrus, where Socrates quotes an allegorical interpretation of the story of Boreas and Orithyia, but remarks that for his part he has no time for such pursuits. Aristotle, however, was not opposed to the movement, though he appears to have indulged much less frequently in ~~the habit~~ allegorizing than did Plato. The Stoic philosophers, who followed in the tradition of the Cynics, were the first to systematize the application of allegoristic to Homer's writings; and in their hands it soon became an important medium of propaganda, especially when reinforced by argumentation based on wide etymological 'research'. Then again, in the first century of the Christian era, Plutarch, the most influential of the 'Pythagorising' Platonists, has left evidences of his liking for the same practice. It was adopted with renewed enthusiasm in the third and fourth centuries by such distinguished members of the Neo-Platonic School as Plotinus, Porphyry and Iamblichus. The allegorization of myths was a regular literary occupation in Byzantine times: examples of the habit are afforded by writers like Eustathius, Tzetzes, and Psellus. Coming down to a later epoch, we find that the great rebirth of classical learning and culture known as the Renaissance, aroused a fresh interest in allegorical interpretation. Thus in Italy, Leonzio Pilato and Boccaccio were but two of the many scholars who lent

their support to the allegorizing movement; while in England, Chapman, Spenser, Roger Ascham, Sir Thomas Browne and Bacon likewise availed themselves in varying degrees of allegoristic in their works. The mere mention of these celebrated names in connection with the practice we are discussing is of course in itself an indication of the extent to which the old tendency had recaptured its former popularity. With this bird's-eye view of the subject-matter and limits of our theme, we are now prepared to enter upon a more detailed account of the contributions made by individual commentators and philosophical schools alike, towards the development of the allegorical mode of interpretation.

Causes Leading to the Rise of Allegorical Interpretation.

"Nisi forte tibi philosophum fuisse persuadent, cum his ipsis quibus colligunt negent. Nam modo (1) Stoicum illum faciunt ....modo (2) Epicureum ....modo (3) Peripateticum ....modo (4) Academicum ....apparet nihil, horum esse in illo, quia omnia sunt". This striking remark, excerpted from the eighty-eighth

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(1) Cf. Cicero, De Natura Deorum, 1,41: " (Chrysippus) vult Orphei, Musaei, Hesiodi Homerique fabellas accomodare ad ea quae ipse ....dixerit, ut etiam veterrimi poetae, qui haec ne suspicati quidem sint, Stoici fuisse videantur".

(2) See the scholiast on Odyssey 9,28: " Know that Epicurus has well said that pleasure is the true end of all things; this saying he took from Homer".

(3) Cf. Iliad 24, 376 sq: "....so beautiful art thou in form and appearance, and thou art also prudent in mind, and of blessed parents". This passage was commonly interpreted as pointing to the well-known Peripatetic division of 'bona' into three classes - those pertaining to the body, those to the mind, and lastly, the goods reckoned as external.

(4) See ~~on~~ Iliad 2, 486: "....while we hear but a rumour, nor know anything". For the same thought, cf. Aen: 7, line 649:-
"At meministis enim, Divae, et memorare potestis:
Ad nos vix tenuis famae perlabitur aura".

letter of Seneca's Epistulae Morales, would furnish the student of Homeric problems with an excellent text upon which to base his exposition of the topic that forms the subject of the present treatise. The sentences quoted above indeed reflect what was destined to become a well-nigh universal tendency among the Ancients with regard to the exegesis of the Homeric poems. It has of course always been a habit with certain types of mentality to see in the utterances of popular orators, or again to read into sacred literature, the very doctrines and principles which in fact distinguish their own particular schools of thought - beliefs frequently quite alien to those with whom they are thus arbitrarily associated. Amid many others, one conspicuous example of this practice is to be found in the efforts expended by various writers, both of early and later times, to allegorize or explain away altogether a group of difficult passages in Homer bearing on sundry details of mythology - difficult, that is to say, in the sense of being apparently impious and subversive of sound morality. Such treatment of irreligious or grotesque elements in the stories told of the gods became increasingly common among Greek thinkers in proportion as their ever-advancing ethical standards accentuated the inadequacy of primitive interpretative methods. And yet despite the truth of this observation, it is none the less worthy of note that even when the growth of intellectualism and positive science had more than demonstrated the untenability of a large number of the legends in circulation about the Immortals, these myths still continued to

occupy a paramount position in the thoughts and conversation of the ordinary layman, who remained comparatively unaffected by the "Higher Criticism" of the philosopher. Prior to the development of a more scientific approach to problems of current theology, however, the leavening influence of a new sensitivity to moral values had long been quietly at work in the world of Greek religious experience, and was now beginning to manifest itself in every department of national life and activity. As it is this phenomenon that chiefly explains later modifications of the traditional attitude towards popular mythology, our next task will evidently be to examine the relations existing between ethics and religion in the Homeric age, and then briefly to consider the question of exactly how, and to what extent, the trend of subsequent events was to strengthen and establish those relations.

Considered from one point of view, to be sure, religion has always been ethical, in that its prescriptions affect even the remotest by-paths of human conduct; but the fact nevertheless remains that unless religion be practised in the light of a morality which owns the guidance and sway of reason, it is bound, soon or late, to enter upon a condition of decay frequently leading to the grossest perversions of its true nature. Now while we are not indeed mainly concerned with the evolution of this new moral consciousness, or with its almost imperceptible absorption into the fabric of Greek religion proper, a brief glance at the more important landmarks in the history of the process will doubtless serve to emphasize its significance as the primary

causal factor in the change of religious attitude mentioned above. A study of the principles of conduct and social intercourse illustrated for us in the Iliad or the Odyssey will quickly convince the reader of the crudeness and inadequacy of the Homeric ethical code. Despite such limitations, however, many passages in Homer do exhibit a grandeur and intensity of religious emotion, united with a noble simplicity of character portraiture all the more remarkable when contrasted with primitive ideals. The latter observation, is of course, in no way a denial of the confessedly imperfect and rudimentary nature of the moral sanctions recognized in the age of Homer: and yet any just estimate of the ethical quality of the latter's poems needs must take into account prevalent economic and political conditions in their bearing upon the ordinary relationships of daily life. Thus, for example, the absence of settled institutions, the unorganized state of contemporary society, and not least the numerous difficulties involved in the confusing polytheism of the times, formed a serious obstacle to any true progress in the sphere of morals. To sum up, then, the ethical background of Homeric religion, viewed apart from its mythological context and associations, is in many respects an excellent one: Homer's gods at their best - that is to say, when treated by him in a genuinely religious spirit, as distinct from the descriptions given of them on a purely mythical or 'romantic' plane - undoubtedly represent the embodiment of that poet's noblest moral ideals and standards. For example,

it is true of the gods, as a general rule, that they reward virtuous deeds, and punish evil-doers; while all men know that the promises of Father Zeus can never be broken.(1) Again, in the Odyssey, where the moral qualities of the Immortals receive a more pronounced emphasis,(2) we are told that they frown on the use of poisoned arrows. These and other instances of a similar nature indicate that while in the realm of mythology the deities may, and indeed often do violate every conceivable canon of ethical conduct, Homer nevertheless regards them as the divine guardians and depositaries of true religion in Hellas. The writings of Hesiod, who lived during the troubled and gloomy period following upon the overthrow of Mycenean culture and civilization, reveal traces of the evident growth of a new corporate awareness of the claims of religion and ethics - a development that is attested, for instance, by the foundation of the Olympic games in the Peloponnese. An examination of Hesiod's poems inevitably suggests a score of interesting mythological questions, none of which really concerns us here: what does, however, demand attention is the advance in the faculty of moral reflection as a component part of the religious ethos.(3) To begin with, "the simple fact that didactic poetry now for the first time takes the place of narrative is most significant".(4) Again, Hesiod makes a further deviation, this time in the realm of ethics, by personifying Justice as the Goddess of Right, and daughter of

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(1) See Iliad 1, ll. 526-527.
(2) See Odyssey 1, l. 263.
(3) Lewis Campbell: Religion in Greek Literature, chap.5,p.109.
(4) Hesiod: Works and Days, l. 256; cf. also the Theogony,l.902.

Zeus; thus the conception of Δίκη, and the role it plays in the divine economy of rewards and punishments, is defined with much greater precision of detail than was its shadowy Homeric prototype. The collection of elegiac poems ascribed to Theognis of Megara, which is of somewhat later date than Hesiod's works, reflects a rather different temper and outlook on the issues of the moment, as would naturally be the case with one whose social position was so far removed from that of a simple Boeotian peasant. Theognis had, along with others of the aristocratic class, been the victim of a campaign of political readjustment on a wide scale, the results of which occasioned him considerable hardship and misfortune: and the effect of his reverses was quite plainly manifested in the pessimistic tone that runs through his verse. This spirit of complaint, which was a new thing in Greek literature, reacted upon the poet's moral philosophy, infusing into it the characteristic note of practical wisdom so much to the fore in his proverbial sayings and maxims. Of the fragmentary remains of the lyric poetry that flourished in such rich profusion during this age, little need be said here: while as models of literary form and as the embodiment of sheer poetic genius, these compositions are often beyond praise, it is doubtful whether they can be said to play any vital part in the process under discussion.

We may now turn our attention to what was the most fruitful and significant of all epochs in the entire history of Greek thought - the sixth century, B.C. An amazing spiritual revival,

destined to affect every phase of national life and conduct, was at that time struggling to birth in Greece. The widespread feeling of dissatisfaction with the immoral colour of many of the old myths became intensified as a result of the fresh stimulus thus applied to men's efforts to achieve a nobler and more adequate moral order. The most striking feature of the whole period, however, was the revolutionary character of the new ethical movement; for the first time in Greek religious experience, we note the appearance of a sense of 'sin' , and a consciousness of the necessity of purification from the taint of homicide - theological concepts quite alien to Homer, (1) who knew nothing of the numerous forms of ritual purgation, which under the influence of the recently-founded mystery cults, were rapidly spreading over the country. This desire for a loftier presentation of moral values met with some measure of fulfillment in the freshly-established worship of Apollo Pythius; and it is probable that the realization of the inherent guilt of bloodshed was greatly strengthened, if not indeed originally inspired by the teaching of the Pythian priesthood. We cannot dismiss this aspect of our subject without a brief reference to Orphism, and the important part it played in the fusion of popular religion with a more or less sharply-defined body of ethical sanctions. The two contributions of the Orphic cult to this end may be summed up as follows: (a), the idea of personal sanctity, and (b),

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(1) The significance of washing with sea-water, a practice mentioned in ll. 313-314 of the first book of the Iliad, as of fumigation with sulphur, which is described in ll. 480-481 of the twenty-second book of the Odyssey, is of course far removed from the moral notions that inspired the complex expiatory rites referred to in the text.

the belief in a future existence. The relation between these was a very real one: as in the Christian moral economy, holiness of living was made a prerequisite to the attainment of salvation. Now moral conceptions of the type just cited obviously represent a very considerable advance in the faculty of ethical reflection from the comparative crudeness of the standards and ideals prevalent in the Homeric age; and it is therefore natural enough that the merging of this increased moral sensitivity with the fabric of the national religion should have profoundly modified the attitude of all enlightened critics towards the mythological discrepancies of the day.

Again, we must not suppose that the Greeks regarded the gods themselves as the authors of the vast body of myths with which in the course of centuries their names had come to be traditionally associated; on the contrary, all thinkers (1) realized clearly enough that the wealth of legend and fable which had gradually grown up about the persons of the Greek Pantheon owed not a little of its richness and variety of theme to the imaginative powers of their poets and mythographers. Hence criticism of such popular mythical lore as is found, for exam-

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(1) " It is impossible to exaggerate the religious influence on the Greek mind of the great epics, and especially of Homer, whom Hesiod merely follows 'magno intervallo'. But the bards gave what they got. To say they created the Theogony may be misleading. They dealt with popular legends, selecting, purifying, transforming them if you will by their art, but they did not invent them at will. Mythology is a gradual growth of the mind of the people, and the primitive poet may have ventured to interpret, but not to create in the full sense of the word. What Homer did, perhaps unconsciously, was to suppress one legend and to stereotype another for all time, and in this sense alone is it fair to call him the creator of Greek Mythology."

H. Browne, Homeric Studies, chapter 4, page 201.

ple, in the pages of Homer and Hesiod cannot be dismissed as merely indicative of the essentially heretical temper of the Greek genius, nor yet construed as the work of a sect of impious fanatics bent on demolishing the very foundations of the national religion by an attack on the morality of the gods; but it is to be rather regarded as an attempt to vindicate, at whatever cost, the tarnished character of the Blessed Ones. And any logical method of realizing this purpose seemed of necessity to presuppose the complete eradication of the element of incongruity so common in the mythology of the times. It must indeed be admitted that there was more than sufficient justification for such censure of current theology. A very large number of the stories of the gods were either offensive to every canon of good taste, or what was worse, frankly immoral in tone. To bear out the truth of this statement, we shall cite but a few instances of many that could be adduced to exemplify the delightful freedom from restraint so typical of the Olympian menage; there is, to begin with,(1) the incident of the mutilation of Uranus by his offspring Cronus, and the latter's(2) meal upon, and subsequent regurgitation of his own children.(3) It is likewise related of Demeter that she devoured the shoulder of Pelops, who had previously been disgorged by his father Tantalus and served up in the banqueting-hall of the Immortals. Moreover what student of

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(1) Hesiod, Theogony, ll. 160, 182. See also Apollodorus 1,i, 4.

(2) Ibidem: ll. 452, 487, and Apollodorus 1,i, 6.

(3) See Pindar: Ol. 1, 49 foll., and for full references consult W. Scheuer in Rosher, art. Tantalos.

classical literature is not familiar with the amorous adventures of Zeus, King of Gods and Men, which were so numerous as almost to defy reckoning ? The escapades, too, of his brother Poseidon, Lord of the Sea, and of his sons, Hermes and Apollo, are scarcely less worthy of note by reason of their complete indifference to the requirements of conventional morality. Thus all thinking people who had the cause of true religion at heart felt the need of a method by which such unsavoury fables as those just instanced could either be explained away altogether as the work of vulgar debased minds, or alternatively, subjected to a process of interpretation designed to elucidate the inner meaning of the passage in question, as opposed to its obvious and external signification.

Personification, Etymologizing, and Allegory in Homer: the Earlier Allegorists.

Having now very briefly outlined the factors in the world of Greek religion that seemed likely to herald the birth of some fresh form of Homeric exegesis, we shall next turn our attention to the first crude manifestations of this new exegesis, and to the varying forms by which it was soon to be distinguished. The critics and interpreters of popular myths who begin to make their appearance in the fifth century, naturally divide into several groups: at the outset, we may remark the etymologizing school, one of whose distinctive characteristics consisted in the belief that it was as the result of deliberate

design, rather than of mere chance that the traditional names of the gods had been created for them; thus these names contained within themselves some hidden significance, the discovery of which would enable earnest seekers after truth to comprehend the real nature and being of the particular deity in question. Such analogies as that of Aphrodite from ἀφρός, Apollo from ἀπόλλυμι, etc., will be readily recalled by the classical student. Next in order come the various schools of allegorical interpretation that grew up about Homer, and with whose efforts this thesis is chiefly concerned. Commentators of this type proceeded on the assumption that Homer in his mythography had never for a moment failed to keep in view the moral welfare of generations yet unborn; if then any particular fable appeared at first sight grotesque, immoral or otherwise impious, the explanation invariably offered was that the would-be interpreter had missed the sub-sense (1) ὑπόνοια, of that fable. Finally, other spirits, boldly rejecting any attempt to explain what they considered mere poetic imagery, strove by every means within their power to establish the supremacy of the faculty of reason in what pertained to the realm of religion, and thus to banish from men's minds the debased and ignoble conception of divinity reflected in the mythology of the day.

We have already noted the appearance in Greek literary history of an etymologizing school occurring simultaneously

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(1) Cf. also Pl. Republ. 378d 6 for this use of ὑπόνοια; the word ἀλληγορικῶς does not occur before Cleanthes.

with that of the early allegorists: it will therefore perhaps be not irrelevant to our purpose to examine at this point, a few instances of such verbal curiosities as they are found in the writings of Homer, since it was habits of style like these that encouraged the efforts of students of the allegoristic persuasion. Among the most elementary examples of that tendency to juggle with words, which as we shall see, was so common among both poets and prose writers must be reckoned simple literary devices like assonance and paronomasia; while one might also include in the same category the varied etymologies of proper names, divine and human, with which Greek authors loved to besprinkle their pages - a practice of which some mention has already been made in a preceding section. The importance of this fondness for playing with words and phrases, in itself of course restricted to no one type of literature, lay in the fact that it was peculiarities of this nature that were destined in later times to result in the mania for philological speculation and research so characteristic of the later exponents of Stoicism. On turning to the Homeric poems themselves, we shall find that they afford distinct evidence of a similar delight in assonance and verbal balance, and what is but one step removed from these, etymologizing and the use of allegory. The following passages exemplify both the former and the latter usages,

(a) Iliad 19, 389: Τὸ μὲν οὐ δύνατ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν

κάλλειν, ἀλλὰ μιν οἷος ἐνίσπατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεύς,

Πηλιάδα μελίην, τὴν κατὰ φίλῳ πόρε Χείρων

Πηλίου ἐκ κορυφῆς.

(b) Od. 19,562:

... αἱ μὲν γὰρ Κεράεσσι τετεύχαται, αἱ δ' ἐλέφαντι·
τῶν οἳ μὲν κ' ἔλθωσι διὰ κριτοῦ ἐλέφαντος,
οἵ ῥ' ἐλεφαίρονται, ἔπε' ἀκράαντα φέροντες·
οἱ δὲ διὰ ξεστῶν Κεράων ἔλθωσι θύρηζε,
οἵ ῥ' ἔτυμα κραίνουσι, βροτῶν ὅτε κέν τις ἴδηται.

Allegory, on the other hand, appears very rarely, there being less than half-a-dozen instances of its employment in the entire poems. Homer here stands out in marked contrast to Hesiod, whose works abound in allegorical description. An examination of the Homeric writings will likewise reveal examples of the figure of speech known as personification: (Cf. Il. 4, 440). 'Δεῖμος, Φόβος and Ἔρις', and 5, 740: Ἔρις, Ἀλκή, and Ἰωκή. The opposite process to the one just mentioned, that is to say, the figurative use of the names of deities as applied to inanimate objects is also employed by Homer on more than one occasion. The early development of this symbolic use of names in Greek literature, coupled with the ever-increasing tendency to allegorization, which faint though it is in the Iliad and the Odyssey, becomes quite noticeable in Hesiod, cannot be regarded as otherwise than an unfortunate one, since in many cases it offered a natural 'point de depart' for the subtleties of interpretative method that were now rapidly coming into vogue. And yet to read into such simple literary artifices a concealed allegorical purpose is obviously absurd. When, for example, Homer and other writers employ the divine name of Ἥφαιστος, to designate fire, we have no right to suppose them to be thereby implying that the deity

worshipped under that title was, so to say, a mere synonym for the qualities of light and heat, or that it was under the inspiration of this Stoicized concept of divinity that the Greek poets and mythographers set up the cult of Hephaestus, thus allegorizing the truth that the particular use of this god's name was intended to suggest.[1] As Hersman has pointed out, there is a decided difference between the use of natural allegory on the one hand, and allegorization on the other; and it is obviously under the former of these two headings that such types of substitution as those just instanced are to be grouped. These, then, were the materials which the allegorical schools found ready to hand in their struggle to vindicate the supremacy that the 'Father of Poetry' had hitherto enjoyed alike in the spheres of inspired verse and 'moral theology'.

It was in the defence of Homer against his critics and detractors that the earliest exponents of allegorical interpretation found the primary raison-d'etre and stimulus for their labours.[2] Heraclitus, the Stoic, mentions such attacks as the main reason for his embarking upon the uncharted waters of allegoristic; and although he lived at a much later date than the ~~one~~ -al now under consideration, we may be quite certain that these earlier commentators were actuated by a similar impulse. For, as has already been indicated, serious criticisms were being directed against Homer's impiety from the most influential quarters.

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(1) Studies in Greek Allegorical Interpretation, page 8.
(2) Quaestiones Homericae, passim.

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Heraclitus of Ephesus had declared that Homer 'deserved a sound thrashing' for the scandalous tone that characterized so many of his tales, (2) while Xenophanes of Colophon probably summed up the objections of the majority of critics in his famous remark: Πάντα θεοῖς ἀνέθηκαν Ὅμηρός θ' Ἡσίοδός τε ὅσσα παρ' ἀνθρώποισιν ὀνείδεα καὶ ψόγος ἐστί' .

The earliest allegorists are little more than names to us, since as none of their writings has survived to posterity, it is impossible to estimate the character of the views they may have expressed, except insofar as such opinions have been preserved for our study in documents of a later date. Theagenes of Rhegium (circa 525 B.C.,) who is placed by most modern authors at the head of the list, was the first to compose a work devoted to the Homeric poems; he likewise initiated the search for hidden meanings in the stories of the gods contained therein. If the scholia are to be trusted, this critic appears to have offered two quite different methods of explaining Homer's famous description of the great theomachy, or combat between the gods and mortal men, which occurs in the (3) twentieth book of the Iliad. According to Theagenes' ingenious theory it was possible to suppose that in this passage, the poet was applying the names of various deities to elements of the physical world; hence the whole scene represents, under the form of an allegory, the perpetual conflict that rages between the mutually hostile forces

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(1) Diog. Laert. IX, 1.
(2) Xenophan. ap. Sext. Empir. adv, Mathemat. IX, 193.
(3) vv. 54-75.

of nature. Thus we are not to believe that Homer ever intended to convey the impression that a real battle of the gods had taken place; in other words, his vivid and awe-inspiring account of the mighty 'war in heaven' must be understood as purely symbolic in force and purpose. Or again, if for any reason this interpretation be unacceptable, we may regard the titles of the gods as personifying mental faculties, emotional states, or even moral principles. Thus Theagenes opposes Poseidon and Scamander, the river god, to Apollo, typifying fire, and Hera to Artemis, as the air resists the passage of the moon: while Aphrodite and Ares, symbolic of profligacy and rashness, are attacked by Athene, the goddess of Prudence. Similarly Leto, or Forgetfulness, is beset by Hermes, emblematic of Reason, or the Spoken Word. It is interesting to observe that the comments and explanations of Theagenes, the earliest of their kind extant, already foreshadow the dual form into which allegoristic was naturally to divide - physical, and moral, or psychological. The next figure who can be clearly discerned on the stage of allegorical interpretation is Parmenides of Elea (c. 540-470 B.C.,) As regards the details of his allegoristic, very little is known; but to gain a clear understanding even of the few facts concerning it that have actually survived, we must briefly review the principles of the Parmenidean philosophical system relevant to our topic. The idea from which he took his starting-point was that of Being as contrasted with Not-Being. In applying this, his cardinal doctrine, to the creation and structure of the world, Parmenides

explained that the opinion of men thinks of everything as compounded of two elements, corresponding to Being and Not-Being respectively; the light and fiery (φλογός αἰθέριον πῦρ) and night, the heavy, dark and cold. For example, the ideas of men, whom, with Xenophanes and Anaximander, he believed had been moulded from mud, were thus closely interrelated with the material constitution of their bodies. The character of those ideas was held to depend upon which of the two elements predominated at the moment: men therefore possessed greater truth when the Warm (Being) was uppermost. This explanation is a clear-cut instance of physical allegory, Zeus being identified with the Warm. Parmenides is thought to have given an allegorical interpretation of other gods as well, equating Hera with the air, Apollo with the sun, etc., just as later philosophers were to do.

Yet another important representative of the same school is Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (500-428 B.C.,) whose chief title to fame may be said to lie in the fact of his having originated, or at any rate developed the method of interpreting the Homeric myths on a moral basis. He conceived the classical gods and heroes as nothing more than mental entities, albeit endowed with names and personality, and represented them as the embodiments of various ethical qualities. Anaxagoras also wrote a work devoted to physical allegory, though in this department he was preceded by his disciple Metrodorus of Lampsacus (circa 464 B.C.,) The latter appears to have carried the allegorical explanations undertaken by Theagenes, to an extreme point; for he refused to

limit himself to the Olympian deities, whom he regarded as symbolic of the human organism, but extended the process to mortal men. Thus he called Agamemnon 'air', and raised the Homeric heroes in general to the rank of constellations.(1) Stesimbrotus and Glaucon are mentioned in the Ion as co-workers in the field of allegoristic; though Plato does not there state whether they favoured the physical or moral mode of interpretation, or both.(2) We have it in the authority of Xenophon however, that both Anaximander and Stesimbrotus of Thasos were students of Homeric allegory, and employed it, among other media, in their explanations of current theology. A further important development in the history of this process was introduced by the philosopher Empedocles, who flourished in the middle of the fifth century. This step consisted in a new emphasis placed upon the gap that existed between the gods on the one hand and the daemones, as they were called, on the other. Such a distinction, while barely hinted at in Homer, is quite clearly recognized in Hesiod's Works and days. Empedocles, then, accentuated the differences separating these two classes, with a view to thus relieving the philosophical mind in some measure at least, from the enormous perplexities and confusion inherent in the mythology of the times. He attributed to the Immortals all the virtues customarily associated with the Divine, but, contrary to all established precedent, freed them from the passions and infirmity of

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(1) Ion. 530 D.
(2) Symp. 3,6.

character that were proving so serious a stumbling-block to enlightened intellects. It was the demons, who formed a sort of intermediate caste between gods and men, to whom were now assigned the obnoxious and unethical acts for which the gods had hitherto borne the brunt of blame. This contrast between gods and demons was obviously a most convenient one: the aberrations of previous interpreters could now be explained as due to the error of imputing to deity conduct really indicative of a demoniac origin. Thus all discreditable acts - rapes, abductions, and mutual strife - formerly assigned to the gods themselves, could henceforth be safely ascribed to a lower and more malign agency. Such innovations preserved both the underlying truth of the fable and, far more important, the moral integrity of the gods themselves: thus obviating the necessity of admitting that the legends were either honey-combed with falsehoods, or of facing the equally unpleasant alternative of the gods' moral obliquity.

Democritus (circa 460-370) who for the whole of later times was the outstanding representative of the Atomistic School, and with whose death (1) Aristotle brings natural philosophy to a close, also appears to have favoured the allegorical method of interpretation - that is, if one or two rather significant remarks of his are to be construed as in any measure indicative of his views on the subject in general. It is true that like Euhemerus, he seems perhaps rather to have sought the sources of

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(1) De part. an., I, i p. 642a, 24ff.

belief in the religion of the day than to have concerned himself with the task of defending and justifying his own private opinions, or with shielding poets and mythographers against them. According to (1) Democritus, one important, and indeed possibly the sole origin of men's beliefs in divine beings is to be found in their efforts to assign causes to outstanding phenomena of the natural world for which they were unable to account by ordinary explanation. Now the use of allegoristic would seem to follow naturally on such a view as the one just cited: and so we find Democritus referring to Zeus as (2) "what men now call air". Furthermore, there is preserved for us in the corpus of his recorded sayings an obviously allegorical interpretation of the epithet 'Τριτογένεια' - a word which was later to prove one of the joys of allegorizing philologians. (3) He explained the term as hinting at the three parts into which wisdom may be divided - namely, to reason well, to express one's thoughts with eloquence, and to reduce correctly to practice what has already been meditated on.

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The Sophists.

The allegorizing tendency seems likewise to have been quite pronounced in the time of the Sophists. Prodicus of Iulis, for example, might well be classified as an allegorist, albeit an atheistic one. (4) The following passage embodies his opinions

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(1) Sextus Math. 9. 24.
(2) Clem. Alex Protrep. c.6 68.59 P. (20 S.)
(3) Diog. L. 9, 46. Eustath. 696. 36.
(4) Sextus Math. 9, 18.

on the nature of the gods: "Prodicus the Cean says that the ancients believed sun and moon and rivers and springs, and, in general, all things that are beneficial to man, to be gods on account of their service to us, as the Egyptians look on the Nile. And that on this account bread was believed to be Demeter, wine Dionysus, water Poseidon, fire Hephaestus, and, indeed, each of the aids to man's life was treated in this way", i.e., deified. We have already noted a few instances of this personifying use of the names of deities in Homer himself, but there, of course, it had been quite free from the strained and unnatural force that allegoristic was even now beginning to stamp upon it. Hippias of Elis, one of the most accomplished scholars in the ranks of Sophism, is also known to have analysed Homer's poems from an ethical and psychological standpoint: for example, he resolved the characters of the more prominent Homeric heroes into semi-personifications of various mental and ethical qualities. Thus in Odysseus he saw the embodiment of ruthless guile and deceit; in Achilles, that of boldness and valour, etc. Such treatment of the Iliad and the Odyssey was doubtless quite common among the Sophists, since one of the main features of their educational programme actually consisted in the interpretation of the poets (' Περὶ ἐπῶν δεινὸν εἶναι ' Prot., 338 E.).(1)

A few instances of allegoristic occur in the works of the tragedian Euripides, who sometimes tends to merge the per-

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(1) Troad. 886, and 983-992.

sonality of his deities into a vague pantheistic cosmos. Thus in (1) two passages he clearly identifies Zeus with the element of air. (2) The same poet also introduces a novel explanation of the old legend telling how Dionysus was sewn up in Zeus' thigh, μηρός ; this fable, it appeared, had arisen because of men's ignorance of what had actually occurred. The fact was, that Dionysus had been preserved by the King of the Gods, the latter having given Hera an unsubstantial shade in the form of an infant, to serve as a pledge, ὅμηρος . (Bac. 286-297). In contrast to this instance, however, Euripides in other places seems to have unduly emphasized repellent features of traditional myth.

Plato and the Allegorical Schools.

The Contributions of the Cynic and Stoic Philosophers to the Development of Allegoristic.

(3) "It is a valuable discovery of modern times that Plato meant all or most of his etymologies as mere parody and caricature". This statement and the truth which it expresses have a very important bearing upon the subject of the allegorical method of interpretation, insofar as that phenomenon occurs in the Platonic dialogues; for although etymologizing and allegoristic are in themselves wholly distinct and separate from each

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(1) Frag. 869, and 935 Nauck.
(2) 229 C, sq.
(3) Cf. Schleiermacher.

other, they have many points in common. Indeed from a quite early period, the association existing between the two had become almost akin to a literary convention.(1) It is now recognized by competent scholars that Plato does not belong to the number of allegorical interpreters; hence the only reason for introducing his name at all in this dissertation is the valuable evidence he offers as to the popularity of allegorization in his day.

Plato refused to allow into his state the blasphemous stories so common in the poets " οὔτ' ἐν ὑκονοίαις πεκοιημένας οὔτε ἄνευ ὑκονοιῶν ", for fear lest they disturbed the morals of the young men by their seeming disregard for ethical conventions.(2) Moreover, he utterly repudiated any suggestion of Homer's omniscience, and denied that either the latter or Hesiod could be considered a suitable guide in the sphere of morality. The fact however remains that a number of the dialogues, especially the Cratylus, contain instances of etymologizing, and also some obvious examples of allegoristic: what satisfactory explanation can be adduced to account for this apparent anomaly? The question of Plato's use of etymologies is a long and complicated one, and has but a remote bearing on our theme. We shall therefore dismiss this problem in summary fashion by observing that with whatever motive Plato does advance his various etymologies, it is certain that in the great majority of cases there is no

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(1) Yet Cf. Ker, The Dark Ages, 29, who makes the remarkable error of calling Plato an allegorist.

(2) Rep. 598 C, D. 606; 607 A.

serious purpose underlying them. As regards the allegoristic found in the dialogues, an examination of them will invariably reveal the fact that each instance has been introduced with the express intention of belittling any philosophers who misused linguistic research to aid them in their philosophies. A typical specimen of such parody is the Platonic exegesis of (1) Homer's golden chain - an interpretation undoubtedly designed to ridicule the extreme Heracliteans. A further example of allegoristic occurs in the Phaedrus: and in it, Plato's feelings on the subject of allegorization are clearly set forth. The following is a translation of the passage referred to: "if I doubted the story, as do the wise, it would not be considered strange on my part, and then I might rationalize it and say that, while Oreithyia was playing with Pharmaceia, a gale of north wind swept her over the rocks hard by, and that this was how she really died, but the legend arose that she was carried off by Boreas (or was the Areopagus the scene? for there is another version according to which she was carried away thence and not from this place). Now I quite admit, Phaedrus, that these are very pretty explanations, but the author of them must be an exceedingly clever and painstaking person, and his lot is anything but enviable, for the simple reason that he will next have to restore to their proper forms the breed of Hippocentaurs and of Chimaera, and an overwhelming flood of Gorgons likewise and of winged horses will flow in

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(1) Theaet. 153 C. Cf. Il 8, 17.

upon him, and other outlandish and monstrous creatures innumerable. Now if, in his scepticism, he is to force each of these into agreement with probability by means of some crude kind of skill, he will need a great deal of leisure. But as for me, frankly I have not the leisure for such pursuits, and the reason is this; I have not yet learnt the Delphic lesson, "Know Thyself", and so I find it ridiculous, in my present state of ignorance, to consider the concerns of others. And therefore I bid a long farewell to all such speculations, acquiescing in the popular beliefs, and I reflect not upon these problems but upon myself, whether I am just some monster more complicated and fierce than Typhon, or some gentler, simpler creature, naturally endowed with a divine and unassuming character".

One of the most interesting features of these lines is the etymology of the word Τυφῶν which brings them to a close. Plato doubtless introduces this derivation in much the same spirit that he manifests in his parody of the Heraclitean allegoristic, already mentioned, and his imitation of them in the Cratylus. Quite apart from its interest as an illustration of the Platonic point of view with regard to one particular instance of allegorical interpretation, however, this passage is no less valuable in that Socrates here hints at what in his eyes constitutes the most cogent reason for rejecting all such linguistic vagaries - that is to say, the absurdity of attempting to detach any one fable from the main body of mythical lore for the purpose of presenting it in a semi-historical or philosophical dress. As Socrates

goes on to point out, the above process could only be recognized as a legitimate one if it were applicable to every myth of that class: otherwise the method would of course be obviously unsound. We emphasize this aspect of Plato's teaching as set forth both in the Phaedrus and in his Republic because it ran so completely counter to the rationalizing spirit in Homeric interpretation that at this time held sway, and of which, as we have already seen, the allegorical method was only a part. In conclusion, then, we may distinguish two ways in which Plato undoubtedly supplied an impetus to the already marked tendency towards allegorical interpretation. In the first place his attacks on Homer and Hesiod as teachers of immoral ideas and impious doctrines inevitably led zealous philosophers of a later age to rally to the defence of the traditional religion, and encouraged them in the belief that the only method of defending these poets lay in allegorizing their myths. Again, although his own use of allegorical etymologies was doubtless jesting, they nevertheless became a standard for serious research and investigation in the field of etymological study.(1) As Hersman has pointed out, Plato quite probably influenced later commentators in yet a third manner: his doctrine of 'Enthusiasmós' of poets may well have suggested to critics the 'infallibility' of inspired writings - a theory which Plato in fact definitely repudiated.

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(1) Studies in Greek Allegorical Interpretation, p.9.

We mentioned above that the method of allegorical interpretation was but one aspect of a much larger movement which at this time was sweeping over Greece: in view of this fact, it is perhaps fitting that we should pause for a moment to glance at some of the broader features of this process as it affected the intellectual life of the fifth century. Euhemerism is the name commonly given to the movement, since it was the Messenian Euhemerus, a contemporary of Kassander of Macedon, who carried it to its greatest extreme, though he was preceded by such historians, for example, as Theopompus and Ephorus, of the latter of whom (1) Strabo says; ... 'εἰ δὲ μὴ ταῦτα ὑπελάμβανε μύθους εἶναι, τί ἐχρῆν τὴν μυθευομένην Θέμιν γυναῖκα καλεῖν, τὸν δὲ ... Δράκοντα ἄνθρωπον;; The semi-historical theory of Euhemerus centred in the belief that while the gods and heroes had in their own generation been ordinary mortal men, though doubtless renowned for their prowess in some one or several fields of human endeavour, yet after death they had been apotheosized or elevated to heroic rank as a result of their outstanding achievements. Euhemerus at the outset enjoyed a fairly large and quite influential following: Men like Palaephatus, who wrote 'On the Incredible', Polybius, Diodorus and Strabo were among his most famous followers; while (2) we are told that his 'Historia Sacra', was translated into Latin by Ennius. It is interesting to note in passing, that while this 'minimizing' school of interpretation

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(1) Geography IX, p.422.

(2) See Cicero, De Natura Deorum, i, 119 Varro De Re Rustica, i, 4. Lactantius (De Falsa Relig. c. 13, 14, 16,) gives many citations from this translations.

soon drew upon itself the odium of all who clung to the old beliefs, Christian apologists like Minucius Felix, Lactantius, etc, eagerly embraced the results of its investigations in their desire to turn against the pagan world the new and potent weapon thus proffered them.

The next group of figures with whom we have to concern ourselves are the Cynics. As, however, very few of their writings are extant , it is impossible to give a really adequate account of their interpretative methods. Nevertheless, we do know that the Cynics indulged to some extent at least in allegoristic: Antisthenes, for example, has left on record his conviction that Eros the God of Love, was a malady of the soul, which had presumably been raised to divine rank by those suffering from its onsets. Again, the same author informs us that some of Homer's words were uttered δόξῃ , others ἀληθείᾳ , This kind of phraseology, which was of course a commonplace on the lips of Stoic philosophers, may not have had quite the same significance for Antisthenes as it did among later writers: at any rate, we have no right at our present stage of knowledge, to assume that the antithesis made by him between 'δόξῃ' and 'ἀληθείᾳ' was intended to represent the expression of truth under an allegorical form on the one hand, as contrasted with its exposition in clear and undisguised language on the other. With the advent of the Stoics, however, the necessarily tentative and hypothetical character of so many of our deductions regarding the beliefs of these early commentators finally disappears, and we are now at

last enabled to enter upon the realm of actual recorded statement and fact. For the Stoics are indeed the first group of thinkers who may be fairly said to have in any real sense elaborated and systematized their employment of allegorical interpretation, in accordance with a clearly-defined body of philosophical concepts. The Stoics of course assumed at the outset of their researches, as had many another in the past, that Homer was acquainted with, and fully convinced of the truth of their credo; and they consequently saw in every page of his work evidences of the modes of thought and expression typical of the Stoic school. Whether writers of this stamp were sincere in their use of the methods by which they sought to commend their doctrines, is a debatable question, and one upon which it is impossible to dogmatize: at the same time, however, the words of Dio Chrysostom, ' ὁ δὲ Ζήνων οὐδὲν τῶν τοῦ Ὁμήρου φέγει ', seem to argue the genuineness of their aims. In appraising the Stoic treatment of contemporary mythology, one is struck by the extraordinary freedom manifested by the exponents of that sect in their employment of etymologizing - a habit the growth and development of which we noted briefly in the preceding section. But among commentators of this type, the tendency grew to monstrous proportions, and rapidly degenerated into an absurd and meaningless fetich: no derivation seemed too fantastic, no etymology too ridiculous for their eager credulity to accept and press into service in the sacred cause of Stoicism. Before we turn to a more detailed analysis of the Stoic application of the etymologizing method

to the mythological system of the day, however, we must pause to examine an important innovation which they introduced into current theology - namely the gulf fixed between Zeus and the other members of the Olympian family. Instances of a similar tendency to blend the personalities of several deities into one, making Zeus the common denominator, as it were, to which all other gods ultimately reduced, have already been alluded to in Euripides: with the Stoics, then, this tentative and arbitrary grouping of the Immortals soon crystalized into a hard and fast distinction. Zeus, in their philosophical system, was the one great primary and Supreme Being, at once the efficient cause, the source and the reality of all things human and divine, visible and invisible. Other deities were regarded merely as phases, attributes or manifestations of the one Father of Gods and Men. The numerous etymological speculations indulged in by Stoic thinkers to explain the origin of the name of Zeus, and of his element, the ether, are in themselves a revelation of these points of doctrine. A few examples of their activities in this field will suffice to illustrate the spirit underlying their general method: thus the Stoics derive Ζεὺς[1] from the verb ζῆν , and the genitive case Διὸς , from the preposition διὰ , ὅτι δι' αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα . Again, the noun θεὸς , it appeared was formed from θέειν , or τιθέναι , and αἰθὴρ , the air from the phrase ἀεὶ θέειν or ἀΐθειν - etymologies borrowed in each case from Plato's Cratylus. It is in-

(1) All these are set forth in Cornutus. pp. 7; 26; 35; 38.

teresting to note the fact that the relation of Zeus, the great primary principle of the universe, to the body of lesser deities was explained on a basis partly physical, partly psychological, just as we are told was done by Theagenes, the originator of the allegorical mode of exegesis. In their account of the physical composition of the world, Stoic authors likewise proceeded on familiar lines: according to their description, the lighter and more airy part of Zeus became the ether, (ἀήρ), while its grosser and heavier elements sank down to the bottom and were known to men as Hades. A similar line of approach was employed in dealing with the source of the three other primary elements of matter - fire, water, and earth.

Having thus briefly sketched the salient features of the Stoic philosophical method as it affects our subject, it is now time to examine the fruits of the labours of its individual exponents in the sphere of allegoristic.(1) Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, was a prolific writer, and we are informed that he devoted no less than five volumes to an analysis of Homeric problems; unfortunately, however, only a few fragments of these are extant. Besides the statement of Dio Chrysostom, quoted above, that 'Zeno blamed nothing in Homer', and his famous remark about the latter's having written some things 'δόξῃ, and others 'ἀληθείᾳ' - a sentiment of which mention has already been made - we have the testimony of Minucius Felix,(2) and of Cicero,(3) that Zeno favoured

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(1) Diogenes Laertes 7, 4; Cicero De Nat. Deor. 1, 15, 36.
(2) Octav. 19, 10.
(3) De Natura Deorum, 2, 24, 63; and 1, 15, 36.

the allegorical method in his interpretation of the Homeric poems. Minucius states that he explained Hephaestus as the element of fire, Poseidon as water, Zeus as the heavenly regions, and Hera as air - etymologies likewise derived from the Cratylus - while in Cicero we have some rather confused and almost contradictory accounts of Zeno's ruthless reduction of the gods to the low-water level of rationalistic exegesis. I use the word 'contradictory', because Cicero at one moment declares that the Stoic author raised the element of ether to divine rank, while at another he complains that Zeno robbed the gods of their distinctive personalities and of all the attributes customarily associated with deity. To substantiate the latter charge, Cicero adduces a few of his alleged etymologies, two of which are as follows: (1)
'ἠχερών', the movement up, derived from the phrase 'ὑχερίνω ἰέναι Κῶιος' formed from κοῖος, the letter χ being substituted for κ as in aeolic. Cleanthes, who succeeded his master Zeno as the leader of the Stoic movement (2) seems likewise to have compiled a fairly large number of works, three at least of which almost certainly contained frequent instances of allegoristic. The titles of these three books were, 'On the Gods', 'On the Poet', and 'On the Giants'. A few typical examples of his etymological speculations are herewith subjoined: Apollo, so called, (3) ὡς ἀπ' ἄλλων καὶ ἄλλων τόκων τὰς ἀνατολὰς ποιουμένου. Another epithet of the same god, Λύκιος, was coined, 'quod veluti lupi pecora rapiunt, ita

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(1) De Natura Deorum: 1, 15, 36.
(2) Diogenes 7, 175.
(3) Macrobius, Satire 1, 17.

ipse quoque Humorem eripit radiis'. Again, Cleanthes derived the name of Dionysus[1] from the verb διανύσαι, because the sun daily makes a complete revolution about the earth[2]. Persephone, it appeared, was so called ' Τὸ διὰ τῶν καρπῶν φερόμενον καὶ φονευόμενον πνεῦμα '. Cleanthes was but one of a large number of enthusiasts in the field of philosophy, whose zeal constantly outran their discretion and better judgment when it came to a question of establishing the antiquity of the particular doctrine or tenet they were eager to commend. This highly-desired end Cleanthes attained by the simple expedient of 'modifying' or expounding the 'true' meaning of doctrines and words, more especially the latter, whenever they appeared out of harmony with his own opinions. Thus the same writer, for example, took the word μῶλυ, (Od. 19, v. 305), and declared that it was a verbal allegory of reason, by which passion and impulse μαλύνονται. Two of the citations made above from the 'De Natura Deorum', contained references to the name of Chrysippus, which Cicero there sets down side by side with that of Zeno and Cleanthes as a fellow-worker with them in the sphere of allegorical interpretation. Cicero likewise cites a number of the more extraordinary and daring etymologies proposed by Chrysippus in common with others of his Stoic contemporaries. Like his predecessor Cleanthes, Chrysippus did not confine his attention to Homer alone, but extended the scope of his investigations to include[3] Hesiod, Orpheus and Musaeus;

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(1) Macrobius, Satire 1, 18.
(2) Plutarch, De Is. 66.
(3) See Philodemus de piet. 13, Pearson fr. 5[illegible].

so that, to quote Cicero's phrase,[1] 'etiam veterrimi poetae, qui haec ne suspicati quidem sunt, Stoici fuisse videantur'. As regards his etymologizing, Chrysippus manifests all the extravagances and vagaries of exegesis, by which the ardent philosopher sought to extract the required meaning from a troublesome passage. Thus he derives the name of Apollo from the negative prefix[2] ἀ + πολύς ὡς οὐχὶ πολλῶν.. τοῦ πυρὸς ὄντος . The explanations given above of the origin of the name of Zeus are likewise attributed to this writer. Cicero, who is our chief authority on Chrysippus, tells us further that the latter called Zeus[3] 'ether', and also[4] 'fate', and[5] deified now one principle or element, now another. In view of what has already been said, it seems probable that his De Audiendis Poetis was full of similar ventures into the realm of allegoristic. Of the many other remaining disciples of Zeno and Chrysippus, little more in most cases than mere names have survived to posterity; and consequently it would be a profitless task to try to estimate their significance in the development of allegorical interpretation. The name of Antipater, however, has been singled out for mention because one or two of his etymologies happens to have been preserved for us, and also because[6] Macrobius has recorded his explanation of the birth of the Latoides and the defeat of the dragon Pytho, as representing, beneath the veil of

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(1) De Natura Deorum 1, 15, 41.
(2) Plotinus v. 5, 6, where it is quoted as Pythagorean.
(3) De Natura Deorum 1, 15, 39, 40.
(4) Plut. Stoic. rep. 1050B.
(5) De Natura Deorum 1, 15, 39, 40.
(6) Satire 1, 17.

allegory, the events that transpired during the creation of the world, and the formation of the sun and the moon. Again, as an instance of his etymologizing we may cite Antipater's derivation of the epithet Λύκιος[1], one of the titles applied to the god Apollo. This word, which, as has already been noted, seemed to exercise a curious fascination upon the Stoics, was explained by him, ' ἀπὸ τοῦ λευκαίνεσθαι κέντρα φωτίζοντος ἡλίου '. While we are considering the Stoic exegesis of divine names and epithets - a process which of course played a vital part in the elaboration of their allegorical system - it will be of interest to remark the extraordinarily varied and fantastic etymologies that centred around the name of Athene. For example, we have the word explained as though it derived from θῆλυς[2], or θηλάζειν, or from ἀθρεῖν, or alternatively, as if it were formed from ἀιθὴρ + ναίω[3], so that Ἀθηναία = Ἀιθεροναία[4]. Similarly, Diogenes and Cornutus[5] regard the epithet Τριτογένεια as symbolic of the three parts - physics, ethics, and logic - into which Stoic doctrine divided philosophy. The myth regarding the birth of Athene from Zeus' head provoked a corresponding diversity of explanations from ancient writers[6]. Thus Chrysippus declares that Athene issued forth from her father's head because the air which he represents is found in the uppermost regions of the universe.[7] Eustathius

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(1) Etymol. Mag.
(2) Etymol. Mag.
(3) Athenag. Leg. pro Christ C. 17.
(4) Phaedr. 1? c.
(5) Cornutus 20, 108.
(6) Cf. Plat. 3, 8.
(7) See on Iliad 93, 40.

also supports this interpretation of the fable, which would appear to have been originated by Diogenes.(1) Cornutus and Heraclitus,(2) however, inclined to the belief that the key to the allegory lies in the fact that it is the head which constitutes the seat of the faculty of reason.

The two extant allegorical works written before Plutarch are the 'Allegoricae Homericae' (Quaestiones Homericae) of Heraclitus of Pontus, and the 'Compendium Theologiae Graecae' of Cornutus, who lived during the reign of Augustus. These monographs may indeed be said to represent the cream of Stoic research and investigation in the field of allegoristic. We shall deal first of all with the former of the two treatises. The Quaestiones of Heraclitus is a whole-hearted and thorough-going attempt to prove that allegorical interpretation is, as it were, the magic key that unlocks the meaning of difficult passages in Homer, and throws light on apparently sacrilegious or otherwise impious legends in Homeric myth. In fact, said Heraclitus, the allegorical method of explaining the Iliad and the Odyssey is the only means by which Homer can be saved from the accusations of blasphemy constantly being levelled at his head - 'κάντα γὰρ ἠσέβηκεν, εἰ μηδὲν ἠλληγόρηκεν', are the two alternatives he presents for our choice in the opening lines of the work. The author begins his elaborately-constructed argument by citing a few passages from Homer, designed to throw into relief his natural piety, and the genuinely religious

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(1) Cornutus 20, 103.
(2) Heraclitus, 19, 40.

spirit that as Heraclitus alleged, underlay and gave meaning to all that the poet wrote - this notwithstanding the seemingly blasphemous tone that characterized so many of the stories; he then turns to an examination of the Homeric poems in general. The first incident he selects for detailed analysis is the well-known scene where, in the opening book of the Iliad, Apollo launches his destructive arrows against the hapless Greeks. In a long and ingenious study of the episode, Heraclitus rejects in toto any idea of literal interpretation of the facts, in effect reducing the whole narrative to the level of a nature-myth.(1) Everyone knows of course that Apollo is god of the sun, just as Artemis is the moon-goddess. The various names and epithets applied to the former deity are in themselves a confirmation of this statement, when understood aright. The following is the exegesis of Heraclitus on these titles: on Phoebus(2) ' φοῖβον οὖν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀκτίνων λαμπρὸν αὐτὸν ὀνομάζει, τὸ νόνον ἡλίῳ πρόσον ἐξ ἴσου κοινώσας Ἀπόλλωνι '; while on 'Ἑκαέργης ' he writes: ' καὶ μὴν οὐδ' ἑκαέργον εἰκός ἐστιν Ἑκαέργης ὀνώνυμον εἶναι τῆς ἐξ Ὑπερβορέων τὰς ἀπαρχὰς ἐπὶ Δῆλον ἀνεγκούσης, ἀλλ' ἐστὶν ἑκατὼν ἑκάεργος, ὁ πολλὰ ἑκάθεν ἐργαζόμενος '. The others are dealt with in the same rationalizing spirit(3) ' λυκηγενὴς δὲ προσηγόρευσεν αὐτὸν οὐχ ὡς ἐν Λυκίᾳ γεγενημένον- ἐξω γὰρ τῆς Ὁμηρικῆς ἀναγνώσεως οὗτος ὁ νεώτερος μῦθος - ἀλλ' ὥσπερ οἶμαι τὴν ἡμέραν ἠριγένειαν

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(1) Cf. Cornutus 32, 191; 34. Cicero N.D. 2 27, 68.
(2) Quaestiones, c. 7, ll. 13. ff.
(3) c. 5, l. 1.

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ὀνομάζει, τὴν τὸ ἦρ γεννῶσαν, τουτέστι τὸν ὄρθρον, οὕτω λυκηγενῆ προηγόρευσε τὸν ἥλιον, ἐκείθη τοῦ κατὰ τὴν ὄρθριον ~~οὕτω λυκηγ~~ ὥραν λυκαυγοῦς αὐτός ἐστιν αἴτιος ..... καὶ μὴν χρυσάορον αὐτὸν ὠνόμασεν οὐχ ὡς ὑπεξωσμένον χρυσοῦν ξίφος - ἀνοίκειον γὰρ Ἀπόλλωνι τὸ ὅπλον, etc.

Having thus cleared the ground, as it were, of these preliminary considerations, and at the same time struck the note of naive and artless ingenuity that characterizes every page of this little work, Heraclitus proceeds to elucidate and develop his treatment of the myth. The explanation given by him emphasizes the fact that it is the sun which constitutes the primary cause of plagues and other such afflictions - for while that orb at times smiles on mortals with soft and genial ray, at others it flames forth with parching heat and draws up from the earth the miasmic vapours which induce deadly fevers and pestilence. Now in view of the above statement, midsummer will naturally be the season during which such plagues will rage most fiercely; and so (1) Heraclitus sets himself to the task of proving by means of 'internal evidence' that midsummer actually was the period that saw these disasters befall the Greeks. If, then, it be granted that summer was the season within which the events took place, and that pestilences would inevitably be more wide-spread at that time, than, let us say, in the winter, how, (2) asks our author, can one escape the conclusion that 'the arrows of Apollo' mean nothing more than

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(1) c. 8, l.20
(2) c. 11, l.10.,

that some corruption (δυσκρασίαν) of the air attacked the Greeks ?: Thus the time-honoured 'μῆνιν' is given its death-blow once and for all, and the only evident connection now remaining between Apollo and the woes of the Greeks is that implied by his title of (1) 'προστάτης λοιμικῶν καθαιρετῶν'. Again, (2) there is the well-known and highly dramatic passage in the first book of the Iliad telling of the descent of Athene from Olympus to quell the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon. This prompts Heraclitus to embark upon a (3) lengthy discussion of Plato's division of the soul into the 'rational' and the 'irrational' faculties - a doctrine illustrated in the (4) Phaedrus by the allegory of the charioteer and his horses. At the end of this digression, he returns to the quarrel scene, and offers the following comment on its supposedly allegorical force: (5) 'ἡ δὲ θεὸν φρονήσει μετάνοια δικαίως ἐν τοῖς κοιμωμένοις Ἄθηνᾶ νομίζεται. ὀχεδὸν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἄλλου τινὸς ἢ συνέσεως ἐπώνυμος ἐστίν, ἀθρήνα τις οὖσα καὶ πάντα τοῖς δεκτοτάτοις ὁμιλοῦσι and etc.'. Another typical example of his allegoristic is contained in the (6) extraordinarily modern treatment of the legend describing the casting forth of Hephaestus from Mount Olympus. According to Heraclitus, Homer's story here must not be construed as an allegory designed to glide over or explain away the embarrassing fact of Hephaestus' lameness or even to give support to the tradition that he was the son of Zeus and Hera: on the contrary, says our author, Homer was making

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(1) c. 11, l. 9.
(2) Vv.195-200.
(3) c. 17, 18.
(4) Phaedr. p. 253D. E.
(5) c. 19, ll. 18, 19, 20.
(6) c. 26.

a direct reference to the element of fire, and to the truth of its two-fold nature. Heraclitus goes on to elaborate the usual Stoic conception of fire as composed of two distinct elements - 'Τὸ αἰθέριον', the more refined or ethereal part, which dwells in the upper planes of the atmosphere, and which is not accessible to man, and 'Τὸ ἐπὶ κῶρ γῆς', the earthly and visible element which can be both kindled and extinguished. The former is called Ἥλιον, or Διά, as being the central and chief flame of the universe, while the fire of mortals is named 'Hephaestus'. The reason, then, for attributing the defect of 'lameness' to the latter is that it lacks completeness in itself, and when divorced from its heavenly counterpart. The force of this observation becomes all the more patent when we reflect that, like a lame man, terrestrial fire, too, requires a stick with which to support and to sustain itself. Moreover, this explanation obviates the embarrassing alternative of supposing that one of the gods, indeed an actual son of Zeus and Hera, the presiding deities of Olympus, could suffer from so purely mortal a disability as lameness.(1) Heraclitus also gives an allegorical turn to that part of the legend which describes the casting forth of Hephaestus from the threshold of his Olympian abode by the King of the Gods. According to the explanation here offered, he is said to have been thus hurled down from on high for the simple reason that it was precisely in this manner that fire first became known to mortals, in those dim and early days before men had learnt to fashion instruments with which they could produce the precious sparks.

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(1) c. 26, page 41.

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Homer also speaks of Hephaestus' having alighted on the island of Lemnos - an incident likewise interpreted by Heraclitus in a symbolical sense. Lemnos is fabled to have been the first to receive the heaven-sent gift of fire because (2) flames kindled by no mortal hand there blazed forth from the ground. The same explanation will account for the well-known story that Prometheus stole fire from heaven: it was the forethought, 'προμηθεία', of human skill that contrived the harnessing of heavenly fire. Again, (3) said Heraclitus, it is possible to see in the myth a physical allegory depicting Zeus' admeasurement of the two great 'διαστήματα' of the universe - the sun and Hephaestus. Thus the latter's descent to Lemnos would correspond to the setting of the former. But whether the story be taken as 'κοσμικὴ τις ἀναπόδρασις', or alternatively - and this explanation is favoured by our author - regarded as an allegory of the transmission of fire to man, it is in either case free from the impiety that Homer's detractors have chosen to read into it.

Yet another interesting example of the type of allegoristic indulged in by Heraclitus is his (4) treatment of Diomedes' wounding of the gods. The famous encounter of that hero with Aphrodite, and his subsequent wounding of Ares, related by Homer

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(1) Iliad 1, vv. 591 ss.
(2) Doubtless a reference to a now extinct volcanic mountain on Lemnos.
(3) c. 30, page 45.
(4) c. 30, pp. 46. ss.

in the fifth book of the Iliad, had always been a source of scandal to the ancient world: Heraclitus once more comes to the rescue of his favourite author by endeavouring to prove that this seemingly blasphemous myth, no less than those which have preceded it, is patient of a perfectly rational and satisfactory interpretation.(1) He explains that(2) the scene in which Diomedes wounds Aphrodite is merely an allegorical representation of the conquest of folly by wisdom, Aphrodite typifying 'ἡ ἀφροσύνη', Athene 'ἡ φρόνησις'. Diomedes, like all the Hellenes, is ἔμφρων in character and disposition - a quality manifested in his struggles with the barbarians, who being 'ἀνοήτοι καὶ λογισμῶν ὀλίγα κοινωνοῦντες', are easily pursued and overcome. Thus, to quote Heraclitus' own phrase(3) 'καλῶν οὖν φονευομένων ἀλληγορικῶς Ὅμηρος τὴν βαρβαρικὴν ἀφροσύνην ὑπὸ Διομήδους τρῶθαι παρεισήγαγεν'. Similarly, the redoubtable Ares, against whom Diomedes next turns his steel, is nothing more or less than the spirit of War, 'ἡ ἀρή'(4). Diomedes is said to have wounded his adversary in the lowest part of his flank, 'νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα'. This statement, says Heraclitus, is most convincing, for 'ἐπὶ τὰ κενὰ τῆς μὴ πάνυ φρουρουμένης τῶν ἀντικάλων τάξεως παρεισελθὼν εὐμαρῶς ἐτρέψατο τοὺς βαρβάρους'. Again, the stock epithet 'brazen', which he applies to Ares, contains a suggestion of the

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(1) c. 30, page 45.
(2) Iliad 5, vv. 336-393.
(3) c. 30, pp. 45, 46.
(4) Iliad 5, v. 857.

armour used by the combatants, which was of bronze, since in early times iron was a rarity. A further proof that Ares is here to be regarded as a personification of War may be deduced from Homer's remark:[1] '(Ares) cried aloud with a shout as loud as that of nine or ten thousand men'. Now one voice, even that of a deity, could not possibly have uttered such a loud shout: it was in fact the cry of the whole band of fleeing barbarians. The binding of Ares by Otos and Ephialtes, the sons of Aloeus, is likewise symbolical of the temporary triumph of peace over war: but 'μητρυιὰ ... φιλόνεικος, οἰκίης νόος', turns everything topsy-turvy, and destroys the former reign of harmony, thus permitting Ares, or War, as he has now been shewn to be, to escape from his prison-house.

Heracles, who is represented in the Homeric narrative as having inflicted wounds on Hera and the God of the Underworld, is[2] deprived of his divinity by Heraclitus, and reduced to the rank of a mortal man. He was in fact, says our author, an enlightened philosopher, striving to dissipate the mists of ignorance which veiled the light of truth from all those not initiated into the mysteries of heaven and earth. This attempt to 'melt down' the deity of Heracles, and to relegate him to the sphere of purely human achievement and prowess, is of course an obvious example of the tendency to 'Euhemerize', which, as has already been

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(1) Iliad 5, ll. 859-861.
(2) c. 33, page 48.

pointed out, was but a broader and more extended application of the ordinary methods of allegoristic proper. As one would expect, Heraclitus also gives an allegorical explanation of the labours of Heracles. Thus, for instance, his campaign against the Nemean Lion, the pursuit of the Erymanthian Boar, and his cleansing of Augeias' stables are symbolic of the hero's war upon the undisciplined excesses of human passion. Similarly,(1) the description of the three-headed hound, Cerberus, guardian of Hades, whom Heracles brought up to earth from the world below and shewed to his master Eurystheus, contains a covert allusion to the familiar subdivision of philosophy into three parts - λογική, ἠθική and φυσική. With reference to the actual wounding of Hera by Heracles - and it is with this particular feature of Homeric myth that our author is at the moment concerned - Heraclitus sees in the latter's act a veiled hint on the part of the poet at Heracles' piercing of the dark 'air' that befogs men's minds, and to his 'wounding', κατὰ τρώσας, of their ignorance. Just as a man shoots his arrows up into the air, in like manner does the philosopher send his mind heavenwards, like a winged missile, to explore the secrets of the upper regions of the atmosphere. Furthermore, after his encounter with Hera, it is related of(2) Heracles that he wounded Hades, the god of the world below. This incident pictures the universal range of the philosophy: not even 'the earth beneath',

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(1) c. 34, page 50.
(2) Cf. Iliad 5, ll. 392-394.

and 'the waters under the earth', remain hidden from its all-embracing ken.

Heraclitus introduces the name of Hera again in (1) subsequent chapter, but this time under quite different circumstances from those just mentioned. On this occasion, he is concerned with a curious incident, (2) related by Homer in the fifteenth book of the Iliad, in which Zeus recalls to his spouse's memory her punishment by suspension in mid-heaven, and the chaining of her hands and feet. The explanation offered by Heraclitus in defence of Homer against those critics who assail the apparent impiety of this passage, is based on the old doctrine of the four primary elements - (3) αἰθήρ , ἀήρ , ὕδωρ , γῆ - which go to make up the stuff out of which the universe is composed. In assembling and combining these elements, Zeus first assigned to the air its position in space, and then fastened (4) 'the anvils' - water and earth - to its extremities. The unbreakable golden chain that bound Hera's hands may similarly be regarded as a symbolical description of the colour of mid-

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(1) c. 40.
(2) vv. 18-22.
(3) The reference here is to the primal fire of the universe.
(4) It is not quite certain what the objects were which Zeus attached to Hera's feet. The word used means 'anvils' in later Greek, as in Homer regularly; but it is clear from a comparison of similar words in related languages that it originally meant large stones ..... this would be a far more suitable thing for Zeus to use than an anvil.

heaven and of the air, which resembles gold. These two elements lie adjacent to each other; so that the mention of the golden chain is not without significance here. But, it will be objected, since Hera was not condemned by her husband's wrath to languish forever in bonds, what satisfactory meaning can be found for the troublesome epithet ' ἄρρηκτον ?' The answer to this difficulty is that the chains which strengthen the sway of the divine 'Harmonia', the great principle that controls the workings of the universe, are firm-set and 'unbreakable': so that by a quite natural and legitimate extension of the metaphor, the same quality of 'infrangibility' may be assigned to the ' δεσμὸν χρύσεον ' of the myth.

We shall now turn to (1) Homer's famous and somewhat lengthy description of the great shield wrought by Hephaestus for Achilles. Heraclitus here offers us one of the most elaborate and carefully-worded instances of Stoic allegoristic extant. At the outset, he makes it quite clear as to the purpose with which the carvings on the shield were wrought, and the events which they were intended to represent - ' Τὴν Ἀχιλλέως ἀσπίδα τῆς κοσμικῆς χειρόδου χαλκευόμενος εἰκόνα '. In the fashioning of this shield, Hephaestus, the smithy, who hammers and shapes it from crude formless metal, symbolizes the action of heat. Now according to the physics of Heraclitus πυρὸς ὁδῷ ἀμοιβὴ τὰ πάντα γίνεται. Thus he is fabled to have been the husband of (2) Χάρις, for' ἔμοιγε ἥδη τῷ κόσμῳ χαρίσεσθαι τὸν ἴδιον κόσμον'. Again, what were the

(1) Iliad 18, vv. 478-606.
(2) Iliad 18, v. 382.

materials used to forge the shield ? In the answer to this query, says Heraclitus, lies one of the proofs that the whole description is to be regarded as purely allegorical in force. For if Hephaestus had really been making a shield for Achilles, he would necessarily have used nothing but gold in its composition: but as it is, he employs silver, brass and tin as well. Now these four metals - gold, silver, brass and tin - represent the four elements into which the Stoics resolved the universe. Thus, for a reason that has already been noticed, the 'ethereal' component is called gold, while silver stands for air, which resembles it in colour. Hephaestus introduces the two base 'metals' - water and earth - 'διὰ τὴν ἐν ἀμφοτέροις βαρύτητα'. The shield, when finally completed, is spherical in form, and so typifies the shape of the world. Again, the sun depicted thereon is styled by Homer 'ἀκάμας', unwearied, because it seems to have no rising or setting, but to be in a constant state of motion. Similarly, the phrase 'θοὴ νύξ' contains a reference to the roundness of the earth's axis: for when the night completes its course, and gives way before the sun, all the space that the latter leaves behind is forthwith darkened again by night, which in its turn swiftly passes on to dawn. A few lines further on in the description, there occurs (1) a passage which tells of a battle waged by the banks of a river, between two hostile peoples; and in the midst of the

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(1) Iliad 18, vv. 533-538.

combatants 'Discord and Tumult and destructive Fate' flit to and fro, plucking their victims from the fray. This scene Heraclitus interprets as allegorical of the course of Achilles' life.(1) The 'two fair cities' which are mentioned as having been wrought on the shield, represent the conflicting conceptions of strife or war, and friendship or peace.(2) Moreover, Homer tells us that Hephaestus carved five 'folds' or 'plates', κτύχες, on Achilles' shield; in this Heraclitus sees a veiled illusion to the five climatic zones - the most northerly, the arctic belt, the temperate area, the torrid region, the second temperate area, and the most southerly of all, the antarctic zone; of these five, our author informs us, two are entirely uninhabitable, by reason of the extreme cold which characterizes them - the arctic and antarctic regions. Similarly, the torrid area which is always in the grip of great heat, does not support life either. As might be expected from their title, however, the two temperate zones are habitable, inasmuch as their particular climate is made up of a suitable blend of all the others. Homer, then, quite obviously had these five areas in mind when he went on to speak of the folds in more detail, and to mention the metals from which they had been made. Two, it appeared, were wrought of brass, two of tin, and one of gold. The arctic and antarctic zones appear in their allegorical form

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(1) Iliad 18, v. 4.
(2) Ibidem, v. 480.

as the brass folds of the shield. The association of ideas here of course is quite obvious. Brass is in itself a cold, chill metal, and so would readily suggest the[1] ἀλαμπεῖς μυχούς, as Heraclitus calls them. By the gold plate Homer means the torrid region; the connexion in thought is as plain in this case as in the preceding one: the tan colour which is burnt on the skin by the blazing tropical sun resembles that of gold. Finally, the plates of tin are emblematic of the two temperate regions; for tin is an alloy that is malleable and easily handled, just as the corresponding climatic belts are pleasant and agreeable to live in.

Heraclitus now selects for analysis a myth which has probably received more attention, both in the way of criticism and defence from ancient scholars and commentators than any other individual legend in the Homeric poems. I refer to the θεομαχία, or battle of the gods. It will be remembered that Theagenes of Rhegium, who is generally recognized as the earliest exponent of allegorical principles, had likewise devoted his attention to the same difficulty: he had offered two different methods of interpretation - the one physical, the other psychological, or moral. As we shall see, Heraclitus adopts a very similar plan in his explanation of the conflict. The results of his investigations and research of course embody the very cream of Stoic ingenuity, and therefore deserve a careful and

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(1) c. 51, page 74.

thorough examination. The general theory underlying his exegesis of the fable is that the theomachy must be considered as an allegorical description of the collision of various planets and other heavenly bodies, with the added connotation of an antithesis of moral qualities. Thus, for example, the struggle between Apollo and Artemis, the sun and the moon, would be assigned to the first class, while the battle waged by Ares and Athene naturally falls under a second heading. The hostilities and open strife of Phoebus Apollo with Poseidon exemplify another typical instance of the purely physical allegory. At first sight, it would appear rather hopeless to explain Apollo as the sun and Poseidon as the watery element, because even with the terms of this new hypothesis, the opposition of these two elements still seems an irreconcilable one, as each has an equal advantage over the other. The difficulty, however, is more apparent than real, for as the sun draws its very nourishment - moisture and especially sea-spray - from the waters, it is impossible for these two elements to be in a state of real opposition to one another. The foregoing is but one of many such explanations offered by Heraclitus to account for seeming inconsistencies of this kind. The struggle between Hera and Artemis is another instance of the same troublesome type of myth, but it lends itself quite easily to a straightforward application of physical allegoristic. Hera, of course, is the air, while Artemis is the moon. Naturally enough then, the air resists the passage of the moon as she cleaves her way through it. Now for

a couple of examples of psychological or moral allegorization. The battle between Athene and Ares is an obvious case of the mutual hostilities of wisdom, or temperance, and folly, or intemperance - and incident which had been analysed by Heraclitus in a previous chapter, when he was considering the question of the ' dei vulnerati '. Another familiar instance is that of Leto, or Forgetfulness, and Hermes, Reason or the Spoken Word, where again, no comment is required, since ' ὁ μὲν οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν λόγος ἐστί, τῶν ἔνδον ἑρμηνεὺς καθών '.

With this brief account of Heraclitus' explanations of the great ' Θεομαχία ' - in many ways the most difficult and troublesome of all the Homeric legends - we shall leave the Iliad, with its setting of strife and warfare, and concentrate our attention upon the Odyssey. This poem, to which Heraclitus applies the significant epithet ' ἠθική ', seems to have offered in some respects a wider scope for the allegoristic so dear to the hearts of philosophers of the Stoic school. A large number of myths and mythical personages lent themselves quite readily to interpretation of this kind.(1) Thus Proteus, with his marvellous power of changing himself into any form he pleased, may be taken as representative of the first rude creative acts of nature, in those primeval days when earth, sky, and sea had not yet been brought to birth, and universal gloom and silence brooded over the world. The various metamorphoses assumed by Proteus are in them-

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(1) Odyssey 4. vv. 384 ss.

selves symbolic of the elements out of which the universe was wrought. Thus his transformation into a raging lion shews forth in allegorical guise the fiery element of the ether. Similarly, the dragon is to be taken as representing the earth, since it was this monster that, first of all its progeny, the earth brought to the light of day. Again, the tree, rising from the ground up into the sky, and spreading its branches in every direction, symbolizes the element of air. Even the name of the island, 'Φάρος', in which he was wont to effect his changes, appears to have been chosen with a purpose, 'ἐκεῖ δήπερ ἐστὶ τὸ φέρεσθαι γενητά'. Thus Pharos in this context signifies the place where all created things derive their being. Turning now to a more involved application of allegoristic, Heraclitus endeavours to discover what meaning lies concealed behind the fabled amour of Eos and Orion: the explanation he advances to elucidate this meaning from what he styles 'κύθος οὐδ' ἀνθρώποις εὐσχημον' is as follows: according to the myth, Eos snatched Orion away when he was still in the full bloom of youth. Now there was an ancient custom that the bodies of those who had reached the 'mortal goal' of life, were not carried out to burial during the night-season, or when the heat of the midday sun was flooding the earth, but rather at the dawn of the day; and so when the fair youth came to the end of his appointed span of life, he was carried out to burial at dawn - hence the phrase 'Ἡμέρας ἁρπάγη' - as one, not dead, but snatched away by love's desire. the next group of myths centre round the person of the actual

hero of the poem, Odysseus. It will be relevant to our purpose to explain at this point that the Odyssey, unlike its sister-poem, was regarded by many allegorizing philosophers as the record of a long series of temptations and hardships inflicted as a trial on a brave and virtuous Stoic pilgrim, passing through the snares and deceits of a cruel world. And so it is in this light that all the adventures of Odysseus are interpreted and explained by Heraclitus. Thus, for example, the land of the Lotos-Eaters, which the hero sailed by in the course of his travels, may be regarded as symbolical of alluring pleasure - a peril which he is enabled to escape only through the constant aid and tutelage of the goddess Athene, his patroness. Similarly, it is by means of the great wisdom with which Pallas inspires him that Odysseus finds the strength to withstand the seductive appeal of those fleshly pleasures - for that is the real significance of Circe in this episode - that transformed his companions into swine. Then again, the snaky monster, Scylla, with her many heads, represents the vice of shamelessness in its several forms; while the grim gulf of Charybdis is but a thinly-disguised allegory of ruinous profligacy, insatiable for the pleasures of the cup. The 'kine of the sun', which seem to have always been a fertile source of allegorical speculation and research, are here regarded by Heraclitus as symbolical of the control of the stomach's needs and desires.[1]

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(1) c. 70, page 92.

Chapter seventy-four of the same author's work contains a quite commonplace exegesis of the names of the rivers - Cocytus, Phlegethon, Acheron and Styx - that flow beneath the earth in the kingdom of the dead. The passage is none the less interesting, however, inasmuch as it at once recalls to one's mind Philo Judaeus' very similar and far more original treatment of the Garden of Eden, and the four rivers by which it is watered. The name of the first river, 'Κωκυτός', of course requires no explanation, as the etymology of the word is obvious at a glance. The stream is so named because it typifies the ills of humanity; it is on behalf of the dead that those who are as yet alive utter their wails. The river Phlegethon, which is mentioned next, derives its names from the hidden fire within us which survives our human flesh. Tradition likewise has it that the two rivers pour their waters into one stream - the Acheron. This is as one might expect, 'ἐκεῖσε ἐκδέχεται μετὰ τοὺς πρώτους κωκυτοὺς καὶ τὴν ὀφειλομένην τιφὴν ἄχη τινὰ καὶ λῦπαι χρόνιαι πρὸς ὀδύνας ἐκπυνθάνεις ἐρεθίζουσαι τὰ κάθη'. It will not be necessary to make any comment upon the fourth river found in the lower world, as its significance is sufficiently familiar to the student. Moreover, Heraclitus is not content with having paraded these very obvious and prosaic etymologies, but even introduces that of Ἀΐδης, as though the title presented any conceivable difficulty of interpretation. With the mention of Hades, it is of course inevitable that the name of Persephone should also occur: and

this is explained by the phrase [1] ἡ τὰ πάντα κεφάλαια διαφθείρειν.

We have now at last reached the concluding chapters of the 'Quaestiones Homericae'; while there has of course not been the time or space necessary to attempt a full description of all the points dealt with by Heraclitus in his treatise, it is hoped that the account of his allegoristic given here will prove to be at least a tolerably complete one, and serve to furnish the student with some conception, however partial or limited, of the general principles which guided Heraclitus in his interpretation of Homeric myth,

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Cornutus and his Allegoristic.

The only other extant work relating to the allegorical interpretation of Homer's mythology that was written before Plutarch's time, is the Compendium Theologiae Graecae of Cornutus (in the reign of Nero). L. Annaeus Cornutus was the friend and teacher of the poets Persius and Lucan, the former of whom Nero banished from Rome after the conspiracy of Piso. (A.D. 65). Like Heraclitus, he derived his inspiration from older writers: It is probable that Cleanthes and Apollodorus of Athens, (Circa 180-109 B.C.). were his two chief sources. While the 'Compendium' bears every evidence of Stoic workmanship in tone and method , it nevertheless follows an entirely different course from that pursued by Heraclitus in his book. Cornutus appears to have

become so completely enslaved by the etymologizing habit that he was incapable of advancing even the simplest explanations without recourse to it: thus while Heraclitus is sparing in his use of etymology, and rarely offers more than one exegesis of a given name or epithet, Cornutus frequently suggests a variety of interpretations of the same word. Thus his work tends to degenerate into an uninteresting collection of fanciful etymologies of divine names, his aim throughout being manifestly to prove that the Greek Pantheon as popularly conceived was an elaborate symbolical representation of the physical constitution of the universe.

With these brief introductory remarks, we may now proceed to examine the treatise in some detail. The first few pages of the ' Compendium ' are devoted to the task of establishing the general principles of the Stoic theory as to the nature of the world.[1] Thus, Zeus is depicted as the soul of the universe, corresponding to the individual human soul; and in the course of the account we find the traditional etymologies of the names of Hera,[2] Chronos,[3] Poseidon[4] and Hades,[5] the god of the underworld. The first example of an allegorical inter-

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(1) c. 2, page 3.
(2) c. 3, page 3.
(3) c. 3, page 4.
(4) c. 4, page 4.
(5) c. 5, page 5.

pretation proper occurs in the sixth chapter, where Cornutus deals with the oft-debated problem as to the exact meaning concealed in the familiar myth that makes Chronos devour his own offspring. The solution offered here is the one usually advanced, identifying that deity with time, which may be truly said to swallow up all that it has brought into being. The story ran that Rhea, to save Zeus, presented a stone wrapped in swaddling-clothes to her consort, in his place. Chronos none the wiser, gulps down the rock, and the infant god was secretly conveyed away to a safe refuge. Chronos is furthermore said to have deprived Uranus of his virility when he was in the act of uniting with Gaia. The following is Cornutus' exegesis of this fable: ' ..... ἡ τῆς τῶν ὅλων γενέσεως τάξις, ἣν ἔφαμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κρίνειν Κρόνου εἰρῆσθαι, τὴν γινομένην τέως κοιλὴν ῥύσιν τοῦ χαριέχοντος ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἔοτειλε λεπτοτέρας λοιβάδα τὰς ἀναθυμιάσεις. ἡδὲ τοῦ κόσμου φύσις ἐλιβχύσαθα, ἣν δὴ Δία ἐλέγομεν καλεῖσθαι, τὸ δίαν φερόμενον τῆς μετροδῆς ἐπέσχε καὶ ἐκέδησε μακροτέραν διεξαγωγὴν δοὺς αὐτῷ τῷ κόσμῳ '. He then proceeds to give a lengthy description of the titles, functions and attributes of (1) Zeus, (2) the Furies, (3) the Fates, and (4) the Muses - all this in traditional Stoic fashion. Cornutus likewise deals with (5) Hermes, the messenger of the Immortals. His treatment

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(1) c. 9, pp. 9-10.
(2) c. 10, pp. 10-11.
(3) c. 13, pp. 12-13.
(4) c. 14, pp. 14-17.
(5) c. 16, pp. 20-26.

of Hermes here affords an excellent illustration of a remark supra regarding his lavish use of etymologies: for in this passage he offers us two different derivations of Hermes' name. It may have arisen either from the phrase ἐρεῖν μήδεσθαι ', to contrive speech, or perhaps from Τὸ ἔρυμα ἡμῶν εἶναι ', Similarly, the epithet 'διάκτορος' is explained as connoting the clear piercing quality of Hermes', Reason's Voice (διάτορος), or alternatively, it refers to the fact that it is he who ' διάγει Τὰ νοήματα ἡμῶν εἰς Τὰς Τῶν πλησίον ψυχάς ,. Again, the epithet ἀργεϊφόντης might be regarded as deriving from 'λευκῶς πάντα φαίνειν ' - because the Ancients called λευκὸν ἀργὸν - or else as having been suggested by the idea of the swiftness of the voice of Reason. Τῆς κατὰ τὴν ταχυτῆτος). Cornutus also gives an analysis of the well-known verses in Homer describing Zeus' punishment of Hera by suspending her in mid-heaven - a myth whose interpretation is glanced at in the 'Quaestiones Homericae' of Heraclitus. Our present author develops his exegesis of the legend on identical lines: thus the two anvils fastened to Hera's feet represent the earth and the sea, which keep the air (Hera) ' 'spread-eagled', as it were, and prevent it from encroaching on the domains of the other elements. Homer's curious passage describing the revolt of the gods against the domination of Zeus is likewise seen as a struggle waged by air and water to avert the threatened supremacy of fire. The name of Briareus, whom Thetis pitted against the rebellious deities, is conjecturally derived (1)

'κατὰ Τὸ διῖρεῖν Τὴν ὠκεῖαν βορὰν Τῶν κόσμου μερῶν '. The cur-

(1) c. 17, page 27.

-rent fable regarding Prometheus' theft of fire is also touched on, the explanation being that it was by means of 'Forethought' (προμήθεια) that mankind discovered the use of fire. Moreover, Prometheus is said to have stolen the precious flames from heaven: this Cornutus regards either as an exaggeration, or as a veiled hint at the possibility of the transmission of fire to man through the descent of a heaven-sent thunderbolt. Again, as a punishment for his crime, the great hero was condemned by Zeus to have his liver perpetually gnawed by an eagle. To this tragic expiation Cornutus likewise gives an allegorical turn; Prometheus is allegorized as 'τὸ προειρημένον ἧπαρ', whose very 'vitals' are eaten away by 'ἡ ἁρπακτομερινία', the devouring eagle.(1) Hephaestus also receives his due share of attention in the treatise: some accounts, we are told, represent him as the son of Zeus and Hera, while according to others, he was sprung from Hera alone. The latter version is favoured by Cornutus, for 'αἱ φλόγες ἁρπακτικώτεραι πως οὖσαι ὥσαν ἐκ μόνου τοῦ ἀέρος διακαιομένου τὴν ὑπόστασιν λαμβάνουσι'. Furthermore, his traditional lameness admits of two different explanations: perhaps the defect was attributed to him 'διὰ τὸ κακεῖαν τὴν διὰ τῆς ὕλης κορείαν κωλύεσθαι τοὺς ἐκκαίοντας ὄντως', or, as was suggested by Heraclitus, because of the impossibility of walking without the support of a staff.(2) Others again see in the epithet 'χωλός' an allusion to the upward motion of fire, which is

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(1) c. 19.
(2) c. 19, pp. 33-34.

-gotten by the ordinary processes of generation. While dealing with Athene he mentions no less than three different etymologies of that goddess' name, the fact of its being 'δυσετυμολόγητον' having apparently proved no deterrent to the speculative ardour of the philologians. We are informed that some critics derived it 'ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀθρεῖν', while others again explained Athenè's having thus been named 'διὰ τὸ καίπερ θηλείαν οὖσαν ἧκιστα θηλύτητος μετέχειν'. A third group regarded the name as having arisen 'ἀπὸ τοῦ μὴ πεφυκέναι θένεσθαι καὶ ὑποτάττεσθαι τὴν ἀρετήν'. Similarly, the name of Pallas is derived from the same root that we find in the verb πάλλω, 'I leap', and in the nouns 'πάλληκες' and 'παλλακαί'.(1) The myth which tells of the birth of Aphrodite in the foam of the sea may be regarded as symbolic of the fact that motion and dampness are necessary for the production of life - both of which prerequisites the sea furnishes in abundance.(2)

Poseidon, the next deity whom Cornutus singles out for comment, seems to have possessed an inordinately large number of attributes and titles in ancient lore, all of which are here set down and justified by recourse to etymological interpretation. More than a dozen such epithets appear in Cornutus' text - surely an amazing example of the indefatigable industry and assiduity of research displayed by the Stoic philologians in the efforts to demonstrate the incontrovertable veracity of the religious and ethical principles that lay at the heart of their philosophical

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(1) c. 24, page 44.
(2) c. 22, page 41.

system. The following is a typical instance of Cornutus' etymological 'resolution' of a title frequently applied to Poseidon.(1) He is said to be 'νυμφαγέτης' and 'κρηνοῦχος' by reason of the fact that the streams of fresh water which flow into the sea are 'Νύμφαι' - this because they always look fresh and youthful in their transit; or perhaps there is a reference to their quality of making objects within them clear to the sight. Similarly, 'Τοῦ δ'αὐτοῦ λόγου ἔχεται καὶ τὸ Ποσειδῶνος υἱὸν εἶναι Τὸν Πήγασον(2), ἀπὸ τῶν πηγῶν ὠνομασμένον'.

In his treatment of Apollo and Artemis, Cornutus begins in the traditional Stoic manner - which, as we have already seen, may be as old as Theagenes - by identifying them with the Sun and the Moon respectively; and he then goes on to draw the obvious allegorical parallel between the rays of light which emanate from these bodies, and the arrows with which the two deities are always represented in legend. This evident example of solar mythology was by no means original with Cornutus, to be sure; indeed it is traced by many back(3) to Anaxagoras himself. There is also a reference here to the(4) Homeric passage describing the arrows, Τοὺς ὀϊστοὺς βαλέτους, launched by Apollo against the Greeks. Cornutus agrees with Heraclitus in his interpretation of these lines, regarding them as symbolic of some form of summer plague caused by the sun's excessive heat. In the name of Artemis, which he derives 'ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρτεμεῖς ποιεῖν', our author

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(1) c. 22, page 44.
(2) c. 32, page 65.
(3) But see for this, Hersman: Studies in Gr. Alleg. Inter. p.11,
(4) Iliad 1, vv. 43-52.

likewise sees an instance of euphemism; while the same may be said of Apollo, 'ὡς ἀχολυόνθ' ἡμῖς τῶν νόθων, ἢ ἀχελιόνοντα ἀφ' ἡμῶν αὐτὰς[1] . (ἢ ἀλολιόντα). The customary list of epithets is appended to this section, and the usual etymologies offered to substantiate Cornutus' allegorization of the deity.

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The Grammarians

As regards the allegoristic of the Grammarians, very little can be said, as our knowledge of their labours in this field is comparatively slight. We do know, however, that Crates of Mallus,[2] a Stoic philosopher, wrote on Homer, and that he followed Heraclitus' method in explaining the fall of Hephaestus from Mount Olympus as a physical allegory.[3] Athenaeus vouchsafes the information that he equated the 'Αχελωΐδες of the twelfth book of the Odyssey, line sixty-two, to the χλειώδης who supplied Zeus with moisture.[4] Aristarchus, on the contrary, was entirely opposed to the principles and practice of allegorical interpretation, though he did resort to etymologizing in his exegesis of divine names.

Plutarch of Chaeronia (45 - 125), the next figure with whose allegorical interpretations we shall concern ourselves, was,

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(1) Cf. the Agamemnon l.1065.
(2) Suidas s. v.
(3) 490 B-E.
(4) Eustathius, p. 3, 40, 604.

as regards his philosophical leanings, a definite Platonist, though in his conception of Plato's doctrines he was influenced in no small degree by the neo-Pathagorizing school which had preceded him. Plutarch's interests lay almost exclusively in questions pertaining to practical morality and religious devotion: theoretical problems as such held but little attraction for him. He believed in a supreme being, eternal and immortal, but not omnipotent: nevertheless, in order to explain the workings and phenomena of the universe, he was obliged to have recourse to a second great principle, i.e., the evil world-soul inherent in matter from all time, which rebels against the principle of good. When we turn to consider Plutarch's theory regarding the significance and function of myth in the sphere of religion, it at once becomes obvious that he assigned to it, the same high values as a key wherewith to unlock the hidden treasures of allegoristic, as did the exponents of the Stoic system themselves. He did not, however, fall into the error of regarding Homer and Hesiod as the inspired and infallible source of all religious truth, on the moral inerrancy of whose writings the whole structure of ethical religion depended. Unlike ancient authors, he did not invest Homer with any peculiar authority: indeed, on occasion he could roundly censure the poet's words, and reject presentations of ethical qualities that did not harmonize with his own lofty standards and ideals. Thus in his attempts to strike the mean between the varied and sometimes conflicting in-

-fluences by which he was surrounded,[1] Plutarch appears as a typical compromising theologian who could not find the courage to take up a firm stand on the ground of a rational explanation of the world, but sought to combine the philosophic and religious conceptions of things and to remain as close as possible to tradition.

Although, as has already been remarked, Plutarch upheld the pre-eminent position assigned to myth in Stoic philosophy, he did not on that account scruple to put aside any elements in current legend which dissatisfied or shocked him - δυσφημότατα,[2] as he styles them in his essay on the Isis myth. The peculiar value of myths in Plutarch's eyes, then,[3] consisted in the 'Τὸ κρύφορον ..... Τὸ καὶ τὴν ὁμοιότητα' that could be extracted therefrom. This emphasis upon the ethical aspect of the body of truths to be derived from the myths and legends of antiquity is obvious in Plutarch's every discussion of the question: the Lives, for example, afford a clear evidence of his primary interest in, and concern with the moral background of the religious ethos. Despite this fact, however, it must be none the less admitted that Plutarch's allegoristic betrays the same intellectual partiality and limited viewpoint which characterized all that he produced in the sphere of literary activity - faults that were

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(1) Zeller: Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy, p. 287.
(2) De Is. 358 E.
(3) Cf. Sallustius de diis c. 4, Isis land, Osiris moist Typhon heat: or Cronus water, Adonis fruits, Dionysus wine.

but the external sign of an apparently innate lack of the faculty of critical appraisal and historical judgment. And yet at the same time, Plutarch's shrewd common-sense and habitually cautious temperament appear to have saved him in a large measure from the misguided and often wildly fantastic interpretative methods of the more 'advanced' exponents of the Stoic philosophical schools. With religious convictions of this nature, it was but natural that Plutarch should shrink from the Euhemerizing and rationalistic modes of interpretation indulged in by contemporary commentators: any such application of the principles of allegorization seemed to him to mark the inevitable prelude to a totally atheistic approach to the world of Greek fable and the phenomena of the religious life in general. Thus he severely reproved the Stoics for their identification of the deities with various moral or physical forces. Chrysippus' impious etymologies of divine names, for instance, were specially singled out by Plutarch for adverse comment: "He derived Ares from χναίρειν, and made of the god nothing but the contentious part of man's soul. Others will say that Aphrodite is desire, Hermes reason, the Muses the arts, and Athene wisdom. You see the abyss of atheism swallowing us up if we transform each of the gods into πάθη καὶ ... ἀρετάς". (Amat. 757 B.). The following remark is likewise indicative of his reaction to physical allegoristic: "instead of leaving the gods free, as drivers or pilots, the Stoics nail and solder them to the elements as statues to bases, so that they suffer change and destruction". (De def. or. 426 B.C.).

In the interpretation of Homer and other ancient poets, the student was warned to avoid the common error of confusing their use of the names of the gods as applied to the actual deities themselves, on the one hand, and their employment of these titles when referring to ' δυνάμεις τινὰς ὧν οἱ θεοὶ σωτῆρές εἰσιν καὶ καθηγεμόνες ὁμωνύμως προσαγορεύονται ', on the other. By a judicious exercise of judgment, it was thus possible, in the light of this important distinction, to set right many seeming incongruities or impious features in Homeric mythology. With regard to the (1) specific passages in Homer that Plutarch selected for allegorical interpretation, they were, almost without exception, the ones usually chosen by Stoic critics. Thus in the well-known fable that he cites in the De Prim. Frig., 953 A, the two names denoted the one thing, since Hera was the earth, and Leto the night; and the night is nothing but the shadow of the earth. Again, the quarrel of Zeus and Hera symbolized a conflict between the elements of nature: if Zeus, the principle of heat, brought about the disagreement, the meaning was that a drought came upon the earth; whereas if Hera precipitated it, this allegorized the coming of a flood. Plutarch also mentions the jesting interpretation offered, among many other philosophers, by Heraclitus in his 'Quaestiones Homericae' (c. 26) to explain the traditional lameness of Hephaestus, the reason of course being that fire could not burn without fuel, any more than a lame

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(1) Plutarch here cites Iliad 24, v. 221; 7, v. 69.

man could walk without the support of a staff.

The Neo-Platonic School, and its Contributions to the Development of The Allegorical Interpretation of Homer.

The Neo-Platonic School, which may be said to constitute (1) 'the last attempt of ancient thought to fashion our knowledge of the world into a philosophic system', had its first beginnings in the great cosmopolitan city of Alexandria. It likewise ushered in the final appearance of the allegorical method of interpreting the Homeric, or indeed any Greek myths in the pagan world. Neo-Platonism was a direct continuation of the Neo-Pythagorizing school and middle-Platonism, although in many respects it considerably modified the original presentation of the older Platonic philosophical schools. The founder of Neo-Platonism is said to have been Ammonias Saccas; his great pupil, Plotinus (circa 204-269) was, however, its real founder: and from the direction impressed by him it derived its unity and coherence. Consequently, any attempt to analyse the Neo-Platonic movement, considered as a philosophic unity, or to isolate the history and development of any characteristic feature of it, as we are here concerned with doing, must begin with Plotinus as the virtual source and inspiration of the school. And so, in our treatment of the topic or

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(1) Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy, Zeller, p. 290.

allegorical interpretation as that method was utilized by the various representatives of Neo-Platonism we shall begin our account with a brief glance at the allegoristic that Plotinus employed in his exegesis of Homeric myth.

In the third book of his writings, that were published by Porphyry after the former's death, in nine Ennaeds, Plotinus deals at length with the well-known Platonic myth of Eros: but this instance of his allegoristic, interesting though it is as an illustration of his theory regarding the relation between myth and science, hardly falls within the scope of the present dissertation.[1] In the fourth book, however,[2] Plotinus gives an allegorical explanation of the myth of Pandora and of Prometheus, in which he offers us an admirable example of his treatment of a specimen ~~Homeric~~ myth: and to this account the interested reader is directed for further study.

Porphyry, (properly Malchus) of Tyre, (circa 232-301 ?) a learned scholar and philosopher, who was the most distinguished pupil that followed in the train of Plotinus Amelius, has also left evidences of his fondness for the allegorical method of interpreting the Homeric myths. His work, on the Homeric cave of the nymphs (Od. 19, 102-112) is indeed a monumental example of "profound absurdity in allegorical interpretation of a poet", while the little treatise entitled 'The Styx", also allegorical in tone, is still extant.

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(1) c. 5.
(2) c. 3, 14.

Iamblichus of Chalcis (Ob.circa 330), who was a representative of the Syrian branch of the Neo-Platonic school, is revealed in his written works as an uncritical and rabid exponent of the traditional mythology with all its inconsistencies and naiveness, and was indeed far more of a theologian than a philosopher in the strict sense of the word. For his emphasis on this aspect of religious thought he was deified by his pupils and the later members of the Neo-Platonic school, who gave him the name of θεῖος. His work, the 'De Mysteriis' which is an elaborate and fantastic exposition of Neo-Platonist theodicy, contains several instances of allegorizing and rationalistic interpretation.

An offspring of the Syrian school was the school of Pergamum, founded by Aedisius of Cappodocia. To it belonged the rhetorician Libanius, one of the Emperor Julian's tutors. The work of his friend Sallustius, entitled 'On the Gods and the World', an extract of which has been preserved, contains some very interesting remarks on the subject of myths - their nature, classification, and interpretation - which summarize in clear and succinct fashion the results of Neo-Platonic research and speculation in this sphere.

The opening pages of the treatise deal with the question of why the ancients employed mythology so extensively in their propagation of the great central truths of religion.

The answer to this query, says Sallustius is intimately connected with the nature of the myths themselves. Our statements about the gods ought to resemble the gods, in order that being worthy of the divine nature, they may win favour for their narrators. Thus the legendary stories told of the various deities may be said to represent them in respect both of that which is speakable, and that which is unspeakable; of that which is obscure, and that which is obvious to all - just as the gods have given to all men in common the favours and benefits to be derived from objects perceptible to the senses, while restricting to the wise the enjoyment of those derived from objects perceptible to the intellect alone. So the myths, in like manner, proclaim to men that the gods existed in very truth, revealing to those 'who are able to hear it' their divine nature and attributes.

From another point of view, the myths can be regarded as symbolizing the active operations (Τὰς ἐνεργείας) of the gods. Indeed, the universe might be described as a species of myth, itself (ἔστι γὰρ τὸν κόσμον μῦθον εἰκεῖν) since bodies and material objects are apparent in it,(1) while souls and intellect remain concealed. Another advantage in thus disseminating divine truth beneath the veil of allegory lies in the fact that it prevents the foolish from despising philosophy,(2) while the good are thereby compelled to study it.(3) The classification of myths that follows Sallustius' brief introductory remarks to the main

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(1) Cf. Julian 226 C for the belief that nature likes to be concealed.
(2) Cf. Vergil Geor. 1, 121 ff.
(3) Cf. Aphthonius, p. 59 Walz.

body of his dissertation is of such peculiar interest, that I take the liberty of quoting a translation of the passage in question:

" Of myths some are theological, some physical; there are also psychical myths and material myths and myths blended from these elements. Theological are those which do not attach themselves to any material objects , but regard the actual nature of the gods. Such is the tale that Chronus swallowed his children; since the god is intellectual, and all intellect is directed towards itself, the myth hints at the god's essential nature. Again, it is possible to regard myths in a physical way when one describes the activities of the gods in the universe; so some before now have thought Kronos to be Chronus or Time, and calling the parts of Time children of the whole say that the father swallows the children. The psychological interpretation lies in considering the activities of the souls itself: the thoughts of our souls, even if they go forth to others, still remain in their creators. The worst explanation, the material, is that which the Egyptians, because of their ignorance, used most; (1) they regarded and described material things as gods, earth as Isis, moisture as Osiris, heat as Typhon, or water as Kronos, the fruits of the soul as Adonis, wine as Dionysus. To say that these things, as also plants and stones and animals, are sacred to the gods, is the part of reasonable men; to call them gods is

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(1) Cf. Plutarch De Iside et Osiride.

the part of madmen, unless by a common figure of speech, as we call the sphere of the sun and the ray coming from that sphere the sun. The blended kind of myths can be seen in numerous examples; one is the tale they tell that at the banquet of the gods Strife threw a golden apple and the goddesses, vying with one another for its possession, were sent by Zeus to Paris to be judged; Paris thought Aphrodite beautiful, and gave her the apple. Here the banquest signifies the supra mundane powers of the gods, and that is why they are together; the golden apple signifies the universe, which being made up of opposites, is rightly said to be thrown by Strife, and as the various gods give various gifts to the universe, they are thought to vie with one another for the possession of the apple. Further, the soul that lives in accordance with sense-perception (for that is Paris) seeing beauty and not the other powers in the universe , says that the apple is Aphrodite's.

Theological myths suit philosophers, physical and psychical myths poets; blended myths suit solemn rites, since every rite seeks to give us union with universe and with the gods. If I must relate another myth, it is said that the Mother of the gods saw Attis lying by the river Gallos, and became enamoured of him, and took and set on his head the starry cap, and kept him thereafter with her, and he, becoming enamoured of a nymph left the Mother of the gods and consorted with the nymph. Wherefore the Mother of the gods caused Attis to go mad and ' Τὰ γοινικὰ ἀκοκομάμενον ἀφεῖναι παρὰ νύμφη ', and to return and dwell with

her again. Well, the Mother of the gods is a life-giving goddess, and therefore she is called mother, while Attis is creator of things that come into being and perish, and therefore is he said to have been found by the river Gallos: for Gallos suggests the Galaxias Kyklos or Milky Way, which is the upper boundary of matter liable to change. So, as the first gods perfect the second, the Mother loves Attis and gives him heavenly powers (signified by the cap). Attis, however, loves the nymph, and the nymphs preside over coming into being, since whatever comes into being is in flux. But since it was necessary that the process of coming into being should stop and that what was worse should not sink to the worst, the creator who was making these things cast away generative powers into the world of becoming and was again united with the gods. All this did not happen at any one time, but always is so; the mind sees the whole process at once, words tell of part first, part second, ... This interpretation is supported also by the season at which the ceremonies are performed, for it is about the time of spring, and the equinox, when things coming into being cease to do so, and the day becomes longer than night, which suits souls rising to life. Certainly the rape of Kore is said in the myth to have happened near the other equinox, and this signifies the descent of souls. To us who have spoken thus concerning myths may the gods themselves and the spirits of those who wrote the myths be kind!"

A further instance of semi-allegorical treatment of myth occurs in the following chapter, where Sallustius sees in the traditional number of the Olympian Hierarchy a veiled allusion to the 'supramundane deities' (οἱ ὑπερκόσμιοι θεοί) of Iamblichus, some of whom cause the universe to exist, while others animated it; others again harmonize it out of its various compounds, while a final triad assume its guardianship when harmonized. Now these operations are four in number, and as each has of course a beginning, a middle and an end, those gods who direct and control these processes must necessarily be twelve in number. And veiled hints at the truths outlined above may be found in the conventional descriptions of these deities in popular myth, and in their statues. Thus Apollo, who shares with Aphrodite and Hermes the function of 'harmonizing' the world, is always depicted as stringing a lyre; Athene, on the other hand, who is one of those assigned to the task of guarding it, invariably bears arms, while Aphrodite again is shewn naked because of the fact that Harmony causes Beauty . . . . . ' Τὸ δὲ ἐν τοῖς ὁρωμένοις οὐ κρύπτεται. ', The Emperor Julian himself, who like Sallustius, was greatly concerned with preserving intact the Greek traditional religion as presented by the exponents of the Neo-Platonic school, has also left on record some examples of his use of the allegorical method in explaining troublesome myths. Thus, for instance, he rationalized the Semele legend, while R. Asmus has recently put forth the

theory that Sallustius borrowed the passage in his treatise relative to the Attis legend directly from Julian.

Macrobius, (floruit circa 400 A.D.,), who was a Roman representative of the Neo-Platonic school, is worthy of mention as a commentator of Cicero's Somnium Scipionis (c. 400). This commentary contained several digressions on Neo-Platonic subjects, and also touches on myths. For example, he allegorizes the golden chain of Homer, in which, as it hangs suspended between heaven and earth, he sees a series of links successively descending from god enthroned on high to the humblest of his mortal subjects.

Proclus, (410-485) the successor of Syrianus, belonged to the Athenian school of Neo-Platonism. A diligent and painstaking scholar, he was as pre-eminent among the Platonists as Chrysippus had been among the Stoics. He wrote fluently and at length; and his works are full of allegorization, both of Homer and of Hesiod: the third excursus of Heyne (1) ad Iliad. 23, De Allegoria Homeria, contains a useful summary of the general subject.

Boethius, (480-524), the most distinguished exponent of Latin Neo-Platonism, and the author of the immortal Philosophiae Consolatio, has left us an instance of his employment of allegoristic in the beautiful metre 'Vela Neritii Ducis', in which he plays on the story of Circe.

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(1) Vol. 8, p.563.

The Byzantine School of Allegoristic

Psellus, (1018-1078), the most notable personage in the Byzantine literature of the eleventh century, was an accomplished scholar and a voluminous writer. Many of his works bear on various points of interest regarding the Greek classics; Among others, there has survived to us a little treatise from his pen, entitled ' Ἀλληγορία τοῦ κατ' Ὁμήρῳ Ἰθακησίου ἄντρου ', which is devoted to an allegorical interpretation of Homer's Grotto of the Nymphs. His treatment of this theme is quite obviously based on the earlier work of Porphyry: indeed, at the end of the dissertation, Psellus frankly admits that the source of his inspiration and the model for his treatment of the passage in question, alike, was none other than Porphyry.

The most memorable name among the scholars of the twelfth century is that of Eustathius (ob. 1192-4). Among other writings, he produced an important Commentary on the Iliad and the Odyssey - a work for which modern critics hold him in deservedly high esteem. His fondness for allegorical interpretation manifested itself in all that he wrote:[1] one instance of his allegorical method may be seen in his explanation of the Homeric 'kine of the sun'. To him, 'the sun' represents time, while the kine

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(1) P. 1717, 32 ss.

and the flocks of cattle symbolized the days of the week, ' αἱ ἑπτὰ γὰρ ἀγέλαι, ὧν ἑκάστη ἡ, τν γένονται '. The days are not brought into being, for they are neither greater nor less than time, but always retained their essential nature.

Another great name that occurs in connexion with the allegorical interpretation of Homer during the twelfth century is that of Tzetzes (circa 1110-circa1180), the author of a tremendous work which he styled 'βίβλος ἱστορική'. Among his other writings are included 'allegories' on the Iliad and the Odyssey, which ran into ten thousand lines. This production, which appears to have reached the low-water mark of literary criticism, is thus characterized by (1) Saintsbury:

" In Tzetzes, the allegorical method neither reaches its pinnacle of fantasticality as in the Romance of the Rose - there is often something faintly fascinating there - nor attains to the rather imposing mazes and meanderings of fifteenth century personification but stumbles along in pedestrian gropings of this kind (on Iliad 1, vv. 517 ff.); " The groaning of Zeus signifietn a puff of wind moving the eyebrows of him, and conducting the thickness of clouds. The downcoming of Thetis indicates that there was rain, which is also a kind of consentment of assistance. And the coming of Zeus to his own home is the restoration of the atmosphere to its former condition, having thinned out the thickness of the clouds to rain. The rising up of the gods from their

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(1) History of Criticism, Vol. 1, page 187.

seats is the confusion and disturbance of the elements," etc etc. The much-ridiculed allegorical morals of the Gesta Romanorum are sense, poetry, piety, to this ineffably dull and childish attempt to substitute a cheap pseudo-scientific euhemerism for the criticism of literature. If Allegory had not too profitably assisted at the cradle of Greek literature, she certainly infested its death-bed in her most decrepit and malignant aspect".

In the Byzantine era also is to be placed the Anonymous Writer in the collection of Westermann (pp. 329-344), who wrote a treatise ' De Ulixis Erroribus ', in which he explained the adventures of that hero upon the same scheme of allegorical interpretation as that employed by Heraclitus. The author resolves the various experiences of Odysseus into a series of narratives symbolic of the trials and temptations of human life. Thus, for example, Scylla represents the allurements and infirmities that have their source in the flesh, while Charybdis typifies those arising from the mind, between which the pilgrim needs must steer his perilous course as best he may. Again, the adventure of Odysseus with Aeolus plainly indicates how little benefit a good man derives from seeking aid, when sore distressed at the hands of evil magicians and the like. Any help so given, even though in the first instance it may appear to argue well for the future, will at the last make its recipient fare worse than ever before.

Allegorical Interpretation in Renaissance Literature.

(1) " It is in allegory that mediaeval literature sometimes appears to be most distinguished, and to differ most from the clear humanities of classical art". The student of mediaeval literature cannot fail to perceive in the above remark a very large measure of truth: the allegorical spirit is in a special sense the property of the middle ages, and a rich and copious profusion of allegorical literature is indeed one of the most striking characteristics of the period. At the same time, however, as a mode of interpretation, and a means of extracting hidden values from writings that on the face of them say something quite different, Allegory was equally the product of classical times, as this dissertation has been concerned with shewing. While mediaeval exponents of the method applied it to a variety of new themes, and reduced it to practice in countless different ways, there was no new principle inherent in their exegesis: the ancient schools of Homeric criticism and interpretation knew of, and utilized them all.

It was in Italy that the great revival of classical learning and culture known as the Renaissance had its first beginnings: and accordingly it is to Italy that we must look for the recrudescence of the allegorizing spirit as it reflected itself in contem-

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(1) Ker, The Dark Ages, p. 14.

-porary literature.[1] There was a well-known saying of St Gregory with reference to the Holy Scriptures: ' Habet in publico unde parvulos nutriat, servat in secreto unde mentes sublimum in admiratione suspendat. Quasi quidam quippe est fluvius ut ita dixerim planus et altus in quo et ~~altus~~ -gnus ambulet et elephas natet '. This proposition, which appears to have been generally accepted by the critics of the day, became a favourite quotation with Boccaccio (1313-1375), who used and applied it in his theory of the art of poetry, in his life of Dante, and his Florentine lectures. His works contain numerous examples of allegoristic and allegorical etymologizing inspired by Homer and other ancient writers, while the laborious ' De Genealogia Deorum ' co-ordinated a large number of the mythical fables of antiquity into what was doubtless intended to read as a sort of family history.

The Spanish school of allegory, which derived its inspiration largely from France, seems to have been particularly rich in its exponents of allegorical interpretation. One interesting instance of sustained and elaborate allegorization occurs in the ' Sueno ' of Santillana, who flourished in the latter part of the fifteenth century. Here indeed the theme and allegorical purpose of the passage in question is purely erotic: at the same time, however, the description of the battle of the gods, is strongly reminiscent of Homer's famous ' θεομαχία ', with perhaps a hint at the well-known encounter between Diomedes and Aphrodite. The

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(1) Preface to Moralia.

story concerns the struggle of its author against Love, with whom he naturally hesitates to come to grips unaided. He therefore enlists the services of Diana as his ally; and accordingly the battle is set against Venus, laziness and understanding fighting for him against Beauty, Prudence, Dexterity, Nobility, Grace and Youth. The sequel of the combat does not resemble the corresponding passages in Homer, nor is the allegorical force of Santillana's description in any way comparable to that assigned to similar accounts by earlier writers: nevertheless it seems quite reasonable to regard this, and the numerous other allegorical conflicts of the same type that were so beloved during the mediaeval epoch as having had their original source and inspiration in the Homeric passages mentioned above.

The tradition of Boccaccio was carried on by Natalis Comes, who is known to have been the author of a very learned handbook of classical mythology entitled 'Mythologiae'. This book, which exercised an enormous influence throughout European literature, contained summaries of mythical tales and legends in easy Latin, and fairly bristled with references: indeed, the volume proved so convenient a compilation that it enabled not a few poets and writers - Chapman, for example - to appear more versed in classical lore than was actually the case. Comes did not confine himself to a bare statement of any particular myth, but rather embellished them with moralizing interpretations in the customary mediaeval manner, thus providing a ready source-

book for any writer who felt disposed to make use of it. It was the allegorical element in Comes which especially commended itself to Chapman, though Chapman was by no means unique in this regard. Thus from this human thesaurus the latter borrowed his explanation of Homer's golden chain as a (1) symbol of avarice and ambition.

The Practice of Allegorical Interpretation In the Elizabethan Era.

Spenser.

Spenser has long been regarded as a poet whose intimate knowledge of classical literature and myth was almost proverbial: nowadays, however, scholars appear much less certain of the tenability of such an opinion. Thus, Mackail has said: " Even for traces of any influence on him from Homer, from the Greek lyrists or from Attic tragedians we may search through him in vain". Now while our evidence for Spenser's having derived his allegorical material directly from Homer is far from convincing, it seems absurd to imply, as does (2) Bush, that Homer should be relegated to the background in assigning the true source of Spenser's allegorization, merely because of the latter's acquaintance with and

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(1) Cf. the Hymnus in Noctem.
(2) Myths and the Renaissance Tradition, page 100.

possible use of ancient Latin and modern parallels. How would Bush apply this argument to the earlier Greek schools of allegorical interpretation, where, comparatively speaking at least, the question of intermediaries could hardly be said to exist at all ? We shall now quote a typical passage in Spenser illustrating his fondness for allegorical description:

(1)

" . . . Said then the Boteman, 'Palmer, stere aright,
And keep an even course; for yonder way
We needs must pas (God doe us well acquight!)
That is the Gulfe of Greedinesse, they say,
That deepe engorgeth all this worldes pray;
Which having swallowed up excessively,
He soon in vomit up againe doth lay,
And belcheth forth his superfluity,
That all the seas for feare doe seeme away to fly

On thother side an hideous Rocke is pight,
Of mightie magnes stone, whose craggie clift,
Depending from on high, dreadfull to sight,
Over the waves his rugged armes doth lift,
And threatneth downe to throw his ragged rift
On whoso cometh nigh; yet nigh it drawes
All passengers, that none from it can shift;
For, whiles they fly that Gulfe's devouring jawes
They on this rock are rent, and sunck in helpless wawes"

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(1) The Faerie Queene, Book II Canto XII. stanzas 3,4, and 7.

. . . Forthy this hight the Rocke of Vile Reproach,
A daungerous and detestable place,
To which nor fish nor fowle did once approach,
But yelling Meawes, with Seagulles hoars and bace,
And Cormoyraunts, with birds of ravenous race,
Which still sat waiting on that wastfull clift,
For spoile of wretches, whose unhappy cace,
After lost credit and consumed thrift,
At last them driven hath to this despairfull drift".

No comment on these verses seems required, as they obviously exemplify a type of allegorization in which the works of Spenser abound. Nor of course was the allegorical interpretation of Scylla and Charybdis here offered a novel mode of exegesis: as we have already seen, Heraclitus in his 'Quaestiones Homericae' had advanced a similar explanation of them. (1)

. . . . . .

Chapman

The prevailing character of Chapman's mythology may be gleaned from the first paragraph of the dedication of his Hymns to Matthew Roydon, which we quote:

" It is an exceeding rapture of delight in the deep search of knowledge . . . that maketh men manfully endure the

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(1) c. 70, page 92.

extremes incident to that Heraculean labour: from flints must the Gorgonean mount be smitten. Men must be shod by Mercury, girt with Saturn's adamantine sword, take the shield from Pallas, the helm from Pluto, and have the eyes of Graea (as Hesiodus arms Persus against Medusa) before they can cut off the viperous head of benumbing ignorance, or subdue their monstrous affections to most beautiful judgment."

His two hymns, the 'Hymnus in Noctem' and the 'Hymnus in Cynthiam' contained numerous instances of the allegorical method of interpreting myths. The following is a typical specimen of Chapman's exegesis of the famous golden chain of Homer. " The golden chain of Homer's high device" , he declares,

"Ambition is,or cursed avarice,
Which all gods haling being tied to Jove,
Him from his settled height could never move".

In (1) the Tragedy of Caesar and Pompey, on the other hand, the golden chain (2) " becomes in Cato's argument for immortality and freedom a symbol of the power and tenacity of the soul". To his translation of the Odyssey, whose unclassical qualities Arnold has so aptly analysed, Chapman prefixes an Epistle Dedicatory in which he likewise allegorizes the Shield of Achilles.

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(1) IV, vv. 128 ff.
(2) Elizabeth Holmes, 'Aspects of Elizabethan Imagery', page 78.

Milton.

(1)

"Milton was steeped in ancient literature as perhaps no English poet before him had been, and in Greek no less than in Latin." This being the case, we are naturally prepared for the richness of mythological allusion and allegorical interpretation that is so marked a feature of his poems. At the same time, however, it must be borne in mind that during Milton's lifetime the allegorical interpretation of mythology had been steadily retreating before the advance of the new rationalism, although,to be sure, it could still count a number of influential adherents in its ranks. Thus we might perhaps expect to find Milton among the rationalists: yet the 'Comus' embodies in substance the traditional allegorical interpretation of the myth of Circe - a fable which perhaps made a deeper and more lasting impression upon him than any other, if we may judge by the fact that the familiar warfare between flesh and spirit - the theme symbolized by the allegory - constitutes the central thought of his four major poems. Milton also allegorizes the ever-popular golden chain of Homer, but contrives to read into it a meaning quite foreign to those assigned to it by his contemporaries. In the 'De Sphaerarum Concentu', occurs its interpretation as a symbol of the chain of connexion and design that runs through the universe.

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(1) Bush: Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry, page 244.

Joseph Addison

1672-1719.

Instances of a decided fondness for allegorical scenes and descriptions are quite frequent in the works of Joseph Addison. Thus, for example, in No. 90 of 'The Tatler', he deals at length with " The Passion of Love - Its allegorical History ", basing his treatment of this theme on the well-known Platonic myth of Eros. Similarly, in Essay No. 97, he expatiates on Heracles' courting by Pleasure and Virtue. Nos. 63, 154, etc., likewise treat of various allegorical topics.

Addison also introduces an allegorical explanation of the Homeric myth of the wooing of Juno by Jupiter on Mount Ida: I quote his interpretation of the legend, which is as follows:

" Juno, says Homer, seeing her Jupiter seated on the top of Mount Ida, and knowing that he conceived an aversion to her, began to study how she should regain his affections, and make herself amiable to him. With this thought she immediately retired into her chamber, where she bathed herself in ambrosia, which gave her person all its beauty, and diffused so divine an odour, as refreshed all nature, and sweetened both heaven and earth. She let her immortal tresses flow in the most graceful manner, and took a particular care to dress herself in several ornaments, which the poet describes at length, and which the goddess chose out as the most proper to set off her person

to the best advantage. In the next place, she made a visit to Venus, the deity who presides over love, and begged of her, as a particular favour, that she would lend her for a while those charms with which she subdued the hearts both of gods and men. For, says the goddess, I would make use of them to reconcile the two deities, who took care of me in my infancy, and who, at present, are at so great a variance that they are estranged from each other's bed. Venus was proud of an opportunity of obliging so great a goddess, and therefore made her a present of the cestus which she used to wear about her own waist, with advice to hide it in her bosom, till she had accomplished her intention. This cestus was a fine party-coloured girdle, which, as Homer tells us, had all the attractions of the sex wrought into it. The four principal figures in the embroidery were love, desire, fondness of speech, and conversation, filled with that sweetness and complacency which, says the poet, insensibly steal away the hearts of the wisest men.

Juno, after having made these necessary preparations, came as by accident into the presence of Jupiter, who is said to have been as much inflamed with her beauty, as when he first stole to her embraces without the consent of their parents. Juno, to cover her real thoughts, told him, as she had told Venus, that she was going to make a visit to Oceanus and Tethys.

He prevailed upon her to stay with him, protesting to her, that she appeared more amiable in his eye, than ever any mortal, goddess, or even herself, had appeared to him till that day. The poet then represents him in so great an ardour, that (without going up to the house which had been built by the hands of Vulcan, according to Juno's direction) he threw a golden cloud over their heads as they sat upon the top of Mount Ida, while the earth beneath them sprung up in lotuses, saffrons, hyancinths, and a bed of the softest flowers for their repose.

This close translation of one of the finest passages in Homer, may suggest an abundance of instruction to a woman who has a mind to preserve or recall the affection of her husband. The care of the person, and the dress, with the particular blandishments woven in the cestus, are so plainly recommended by this fable, and so indispensibly necessary in every female who desires to please, that they need no further explanation. The discretion likewise in covering all matrimonial quarrels from the knowledge of others, is taught in the pretended visit to Tethys, in the speech where Juno addresses herself to Venus; as the chaste and prudent management of a wife's charms is intimated by the same pretence for her appearing before Jupiter, and by the concealment of the cestus in her bosom.

I shall leave this tale to the consideration of such good housewives who are never well-dressed but when they are abroad, and think it necessary to appear more agreeable to all men living than to their husbands: as also to those prudent ladies, who, to avoid the appearance of being over-fond, entertain their husbands with indifference, aversion, sullen silence, or exasperating language".

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Henry Fielding.

1707-1754

The following instance of allegoristic as applied to a familiar Homeric myth occurs in the works of Henry Fielding.[1] I quote the passage in full:

" For my own part, however whimsical it may appear, I confess I have thought the strange story of Circe in the Odyssey no other than an ingenious allegory, in which Homer intended to convey to his countrymen the same kind of instruction which we intend to communicate to our own in this digression. As teaching the art of war to the Greeks was the plain design of the Iliad, so was teaching them the art of navigation the no less manifest intention of the Odyssey. For the improvment of this, their situation was most excellently adapted,

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(1) A Journey from this World to the Next and a Voyage to Lisbon, pp. 239-240.

and accordingly we find Thucydides, in the beginning of his history, considers the Greeks as a set of pirates or privateers, plundering each other by sea. This being probably the first institution of commerce before the Ars Cauponaria was invented, and merchants, instead of robbing, began to cheat and outwit each other, and by degrees changed the Metabletic, the only kind of traffic allowed by Aristotle in his Politics, into the Chrematistic.

By this allegory then I suppose Ulysses to have been the captain of a merchant-ship, and Circe some good ale-wife, who made his crew drunk with the spirituous liquors of those days. With this the transformation into swine, as well as all other incidents of the fable, will notably agree; and thus a key will be found out for unlocking the whole mystery, and forging at least some meaning to a story which, at present, appears very strange and absurd".

. . . . .

Conclusion

The following remarks bring to a close our investigation into the origin, early growth, and subsequent development of the practice of allegorical interpretation as applied to the exegesis of Homeric Myth in the ancient world. While among Greek commentators, the habit tended from primitive times to become almost exclusively identified with the particular poet, Homer, with whose interpretation this thesis is concerned, it was nevertheless quick to prove itself a worthy medium for the dissemination of philosophic 'truth' in other fields, and with regard to other poets, as well. Thus the use of allegoristic was extended to include an ever-widening circle of poets and authors in general: in this way, then, allegoristic progressed a stage further and became a sort of literary convention; in the mediaeval period, which is justly considered the golden age of allegory, the practice was resorted to as a means of embellishing and setting off the text in which it occurred. And it is interesting to note in this connexion yet another modification of the original course of the movement: Homer was no longer the favourite author of the allegorist or even the fanciful literary dilettante; Ovid and Virgil now held unchallenged sway in the sphere where the 'Father of Poetry had never known a rival.

A second noteworthy fact in the history of this process is the amazing universality which seems to characterize the allegorizing spirit, whether as applied to Homer or to any other poet of like nature. There appears always to have been, as it were, a continuity of allegorical thought to maintain unimpaired the traditions of that school. The catena of authors mentioned in this dissertation is in itself a sufficient evidence of the truth of this observation. Even in comparatively recent times, the principles of allegoristic do not lack their champions: some words of Ruskin[1] bear on this point:

". . . Now, therefore, in nearly every myth of importance, ... you have to discern these three structural parts - the root and the two branches:- the root, in physical existence, sun, or sky, or cloud, or sea; then the personal incarnation of that; becoming a trusted and companionable deity, with whom you may walk hand in hand, as a child with its brother or its sister: and, lastly, the moral significance of the image, which is in all the great myths eternally and beneficently true.

. . . For all pieces of such art (i.e., the Iliad) are didactic in the purest way, indirectly and occultly, so that, first, you shall only be bettered by them if you are already hard at work in bettering yourself; and when you are bettered by them it shall be partly with a general acceptance of their influence, so constant and subtle that you shall be no

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(1) The Queen of the Air, p. 9, and etc.

more conscious of it than of the healthy digestion of food; and partly by a gift of unexpected truth, which you shall only find by slow mining for it;- which is withheld on purpose, and close-locked, that you may not get it till you have forged the key of it in a furnace of your own heating. And this withholding of their meaning is continual, and confessed, in the great poets. Thus Pindar says of himself: " there is many an arrow in my quiver, full of speech to the wise, but for many, they need interpreters". And neither Pindar, nor Aeschylus, nor Hesiod, nor Homer, nor any of the greater poets or teachers of any nation or time, ever spoke but with intentional reservation: nay, beyond this, there is often a meaning which they themselves cannot interpret - which it may be for ages long after them to interpret - in what they said, so far as it recorded true imaginative vision. For all the greatest myths have been seen, by the men who tell them, involuntarily and passively - seen by them with as great distinctness (and in some respects, though not in all, under conditions as far beyond the control of their will) as a dream sent to any of us by night when we dream clearest; and it is this veracity of vision that could not be refused, and of moral that could not be foreseen, which in modern historical inquiry has been left wholly out of account: being indeed the thing which no merely historical investigator can understand, or even believe: for it

belongs exclusively to the creative or artistic group of men, and can only be interpreted by those of their race, who themselves in some measure, also see visions and dream dreams".

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Appendix

(1)

" In an article in Classical philology Professor J. A. Scott examines one of the recent theories of the Odyssey, a theory advanced by Menrad in 1910. The Odyssey, if you please is merely a sun-myth; Penelope (by some thought to represent a primitive duck goddess) is in reality the earth; and Odysseus (by some thought to be a wolf) is the sun-god, kept back from his bride by the storms of winter . . . but (says Dr. Woodhead, having reviewed the principle arguments telling against this theory) better than all argument and criticism is the theory which Scott builds up, a theory which as he tells us, does not depend upon misuse of numbers or assumed facts: . . . "The American Civil War is only a sun-myth, being the popular expression for the struggle of the seasons, the white troups representing the days, the coloured troops the nights. The four years are the four seasons; during the first three, the autumn, the winter, and the spring, the South held back the North, but failed during the fourth - that is, during the summer. The sun-god is none other than General Lee, whose invasion of Pennsylvania is the poetic expression of the northward movement of the sun. The three day's battle at Gettysburg represents the three days of the summer solstice when the sun moves neither

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(1) I owe this description of the "American Civil War" myth, to the kindness of Professor Woodhead of McGill University.

north nor south; these three days of battle were the first three days of July, while General Lee's retrograde movement began on the fourth. These dates may seem disturbing, but they flood the theory with light, for if we change them from the Gregorian to the Julian calendar we shall find that Lee started southward June 22, that is, on the very day when the sun turns from the Tropic of Cancer. This also gives a definite clue to the time when General Lee, or the sun-god, was first worshipped, since his retreat must fall on the day when in the Julian calendar the retrograde movement began; hence his worship began about two thousand years ago, or about the time of the introduction of the Julian calendar. Later, sacred days were set apart for his worship and in many places images were erected in his honour by those who had forgotten the story of his divine origin". (The analogy is carried on for several lines more in a similar manner: we conclude our description of it at this point).

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