THEOGNIS OF MEGARA

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

BERSERKER
BOOKS

On Theognis of Megara

I. On the conditions of Theognis and Megara at that time.

1. The revolutions in the city-state of Megara in the sixth century are described.
2. The age of Theognis is calculated.
3. Some events from his life can be identified in his poems.
4. Welcker has described the life of Theognis differently.

II. On the poems of Theognis.

5. The fate of his poems and the judgement of the Ancients.
6. The judgement of later critics on Theognis' poetry.
7. Theognis did not superscript the poems written for Cyrnus with *maxims*.
8. The elegies were not written at a certain or particular moment of his life.
9. Through these elegies, Theognis expresses moods and feelings, but he never gives advice in the manner of a teacher.
10. In the same fashion, the drinking songs can also not be attributed to a specific period of his life.
11. Some techniques of Theognis' poetry.
12. Traits of the drinking songs are portrayed.
13. Cyrnus and the elegies written for him.

III. Theognis' views about gods, morals and states are investigated.

14. Why is it that his opinions about states, gods and people are closely interconnected?
15. In what with regard to Greek nobility lie the roots of dignity and respect?
16. Did Theognis remain true to his beliefs when he redefined all values?
17. From which signs can one determine that the aged Theognis departed from his previous convictions?

Friedrich Theodore Welcker[1] rightfully takes first place in questions regarding Theognis. He was the first to translate the poems, to order them in a better sequence, especially because he collected many, often scattered and contradictory testimonies. He studied these with great astuteness, discarding some and improving others. He judged more accurately and correctly the style of Theognis' poetry, the times of the poet and the citizens of Megara. Although these questions have been answered by that most learned man, nobody would believe that no new contributions can be made. One need only remember the dispute of philologists concerning the [proper] procedure of [textual] criticism to be applied to Theognis [scil. his works]. This has not been solved, as Bernhardy has rightly pointed out,[2] and with regard to the problems pertaining to Theognis' work, he noted that it was a field [open] to research and conjecture.

I should not deny that I will generally concur with Welcker, but I fear that there are two points in which I am unable to agree with him. Firstly, with regard to what can be determined about the life of Theognis from his poems -- I do not doubt that it is possible to glean more certain and correct information. Second, Welcker denies the authorship of a large part of Theognis' poems, especially nearly all of the convivial and drinking anthems; he also attempts to show that this type of poetry is generally gnomic. Moreover, no one, to my knowledge, has attempted to demonstrate how important Theognis is for understanding the ethical thinking of his time, although hints of this line of inquiry can be found in Welcker, who, well versed in these questions, was the first to propose a new and correct interpretation concerning the political use of the terms *good* and *bad*.

Therefore firstly the times of Theognis and the condition of the citizenry of Megara are to be investigated; then it will be necessary to examine the form and argument of Theognis' writings; finally, I will attempt to distill the ethical ideas in the period of the poet's *floruit* by means of his poems.

Although a certain fear inhibits me — who is hardly on the threshold of scholarship — from competing with a distinguished

man and contradicting him on many points; in my defence, I note that it is my way of expressing gratitude to the person who inspired me to the study of Theognis: by following the path he first took and reporting humbly where, in my opinion, a new direction seems appropriate.

I On the conditions of Theognis and the Megarians at that time.

1. Among the citizenry of Megara — as with nearly every community of the Dorians — the power and the administration of the *sacra* was controlled by the nobility who since time immemorial had kept the indigenous inhabitants out of the city by means of oppression and ignorance. Gradually though, due to the colonies founded in fertile regions from which riches and luxuries flowed back to the metropolis, dissension appeared between the optimates and the plebeians. That is what enabled Theagenes to gain power with the help of the multitude whose mind he had won over, whereby he employed that shrewdness which nigh all tyrants make use of (cf. Aristotle *Rhetorics* 1, 2, 19;[3] *Politics* 5, 4, 5[4]). If, however, we were to ask ourselves when this happened, nothing is certain except that he established the tyranny after Cylon of Athens had obtained power.[5] It is also not certain in which year he was expelled by the optimates, although this was probably around 600 BC.

Since it is in this sixth century that most of Theognis' life transpired, it is first of all necessary to collect the testimonies of the Ancients who provide us with information on the condition of Megara in this period. These, however, are but few and brief.

In 570 the war between Athens and Megara over the island of Salamis was kindled and brought to an indecisive end. It was agreed by both cities that Sparta should be chosen as an arbitrator. Sparta, by means of a council of five men, allotted the island to Athens, although the Megarians were more related to Salamis both qua blood and with regard to the administration of public affairs.

In 559, according to Clinton[6] and Rochette,[7] the Megarians founded the colony of Heraclea Pontica.[8] Here, like in many other Dorian colonial foundations, they divided the phylae as they were in Megara which seems to indicate as Plaß (*Tyrannus* I, 84)[9] conjectured, that, after the expulsion of Theagenes a large number of the optimates, having been harassed by the populares, emigrated and sought out a new abode. It is possible that for some time thereafter tempers were assuaged because the plebeians saw that so many nobles had left their native land.

Of great importance in this regard are three passages from Plutarch and Aristotle which we must cite here.

Plutarch, *Greek Questions* 18. *After expelling the tyrant, Theagenes, for a short time the Megarians were of sound mind with respect to affairs of the state. Afterward, according to Plato, because the demagogues had enticed them with the taste of liberty, they became entirely corrupt. The poor behaved insolently towards the rich, occupying their houses, demanding to feast sumptuously lest they carry them* [scil. the rich] *away by force and with insults. Finally, they enacted a law to demand back from lenders the interest which they had already paid, calling it 'return interest.'*

Aristotle, *Politics* V, 4, 3. *Megara's democracy was destroyed in a similar fashion. The demagogues, so as to have money to distribute to the people, kept on expelling many of the notables, until they formed a large body of exiles. These then returned and defeated the people in a battle and founded the oligarchy.* V, 2, 6 *The democracy of the Megarians was destroyed by disorderliness and anarchy after they* [scil. οἱ εὔποροι 'the well-to-do'] *had been defeated.*

IV, 12. 10. *Either all of the citizens appoint these men* [magistrates], *or some, and either from each or just from a specific class defined by honour, birth, virtue or some other such factor such as at Megara where only those who had returned from exile and fought together against the people were eligible.*

These passages make it clear that not long after the expulsion of Theagenes, a new war between the optimates and the plebeians broke out — or to be more precise, between the rich and poor, since during the reign of Theagenes many born as plebeians seem to have

become rich whereas many nobles were robbed of their fields and riches. In this war, the plebeians seem to have won, but were soon corrupted and divided by the seditious men, so that they introduced *return interest* which decreed that the interest already paid was to be returned to the debtor by the creditor. They then occupied the houses of the rich and demanded hospitality. Finally, many rich were robbed of their goods and expelled from the area. These, however, returned home after a long exile, rekindled the fight and gained power over the citizenry and held on to it. We can say nothing as to when this happened except that in 510 the optimates were again restored to power because in this year the Lacedaemonians increasingly crossed the Isthmus without hindrance to expel Hippias[10] from the rule he had assumed — which would not have been possible had the populares been in power. The optimates were then continually in power from this year until the Persian Wars and thereafter — although this cannot be ascertained by evidence. It is nonetheless recorded that in 468 the nobles were once again expelled by the plebeians and the rule of the masses was again restored.

2. In the time frame whose lines I have tried to sketch as well as is possible lies Theognis' life, which, should we adhere to this succession of events, we are unable to describe with more accuracy than is permitted by the few testimonies of the Ancients. We cannot learn about this life except through the few passages of the *Suda*, other authors and above all from the works of the poet himself. As to the year in which the poet was born, the *Suda* has[11] *"Theognis was present* [gegonōs] *in the 59th Olympiad"* for which interpreting *gegonōs* as 'born' is not credible. In fact Hieronymus' *Chronicle*[12] notes "Theognis was considered a famous poet in the 59th Olympiad" whilst the *Chron. Paschal.* has for Olympiad 57 *Theognis known as a poet*[13] and Cyrillus *Contra Iulianum* I p. 13 has for Olympiad 58 *Theognis well-known.*[14] The *Suda* is either mistaken or merely wishes to signify with the word *gegonōs* that "he lived at this time" or "he was famous."

If, from the passages which I have cited, the poet had started to

become famous by the 58th Olympiad, then this is unlikely to have occurred before his twentieth year. In any case, it can not have been much after this year because Theognis was still alive as an old man in 479. For this reason, we can conclude that the poet died shortly before his ninetieth birthday. This might not seem plausible because the Ionians, as can be concluded from the fragment of Mimnermus,[15] seldom surpassed the age of seventy, and the Attic Greeks as well as possibly also the closely related Megarians did not surpass eighty, as the extant verses of Solon teach (Bergk, 20[16]). For this reason we are forced to take the number of years which we have determined and somehow shorten them and place them within more narrow limits.

It is therefore necessary to investigate whether the poet could actually have been alive in 479. This can only be concluded from the verses 773-83 in which the poet implores Phoebus to avert the advancing army of the Persians so that the people could send hecatombs at the beginning of spring and, along with songs and games celebrate an appropriate festival for the god. He himself feared discord (*people-destroying discord*) among the Greeks. Duncker[17] is of the opinion that these verses can only refer to this year and no other. But why not?

Besides these, verses, 757-68 also appear to refer to the Persian Wars, which the poet merrily and jovially calls to drink:

Not fearing the war of the Medes
Living blissfully without worries
Being merry and far from evil spirits,
Accursed age and ultimate death

Would the poet really have written such at the beginning of a most dangerous war with the Persians? Would there then have been time to drink? And what does the poet request suppliantly? That the gods postpone old age. Is this what a nonagenarian poet requests?

I am thus of the opinion that these verses refer to a completely different period, namely that of Harpagus' expedition which he in all likelihood undertook in 546.[18] At that time, dread overtook the

Greeks which Theognis in a famous passage and also Herodotus with well-known words memorialise. This was when the Greek cities in Europe feared that the Persians would continue to seize cities — this is when the discord arose among the peoples to which the *people-destroying discord* refers. At this time, the still youthful poet wished for nothing less than to enjoy a pleasant youth and that old age and death be kept as distant as possible.

Thus we must work back from the year which we have determined, but not past 484, the year in which Gelon the tyrant of Syracuse conquered Hyblaea.[19] The *Suda* also mentions *Theognis of Megara in Sicily; he wrote an elegy for those rescued during the siege of the Syracusans.* These words were understood by Müller *Dor.* II, 509[20] to mean that Megara besieged Hyblaea and that *of the Syracusans* is to be taken as a subjective genitive. This appeals to me very much, yet I must admit that the word-order is somewhat unusual. The passage of the *Suda* about Gelon invading Syracuse is incorrect — it is known that he did not take the city by force, but received it from the people voluntarily. Megara (Herodotus 7, 156)[21] though was besieged approximately at the time of the Olympiad 74.2 or the year 483/4. Hence, Theognis was still alive in 484, perhaps also in the following year. We can thus determine that the poet became famous in 543, was born possibly in 563 and died in 483 or possibly somewhat later.

Theognis was therefore among the exiled optimates because before the exile he had strongly resisted the populares and their institutions. He himself remembers how at that time he had already tried to flee, being harassed by both poverty and the severe abuses of his slanderers.

I worry not about the poverty consuming me <1129-32>
Nor of my enemies' evil slander
But youth beloved now fleeting I do mourn
And that grievous age now approaching

We can nonetheless suspect, due to the moderate tone which the poet uses in these verses, that at this time he was not yet as plagued by anguish as at other moments in his life which many

poems demonstrate. These verses then seem to have been written at the beginning of a conflict from which he would depart into exile, vanquished and robbed of personal property. This passage, however, would not seem to have been written before the thirtieth year of the poet, i.e. 533 (on account of the words *But youth beloved now fleeting I do mourn*). Thus we can only conclude that Theognis went into exile between 530 and 510, travelled to Sicily, Euboea and Lacedaemon and then returned home.

I need now only compare what has been transmitted about the citizenship of Megara by Theognis and about the civil wars with some testimonies of Plutarch and Aristotle.

This is easy to understand if one studies the passages to be compared next to one another.

V. 4, 3 *The demagogues in order to have funds to distribute to the people.*	v. 46 *For the sake of profit and power* 50 *Profits that bring with them public baseness.*
Q. 18 *The poor ... inflicted all with outrageous violence ordained ... return interest.* Q. 18 –*They came to their senses ... when the demagogues poured them absolute liberty like free wine they became utterly corrupt.*	677f. *They snatch with force, order is in ruin, spoils they no ... longer divide equally.* 41f. *The citizens though are used to reason ...* *Their leaders though headed for great destruction.* Comp. these with vv. 44-45

It may well be that the meaning of the verses is unclear. One must though never forget that they were written during an atrocious tyranny so that the poet only insinuates because free speech was made impossible by the reign of terror. The poet himself ends the poem by portraying the desperate condition of the city as if it were a foundering ship [680]:

I speak my oracles in riddles for the good <681-82>

but the bad too will understand if they are prudent

3. I have attempted to investigate the period in which the poet lived and to calculate the years of his life. I have also briefly discussed the condition of the Megarians at the same time, something Theognis touches upon in his poems. Now then, some other events which are mentioned in the poems still need to be joined together and put in a logical sequence — I regret that this important matter was neglected by Welcker.

It is therefore certain that Theognis, of noble stock, was exposed in adolescence to pleasure since in this period the Megarian nobles had abandoned the old values and through luxury had become somewhat soft. This youthful gaiety and frivolity is referred to by the verses:

1222 *My heart melted with youth and riches ...*

1153f. *May I be allowed, aloof of evil cares, to live in wealth, unharmed ...*

567 *I play with delight in youthful prime ...*

Yet the storms were already falling upon the republic and it was no longer possible to lead a secure and agreeable life. He in fact perceived daily how not only the customs in which he had been brought up with since his childhood were ridiculed by the plebeians, but were also being neglected by the optimates. This was especially the case when he saw noble blood being contaminated through marriages with upstarts. He would then take up with indignation the struggle against the badness assailing the republic and by whatsoever means he was able, castigated the degenerate nobles and chastised the plebeians with a burning hatred. In truth, nothing checked his fighting spirit and anger than in order to save his life, he was forced to associate himself with the plebeians and albeit grudgingly support their objectives. One thing is certain, that in order to save his goods — although the goods of others had been robbed by the populares — he took pains for a while to strive after the gratitude of the plebeians, something he seems to have achieved because he writes:

By good faith I lost wealth, by bad faith saved it, <831-32>
The verdict of both is equally bitter.

He was nonetheless mistaken, since his adversaries seeing through the poorly disguised zeal of the nobleman appearing to be popularly-minded, robbed him of his goods and brought his life in great danger.

Oh wretched me — a mockery unto my enemies <1106>

Oppressed by extreme destitution, mocked by his enemies, irksome to his friends who — to his great lament — even betrayed him, he decided to flee. Initially, he doubted whether to take his wife — should I see this correctly — Agyris with him, also proposing to the adolescent Cyrnus, to whom he bore a fatherly disposition, whether he might not take on with him the exertions of the journey and flight. It does not become sufficiently clear whether they followed him or not. In Boeotia he, however, hoped to be favourably received by the optimates of the city of Lebadea because he remembered that in 559, when the Megarian nobles were founding Heraclea Pontica, they were most optimally aided by the Boeotians. I would not hazard a guess as to whether he actually went there. What he himself recalls is certain, namely that he spent a long while on Sicily (and was given presents there by the citizenry of Megara Hyblaea) which is also confirmed by the testimony of the *Suda* previously cited and by Plato (*Laws* I p. 630)[22] who refers to him as a *"citizen of the Megarians on Sicily."* This is the source from which the error of the first Theognide editors emanates, who state that the poet was born at Megara Hyblaea. It is, however, possible to show with many examples that those distinguished by fame in letters and the arts were known to be citizens of both the colonies as well as of the founding cities, such as Archilochus of both Paros and Thassos, Protagoras and Hectaeus the Younger of both Abdera and Teos, Terpander of both Boeotia and Lesbos, and Mimnermus of both Colophon and Smyrna.

He reported to enduring the Sicilian exile tolerably well. If one would desire to know what his living conditions were, he let it be

made known:

Good yet hard, also hard but good <520>

The irksomeness of exile would seem to have been diminished by the fact that the noble exiles were continually striving, through reciprocal trade and common experience, to be restored to their native city and to regain their former rank. From Sicily, Theognis seems to have travelled by boat to Euboea. The nobles of this island, who enjoyed opulence and luxury, received the exiles generously and nobly. The last part of his exile, however, he spent in Sparta among the resident nobility from whom, as it were, the exiles expected to receive the most help against their wicked fellow citizens. They do not seem to have been deceived in this hope. It is really not conceivable that these exiles, by their own might, without the aid of others were able to forcibly return to their native city, defeat the plebeians and again take charge of the political institutions.

This is nearly everything which we can relate with certainty about his life before and during exile. There only remains to be examined what the poet relates about the last part of his life which is neither much nor important. In public affairs, he remained more moderate than previously, so that even his own disdain and hatred against the plebeians seems to have faded.

He suffered intensely from the cruel misfortunes through which the optimates, who had been most friendly to him and most meritorious with regard to his well-being, were done away with in two cities, namely Cerinthus and Megara Hyblaea, which we have already noted. For the rest, as an old man, he continually distanced himself from the austere precepts, about which we have been able to derive certain information, that he had cherished in his youth. We have already said that nothing at present is certain regarding his death. It is most probable that it followed shortly after 484 when he had heard that Megara had been captured by Gelon and he was consumed by grief and sorrow.

4. Now that we have briefly sketched the life of Theognis, we must then address Welcker, who, briefly stated, arranges some events differently and joins them into a new sequence of events. He

says, as he makes unambiguously and abundantly clear in his book, that Theognis was namely among the exiled nobles and wrote at a time during which the optimates, who had been in power after their victory over the plebeians, again had had to retreat from the rule of the populares, until the 89th Olympiad. The poet supposedly recovered his property, if he — which is quite dubious — returned together with the others, whereupon it was certainly taken away from him again. Then, when he saw propertied men from the plebeians enjoying themselves — those who had formerly been disenfranchised from public life being entrusted with honours as well as with noble blood, which after the right of marriage had voluntarily been given to the victorious party, was being defiled by unions with upstarts — his indignation would seem to have been made into verse.

What happened then? Are the events then not torn asunder wondrously?

Certainly, many difficulties arise, of which it is sufficient to single out the most severe. In 510, the optimates were in power — after this year Welcker proposes that all that badness, which so vexed Theognis, gradually crept into the state. But what had the poet done before this year? Had he not written anything? Certainly he had written — from exile he sent elegies to Cyrnus, such as v. 1197. And also before exile he had composed vv. 53-60:

Cyrnus, though the city's still a city, the inhabitants are others;
Those who previously had known neither order nor laws,
But wore out goat skins clothing their sides,
They dwelt there like deer beyond this city.
And now, son of Grabbedalot[23]*, they're the good, those once noble*
Now are servile. Can anyone bear to see such?

It is not possible that these verses can be taken to refer to the civil uprisings of which Welcker speaks, since the plebeians, allegedly before the disturbances, dwelt in the countryside clothed in hides, having then fled from the city like deer. This does not square with historical reckoning because the plebeians already had forced their way into the city during the first republican uprising and had already for

a long time been lavishing upon themselves lust and licentiousness. These verses describe the condition of the state before Theognis' exile. Therefore, at that time, those *"once servile"* had usurped the dignity of *"the good"* — that is when the possessions of Theognis were forcibly taken from him:

... my possessions by force <346>
They've robbed. I, like a dog, did cross the torrent
Shaking off all from myself in the swollen river.

It was then, harassed by extreme destitution, that he composed those elegies in which *poverty* was heftily cursed.

What then have we shown? That according to Welcker, what the poet endured after returning from exile, he had already endured before being exiled — as if all events were being repeated.

What compels us to accept this contorted interpretation? Are there perchance any verses in which the poet may be perceived to intimate the repetition of events? Since such verses do not exist, nothing compels us.

Nonetheless, I do not deny that the method by which I have delineated the life of the poet does not entirely coincide with the judgements and computation — besides those of Welcker — of all who have recounted the life of the poet whether in passing or in detail. Almost every one of them followed their own way in this matter, some more ingenious than shrewd, others more adapted to historical truth than would suggest itself to us. So, for example K. O. Müller: *"due to a forcible redistribution of property, Theognis, who happened to be on a sea-voyage, was robbed of his father's rich inheritance."*[24] But this *sea-voyage* (1202), and from this one word this conjecture originates, is the exile itself, although no one might conclude such from Müller's words.

What remains is to synthesise and summarily note what is still to be written about.

563? Theognis born at Megara
543? Initial fame as a poet
533 The struggle against the populares begins

530-10 Robbed of his goods and consumed by destitution he went into exile; he abided on Sicily, Euboea and at Sparta. With the other exiles he returned after the plebeians were beaten in combat and recovered his former dignity.

506 He complained that the nobles of Cerinthos were driven out by the plebeians.

484 He composed an elegy about Megara Hyblaea captured by Gelon.

Not long thereafter he passed away.

II On the Writings of Theognis

5. I have long and often been uncertain whether I should specifically follow the judgements of Xenophon and Isocrates, or rather in the footsteps of our more recent scholars in this most controversial matter. I do not know whether those who lived closer to the era of Theognis judged more correctly than those of us who came afterwards. It is no less problematic, that due to the poor hodgepodge arrangement of the poems we must make guesses, though not with the complete and intact poems as did the older writers as we have shown, with regard to not only his era and the condition of his homeland, but also especially regarding his life, memory is defective and incomplete.

Because most recently I have meditated upon questions concerning Theognis and have myself gone through what survives of Theognis repeatedly, I have convinced myself that neither one nor the other position is to be supported in all facets.

We should briefly consider how the Ancients in different periods of Antiquity judged the poetry of Theognis. In the age of Isocrates, he was seen as a very strict teacher of morality — see his book *Writing on Men* or *On Perfection and Badness* (Xenophon cited by Stobaeus[25]; and note also Plato, *Laws* 630, Isocrates, *To Nicoles* 2.43[26]). Theognis' book had already been used to teach boys. Possibly it was no longer intact, but only in excerpts of maxims which

students were made to memorise (note Isocrates, *To Nicoles*, and Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 3.32)[27]. From the fate of this book, possibly all of the opinions can be derived which were proffered after Xenophon. Because boys, still uncultivated in learning, were given the work of Theognis in order to commit it to memory, so as to derive from it the rudiments of all knowledge, the verses of Theognis achieved common and daily usage and were very often quoted in discussions, as we know from the writings of the Ancients in which an axiom of Theognis is praised here and there — so that it seems that the Ancients soon forgot that Theognis was in reality a poet and not a teacher. From this it is possible to correctly understand the words of Plutarch (*Quomodo adolescens poetas audire debeat* 2)[28] who says that the *dicta* are *propositions* which in order to avoid epistolatory style use metre and rhythm as a *vehicle*. Furthermore, the intact poems of Theognis gradually faded away entirely because it was thought that nothing from these was useful for boys except for the excerpted *dicta* — and truly which man would not find it undignified to return to his earliest schooldays? This is what Dio says quite clearly: *"What is there in them (Theognis, Phocylides) by which a man like you or me could profit?"*[29]

From this fate of Theognis' poems one can derive the reason why they have been transmitted to us in a most deplorable condition — dispersed, broken asunder and mixed together with parodistic verses of other poets. I would contend that at the time in which a scholiast who studied literature would have gathered together the verses of Theognis, collected into one volume from other authors and from excerpts of *dicta*, from those efforts Stobaeus would have copied by hand that one book, reduced to the same form which exists today. This has been accurately demonstrated by Bergk, to which I would only add that this could not have been undertaken before Cyril of Alexandria [†444 CE]. The latter states namely that Theognis wrote *"Simple and ingenious anthologies, which nurses show to young girls and tutors to young boys when advising them."* It becomes clear from these words how greatly this Theognis — which Cyril has deemed baby food — differs from the Theognis who we have today:

a potpourri of amatory and drinking songs, and even obscene fragments all brought together as an unskilled and unordered hodge-podge.[30]

Therefore, so that I may briefly explain why I am of the opinion that the judgements of the Ancients must be revised: no one to my knowledge has made the effort to investigate the life and times of the poet; no one read Theognis in order to be delighted by his poetry. Rather almost everyone read Theognis to extract and memorise his moral sentences. Lastly, no one made any effort to transmit the poems uncorrupted and intact to following generations. Truly, Theognis has met with what was so deprecated by Horace (*Satyrarum* 1.10: 74-76): "What, would you be such a fool as to be ambitious that your verses should be taught in petty schools? Not in my case."

6. Prior to our times in which historical records of the ancient world are brought to bear in order properly to understand the remnants of Theognis, it could only be that scholars judged Theognis wrongly — although not as wrongly as they would have had to judge Theognis were it not that a sense of propriety held them back and had not a certain inestimable appreciation of Antiquity prevented them disparaging a very famous Greek poet. It was only Goethe who candidly expressed what he himself saw of value in Theognis with these candid words: (W. Goethe, *Gesammelte Werke* Vol. 5, p. 549):[31] *"I remember very well that we in our youth repeatedly struggled with Theognis and thought him a pedagogically oriented rigorous moralist from whom we sought to procure some benefit without ever succeeding. Therefore we put him aside again and again. He came across to us as a miserable (un-)Greek hypochondriac. For how could a city or yet a state be so depraved that the good ones fared badly and the bad by all accounts fared well, and in such a measure that an upstanding and right-thinking man would insist on denying the benevolent nature of the gods? We attributed these objectionable opinions to an idiosyncratic individualism and turned our attentions reluctantly to his merry and cheerful compatriots."*

Yet Goethe himself expresses with the following words just how greatly he changed his opinion once he had learnt from good historians about ancient Megara and the misfortunes of the poet: *"Once informed by excellent classicists and by modern historical research, we can better understand his situation and are better able to know the eminent man. Megara, his native city, ruled by the old moneyed, conventionally known as nobles, was, during the course of time, humiliated by* monocracy *and then shattered by the populist preponderance. The propertied, the cultured, those accustomed to tidy domesticity, were most ignominiously beset in public, and their most intimate familial bliss haunted, disrupted, disturbed, humiliated, robbed, destroyed or driven away — and along with this class, among which he counted himself, Theognis suffered all manner of tribulations. Now his enigmatic words can be understood most completely when one learns that an émigré composed and wrote these elegies. We must then admit that we can neither imagine nor understand a poem such as Dante's* Inferno *if we do not bear in mind that a great intellect, a decisive talent, a worthy citizen from one of the most important cities of that time, who, together with his like-minded fellows, was robbed of all privileges and rights and driven into penury during those most tumultuous times."*

Although I recommend that, generally speaking, this judgement is to be supported, I do not doubt that in some parts of it, this or that could be expressed more accurately and clearly. Furthermore, Goethe's words are erroneous in that he believed that all of the elegies were composed by the poet during exile, although not even the greater part of these were written then. Yet it is easy to understand the cause of this error. And thus we touch upon what is to be set forth in greater detail and described more clearly in these pages.

Our discourse will deal with four points to be explained subsequently. I believe that:

1. Theognis did not entitle the poems he composed for Cyrnus *Gnomonology* nor *Practical Maxims for Cyrnus.*

2. These elegies were not composed at a specific or defined period in his life.
3. Indeed, in these elegies the poet evinces all phases of his life, his affection and intellect, though this was never done in order that he give precepts in a teacher's stead.
4. Similarly, the banquet and drinking anthems are not to be related to a specific moment in his life.

7. With respect to the first point, although Welcker explained it in such a way that there is nothing left for me to say, I am nevertheless surprised that the subject has been thrown into confusion by these words from Bernhardy "traditional title *Practical Maxims for Cyrnus*." If, however, it is asked why I dwell on this trivial matter extendedly — merely mentioning it would have sufficed — my reply is that I wish to demonstrate that the poetry of Theognis was not gnomic, and therefore it is first of all necessary that the title by which the manuscript is transmitted be removed, so that no one will use this worthless title to prove that Theognis' poetry was gnomic. In a short note on Theognis in the *Suda*, the elegies to Cyrnus are mentioned thrice, always by different names: *Practical Maxims for Cyrnus, Gnomonology* and *Exhortations*. No one doubts that nothing is to be added to this testimony because it contradicts itself and, in a surprising manner, fluctuates in the title it gives. The poems of Theognis are called *Gnomonologies* by Plutarch[32] and *Exhortations* by Stephen of Byzantium[33] and Aphtonius.[34] And besides we must return to the things I have said about the fate of the Theognide corpus at the beginning of this chapter — the titles (*Practical maxims, Gnomonologies* and *Exhortations*) refer to those excerpts of maxims which I have already mentioned.

The oldest testimony to the controversial title is found in Plato's *Meno*: 95d: *Socrates "... but Theognis the poet also says, you remember, the very same thing?"; Meno "In which poems?"; Socrates "In the elegies."* And following this are the verses as they are still read today.[35]

Schneidewin is somewhat troubled by these words because from the question *"In which poems?"* and from the answer *"In the elegies"*,

he seems to draw the conclusion that Theognis must also have written poems in other genres besides elegies. This is very doubtful, and on the contrary, it certainly must be rejected if only because *"In which poems?"* must be correctly interpreted as "in which verses" (as in Aristophanes, *Clouds* 638[36]) or "in which lines" (as in Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 113, *Birds* 507). If these words really had the force which Schneidewin wants, I must take exception to *"In which poems"* and would rather write *"In which poem?"*[37] Certainly this answer is not an exact fit, but this manner of answering is the one most commonly used in familiar speech.

As Plato, who in all likelihood was acquainted with the unmutilated poems, refers to the aforementioned as *elegies*, there is no reason why we should doubt that Theognis himself actually entitled his poems with this name. With regard to the other titles, Welcker already correctly saw that they are not titles belonging to some book, but rather variant terms referring to gnomic poetry.

8. Let us now move on to the second point, which I consider to be the most important one because it seems that many have erred with regard to it. Thus I myself fear that I fall short in this controversial matter.

Goethe, or rather Weber, whose opinion he has followed, believes that the elegies to Cyrnus were composed by the poet during exile. In contrast, Welcker thinks they were written by poet after he had returned from exile, age-worn and poverty-stricken. A similar view is held by Bernhardy: *"That Theognis composed the poems as a very old man cannot be concluded from passages such as 527, but only from the tone of the banquet poems 1077ff. and 1131ff."* K. O. Müller also thinks that they were written after Theognis' return from exile because Theognis describes the hardships and struggles that he endured much earlier. There are so many different opinions among scholars in this matter! Only one of these is really sound, namely that of Dunker in his *Greek History*. Although he does not deal with Theognis specifically, he seems to be of the same opinion with which I am very much in agreement with. I am convinced that this is the most probable view, namely that Theognis recorded

his deeds and experiences at separate times throughout his entire life and consigned these as elegies. Yet I cannot maintain this unless I first show that I have selected the fragments of elegies which were self-evidently written at a specific period of his life, and then demonstrate that these elegies are interconnected.

v. 53-58 As we have already shown
183-90
1109-14
173-85
textsuperscript38 written before exile
833-36
1103-4

(I have only chosen those remnants in which the name of Cyrnus is attested, so that no one may doubt that these remnants really have been selected from those elegies for Cyrnus).

v. 209-10 Written in exile
1197-1202
v. 549-54 Written after exile.
805-10
783-88

I do not deny that the largest part of these elegies were composed during the time in which Theognis was most harshly afflicted by calamities. Despairing for the welfare of both himself and his republic, he very often took refuge from the crushing indignities in poetry as if it were a safe harbour — that is before exile.

9. I have briefly touched upon the third point which I proposed in what I have written above. If I see it correctly, then it can only really follow provided that I have explained the second point correctly.

In the ancient world, elegiac poems were sung to the music of flutes and also lyres — the ancient Greeks truly saw a very close connexion and bond between poetry and music. In Theognis' time, this custom had not yet disappeared as his songs expressed moods

and passions of the soul and for that reason were adapted to singing. Thus most of the fragments of Theognis share the characteristic that they were performed in an agitated spirit and with a roused mood. Because in most of these fragments, in which not only moral teachings are contained, you may see either the most harsh pain and unquenchable hatred against the plebeians expressed, or longing for the homeland stolen by exile, as well as concern and anxiety for the well-being of Cyrnus. You will never, however, perceive a strict and pedantic teacher who only aims to teach precepts to his pupil. It indeed cannot be denied that many things to which Theognis relates have some instructional content; especially since he did not seem to fear anything more than that young Cyrnus, whom he loved as a son, would depart from the teachings of the optimates and their way of life, which is why he warned him most seriously that he should never ever depart from the way which he had once embarked upon. He hoped that through this youth the old institutions of the nobles, whose biggest proponent he was, would be preserved. Perhaps it will not seem absurd that I compare Theognis with Schiller's Marquis of Posa, who, wholly versed in the study of human affairs,[39] loved in Don Carlos the man who he hoped would one day realise his plans — which is why he did not hesitate to devote his life to those plans and to that friend.[40]

For my part, when reading Theognis, I can discover nothing gnomic in his poetry, although I readily admit that anyone who approaches Theognis not having a foundation in the study of history will find something apparently similar to the *Proverbs* of Solomon, with which Julianus indeed did compare Theognis' works.[41] For this reason, it is not superfluous to quote the words of Goethe which pertain quite well to that what I have said: *"We are used to interpreting the statements of a poet — regardless of their nature — in a general fashion and to adapt them to circumstances as they momentarily suit us. Thereby, many passages receive an entirely different meaning than in the context from which they were taken. A proverb of Terrence takes on a different meaning in the mouth of an elder or a slave or even on the page of a family album."*

For this reason, I completely disagree with the opinion of Plutarch which Teuffel recently endorsed with these words: *"Plutarch already correctly discerned the fundamentally prosaic character of his poetry."* On the contrary, should something in his fragments appear sententious, and not a few appear to be so, based solely on their content, it pains me that such verses, deprived of their original context and order, their rhyme and the circumstances in which Theognis composed them, can no longer be determined.

10. Now remains the final though by no account light question which concerns the banquet and drinking songs. It is most easy to demonstrate that these songs were composed at various times with the exception of old age — which due to its nature seems to preclude jestful merriment and amorous delights.

v.	1119-22	Composed by the adolescent
	773-82	
	756-69	
v.	1153-54	
v.	1017-22	By the young adult —
	1129-32	
v.	1087-90	In Sparta by the exile.
	879-84	

As in none of the banquet songs the name Cyrnus, which is so frequent in all of the other elegies, is extant, I am thus able to infer what Welcker concedes: "these poems have no place in the *Gnomonology*." It would have been moreover entirely improper for the poet to dedicate drinking and love anthems to a youth he wanted to instruct with the best precepts. However, Welcker maintains that not even these poems were published separately inasmuch as Antiquity, for the most part, makes no mention of them. Theognis was distinguished by Dio, that most skillful writer in this matter, from the poet of the love and banquet anthems. For Dio relates that Alexander the Great on being asked by his father why it was that he only read the poet Homer, responded that not every poet is suitable for a

king: *"And perhaps some of them [i.e. poets] might be called popular also, in that they do give advice and admonition to the masses and to private citizens, as, for instance, the works of Phocylides and Theognis do."*[42] But even this judgement must refer to those excerpts which are known from the entirety of the Theognide corpus, so that from these words nothing can be concluded about the trustworthiness of the banquet anthems. Nor is all of Antiquity silent about these songs because Athenaeus, who was a most diligent investigator of ancient matters, attributed to Theognis vv. 917-22 and 157-60 with these words: *"Theognis also deals with pleasure, what he himself says about himself with these [words]".*[43] Naturally, this means that the hodge-podge of all remnants were not yet rendered in their current form. If Athenaeus had had these fragments which we now have, these would have provided many better arguments that Theognis was not adverse to pleasures and he would certainly have quoted these. Yet, I must confess that I do not have convincing arguments by which I might prove that these banquet anthems were indeed left by Theognis. But such arguments do not exist. This is why generally there is uncertainty with regard to the authorship of the more pleasant fragments. However, it surprises me that the light-hearted poems of some unknown bard were attributed to, of all people, Theognis, that allegedly severe moral teacher. Therefore, I am very pleased that Bernhardy has spoken out in favour of the same view (*Op. cit.* II, 457): *"Furthermore, the symposiast part has such an oratory elegance and liveliness that one can only think Theognis capable of such in his youthful years."* It becomes clear from these words that Bernhardy also ascribes these anthems to Theognis. Welcker is entirely correct in considering as not genuine the last part of the Theognide corpus with erotic content because these songs by an unknown author were appended to the other fragments from one manuscript based on the words of the *Suda*: *Maxims for Cyrnus, Theognis' Lover [eromenos]* — an opinion from which I greatly differ (see Welcker C. II, Bernhardy II, 458, K. O. Müller).

11. I have already discussed the nature of Theognis' poems in general. I wish briefly to add a few comments on the methodology

which Welcker employed in order to show that Theognis was not so sober, so cold or so dependent on free prose as the Ancients, especially Plutarch, judged.

First of all, I will collect concepts and comparisons taken from Theognis:

114 A bad harbour (a plebeian)

105 To sow on the sea (*to do good to the bad*)[44]

657-82, cf. 855 An imperiled ship (the republic) — what is very nicely elaborated throughout the individual parts.

83 In a ship (you should easily embrace all good people) 970 A ship avoids a ship (a false and insidious friend is reprimanded)

457-60 Ship, steering-oar, anchor, harbour (the faithfulness of women)

575 The helmsman avoids the reef (I, my enemies)

— Certainly one will be quite surprised that the poet often uses nautical allusions in his comparisons. This is due to the most flourishing Megarian mercantile and nautical activity.

56 A deer (the peasants, formerly)

949 A deer and a lion (himself after his return)

293-94 A lion does not always eat meat (the nobles oppressed by poverty)

1057-60 A donkey and a mule (two competitors)

847 A wild animal on which spurs and a harness are fitted (plebeians)

257 A mare speaks (a girlfriend of noble lineage)

983 A horse crossing land full of grain (so quickly does youth flee)

811 A bird (a young girlfriend)

1097 A fowl flying from a lake (Cyrnus, fleeing the plebeians)

993 Nightingale (singing with a clear voice)

347 A dog saving itself from torment (he himself from dangers)

602 A snake in one's bosom (an insidious friend)

537 Roses and hyacinths do not grow from onions (from a plebe

a noble will not emerge)
— the Megarians were famous onion traders (Schol. Arist. Pac. 245. Plin. XIX, 5, 30, XX, 9, 40).
— on Nice's fields there are many roses (Nicandrus cited by Athenaeus XV, 491).
215 An octopus (a true friend)
568 Stone and earth (a man buried)
175 A monster to be cast into the sea (destitution).

The following persons are introduced by the poet:

Hope 1135	*Faith* 1137	*Wealth* 523, 1117
Prudence 1138	*City (gravid)*	*Poverty* 351
Wine 873	*Earth* 9	*Sea* 10

Theognis gives speaking rôles to:

A plebeian	Ulysses
The beloved girl	— A mare —

The poet mentions the following mythical stories or persons:

Odysseus 1123	Boreas 716	Rhadamanthus 701
Sisyphus 702	Nestor 714	Harpy 715
Centaur 541	Alcathous, a civic hero	Castor and Pollux [1087]

12. Now that we have shown with a few examples Theognis' rhetorical devices, it remains that we go over to a more precise explanation of the various genres of his poetry. We will open the discussion with the banquet anthems.

Megarian nobles, just as at Sparta, appear to have had instituted *common meals* ('syssitia') long ago, in which similar laws were adhered to (536-66, 309-312; see Welcker, *Prl.* and Grote, *History of Greece*). These noble assemblies seem to have given birth to Theognis' elegies, so that from these remnants we are able to get an idea of the nature of these gatherings. After the table companions had

been satiated with food (994-1002), cups were filled, a libation was made to the gods, and prayers and songs were offered especially to Apollo (943-44). This was then followed by the festive part called *carousal*, entirely dedicated to music and cheerful jesting. Some of the participants then were wont to sing elegies accompanied by the flute — among which nearly all of Theognis' elegies are to be counted. It seems that Theognis selected the themes of quite a number of his anthems — which one could divide into various and diverse genres — directly from daily life and especially from the domain of banquetry. This is because I believe they were intended to arouse the sentiments and affections of the banqueters. As a matter of fact, Theognis on occasion jokes pleasantly and politely with his friends as if he were inviting them to a banquet or drinking bout (1047-48, 997-1002, 879-84) — while on other occasions, he sings hymns to the gods or makes supplications:

1-4 To Apollo	5-10 Again to Apollo
11-14 To Diana	15-18 To the Muses and Charites
337-40, 341-50 To Zeus	757-68 To Zeus and Apollo
773 To Apollo	(1087) To Castor and Pollux

Of these, the most beautiful is the second song to Apollo which will be helpful to have quoted here [vv. 5-10]:

> *Oh lord Phoebus, when divine Leto bore you,*
> *Her slender hands clutching an oasis' palm,*
> *To be the most fair of the immortals,*
> *Limitless Delos' entirety was filled with*
> *Ambrosia's scent — monstrous earth laughed,*
> *The grey ocean's saline depth rejoiced.*

On yet other occasions, he recommends the measured use of wine as in 929; on others, he outrightly exhorts the full enjoyment of youth (877, 983-88) or he most bitterly laments its flight (1017-22, 1129-32). However, what I have already pointed out concerning the connexion and relationship of poetry with music seems to apply to Theognis in a quite singular fashion, inasmuch as I do not know of another poet

of Antiquity who has written so subtly about the purpose of music. This is why a not inconsiderable part of the banquet songs which deal with the praise of music juxtapose a marvellous sweetness and delightfulness together with an emotional power and passion. So, for example, when he describes the Underworld, he regrets most of all that he will miss music there (973-78, 531-32, 533-34, 944).

Verses 406-407,[45] 993-96, 1078-90 must refer to the contests that arise frequently among banqueters.

At banquets, *Trinklieder* and riddles were most common, and it is recorded that Theognis also performed these:

Most beautiful is righteousness, most desirable is health <255-56>
Though the thing most pleasant is finding one's true love.

And in the verses 1229-30 preserved by Athenaeus:

For I have been called home by a corpse from the sea,
Who though dead, croaks with a mouth quite vital.

Riddles were also hidden in other verses, such as 1209, 949-54, and although they seem to have been investigated by scholars — this should not prevent us from proffering here a simple explanation of these verses.

Besides these elegies, whose common theme deals with the general nature of banquets, Theognis also composed elegies for specific occasions and events, the best of these fragments touch upon affairs of the heart. He loved a girl deeply, whose parents though favoured not him, but rather a plebeian. They seem to have belonged to those nobles who were so degenerate, lusting only after wealth, which Theognis so abhorred. Nonetheless, the girl preferred the noble though a pauper and, as it seems to me, she came together with him as if she had drawn water from a spring. Thus:

[At the spring] I embrace the girl and kiss her neck <265-66>
Her lips softly murmuring.

In these amatory elegies, he often lets the girl speak:

A fair prize foal am I, but most repugnant <257-60>
Is my jock - this upsets me:
Often I have discarded my bit,
Thrown off my vile rider and fled.
(She) I detest a bad man, veil myself when I meet one <579-80>
Keeping, like a little bird, my wits nimble.
My friends forsake me and give nothing <861-64>
When men come. Hence I keep going out
Evenings and return in the morn,
When the cocks begin to crow.

I do not know if he later married the same girl — although does praise a marriage entered into with a noble woman. Possibly her name was Argyris.

Nothing, Cyrnus, is more dear than a good wife: <1225-26>
I am the living proof, as you are mine.
Don't ridicule my lineage so brazenly <1211-16>
Argyris! For one day you will be a slave.
Although we - woman! - have been abused since
Exile, vile slavery hasn't been our lot:
Our likes are not sold - We at least have a city,
Yonder on the plains of Oblivion.

Besides this elegy, Theognis wrote one for Simonides before he went into exile, whilst under pressure from the tyranny of the plebeians which we have already noted (667-82). This was a time in which one could only make known the condition of the republic covertly and describe it with similes.

A bull that stomps its stout hoof on my tongue <815-16>
Keeps me from prattling what I know.

As an exile, Theognis wrote to Clearistus, who being afflicted by destitution, came and was received benevolently by him (511-12). He wished another émigré, who was about to embark on a sea-

voyage, good luck.

He advises Democles to bear poverty with dignity (923-30). Seemingly the exiled optimates, accustomed to a gentle and luxurious life, endured the shortage of resources and the harshness of exile only with difficulty.

'Tis very hard for you, Demonax, to bear a burden - <1085-86>
Accustomed as you are to doing just what you want.

Verses 597-98, 599-602 are inveighed against unfaithful friends whose insidiousness was apparently discovered whilst in exile.

After exile, as we have already noted, an elegy of which four verses survive (891-94), bemoans the nobles of Cerinthus who were driven out by the plebeians.

After the return of the nobles, Theognis rejected a man harshly who, formerly a commoner, had attempted to creep back into his favour (453-56).

What verses 1209-10 mean has hitherto not been explained by any commentator.

13. Lastly, regarding the elegies dedicated to Cyrnus, to which we now proceed, it cannot be doubted that when he wrote each of them, he did not yet have any intention to publish these in the form which they were later ordered and collected. This is certainly what happened, since verses survive in which Theognis makes known that he, as it were, put a seal on his poems so that they could easily be distinguished from counterfeits. In addition, it can be concluded from the words of Xenophon (cited by Stobaeus) that these verses formed the beginning of the elegies and thus seemingly, became the title on the cover of the complete book. I believe that these verses were composed by the elderly Theognis and that on deciding to publish, he prepended these to his poems, namely because 1) he calls himself a *"sophisticated reasoner"*, something which only an old man can say without being arrogant; 2) Undoubtedly a young man would under no circumstances write *"famous to all men, although I have not been able to please all of my fellow-citizens"* (22-24). It is unlikely that he had already achieved fame throughout Greece

for his poetical abilities before he went into exile. In addition, that *not yet* indicates that he had reconciled with the optimates and the populares, something which he only sought as an old man after returning from exile.

Before, however, I explain in what follows, the subjects dealt with by these elegies, something must be said about the relationship of Cyrnus and Theognis. Welcker,[46] for instance, says that Cyrnus is just a figure of speech which only has meaning in relation to the form of the book. It seems to him that Theognis does not use *Cyrnus* as a given name, but rather as an old epithet by which this fiction once having been made, perpetuates itself. And Welcker even says there was in fact a custom among lyrical poets to use such epithets in order to make their point seem more real when addressing a young friend, so as to effect the maximum emotional impact that only the addressee, and not any stranger, would understand — something which would be more suited to gnomic poetry. In this manner, the severity of precepts is softened by the import of paternal kindness, so as to penetrate more easily into the minds of youths.

I completely disagree with this opinion because nothing fits less with the depiction of Theognis we have presented here than that of Welcker. Theognis was not a teacher of precepts, he does not invent a character whom he would flatteringly address so that, in this fashion, precepts would penetrate more easily into youthful minds. He is not at all to be numbered among the gnomic poets as we have already shown. On the contrary, there is much in his character which I have described as judiciousness. For Theognis, at one moment, seems to have disposed to Cyrnus as a father. While at another, as a brother or as a friend, which seems to be due to the differing ages of both since, so to speak, whereas once one of them played the rôle of the counselling father and the other that of the adolescent, as they advanced in years the age difference increasingly was forgotten: they were joined together in friendship as gradually, one might say, the dissimilitude of years seemed to narrow. Cyrnus was therefore, as all recent commentators, with the exception of Welcker, agree, the son of Polypaus (*Polypaides*). Welcker, however, says that the given name and the patronymic

are to be found together in invocations to gods and exhortations to men like *Glaucus, the son of Leptines, Charilaus, the son of Erasmon* mentioned by Archilochus and *Glaucus, the son of Epicydes* in the oracle cited by Herodotus (VI.86) and elsewhere. This is certainly possible, though by no means mandatory, as is clear from many passages in Homer: [Diomedes who is frequently known by the patronymic] *Tydides* (*Iliad* 5.18,134, 303 [et passim]) and *Ligyaistades* (i.e. Mimnermus) cited by Solon (quoted by Diogenes Laërtius 1.66). Schneidewin (*Delectus poesis græcorum* (Göttingen 1838) Vol. I, 50) was the first person to show that *Polypaides* is the patronymic of Cyrnus. Besides, one probably must not disregard that Theognis cautions Cyrnus in jest that he must have the *polypoid disposition* — these words intended either in the meaning *many-footed* or *octopus.*

That Cyrnus in fact did very often frequent in noble circles and was beloved and dear is shown by the verses 655-66: *"We are all sorry for your grief, Cyrnus ..."*

The teenager seems for a while to have been in doubt whether he should associate himself with Theognis, so that the latter did not know what he should do and wondered why Cyrnus did not frankly make known what he felt:

Don't say you love me, while your mind roams asunder, <87-90>
If you really love me, then only with all your heart,
Either love me wholeheartedly, or declare me
Your disdain and then let's fight it out.
Another's care is fleeting. <656>
Yet you could care less about me, respectless, <253-54>
You rather cheat me like a small child with words.

When the storms against the republic erupted, Theognis repeatedly warned Cyrnus that he should follow the middle path between the parties (331-32, 219-20) and the adversities of the period not suffer with more severity than necessary. Yet at the same time, too much was amiss for Theognis to be able to exercise moderation and discretion in public matters. Every day he was aroused more by a burning anger, so that rocked by emotions, he sent to the same Cyrnus, whom he had wanted to comfort,

elegies in which he declared an unquenchable hatred against the plebeians, enmity against the degenerate nobles as well as disdain for unfaithful friends. He depicts this all in vivid colour:

Concerning the marriages between nobles and plebeians:
183-90 537-38 193-96
On the subversion of the state:
53-58 279-82 289-92 647-48 1135-50
On the unabridged wantonness of the plebeians:
39-42 43-52 663-64 833-36
On the pernicious power of wealth:
53-60 699-718 1109-14 719-28.

One might be surprised at how often Theognis attacks his enemies harshly, and yet, as we have shown, would nonetheless try to garner the favour of the plebeians and, by being submissive to the demands of the populares, try to save his life and possessions. This is what W. Teuffel (article "Theognis" in *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft* 6.2, ed. A. F. Pauly (Stuttgart, 1849)) accurately notes: *"As proof that — by harsh experience — his mood against the people is a bitter one, he postulates the theory all the more radically, the more he is forced to make compromises in reality. So much so, that in the face of life's humiliations, he intends to save the pride of his conscience through expressing it in writing and by this means also exact revenge for the former."*

At this time, Theognis fell into utmost poverty which he in many elegies deplores as the most wretched and harsh burden:

Poverty, he says 268-70, *Visits neither the market nor the courts,*
It is always considered inferior, always derided,
Always hated equally wherever it is found.

Therefore it behooves a pauper to die (181-82) or at least perish in the sea so that he be released from poverty (173-80). He especially laments that poverty and necessity divert a man from the right path and teach him shameful crimes. I do not know whether in these verses he is secretly noting how greatly he regrets that he himself

had once reluctantly belonged to the populares:

Oh miserable poverty lying on my shoulders, <649-52>
You disgrace both my body and my mind,
Oppressively teaching me shame and misery -
Despite me knowing what's good and noble for men.

See also 351-54. 619-30.

If you look a the themes of the elegies which he composed as an exile, many of them contain a certain loathing and contempt for human affairs:

For those on earth, never being born is best, <425-28>
Never to have seen the sun's burning rays.
Thus when born, head straight for Hades' gates:
Make your earthen grave and then lie in it.
Have patience my soul, I can't supply all <695-96>
Your wants - you're not the only admirer of beauty!

See also 441-46. 555-56. 1117-18. 1229-36.

He himself acknowledges that as an exile he suffered most of all from homesickness:

Exile's abodes could not delight my heart, <787-88>
Nothing was dearer to me than my homeland.

It is possible that he had even left his wife behind in his native city, who, would seem to have been Argyris as we have already seen:

Remind me not of infelicity, as Odysseus, I've suffer'd - <1123-28>
Who escaped Hades' mighty abode, resurfacing,
To go and pitilessly slaughter the suitors
Of faithful Penelope, his wife dearest,
Who long at her son's side pined his return.
Until he once again reached dry land ...

Furthermore, the most worthy of Theognis' elegies which should be mentioned in this context are:

The bird's shrill call, Polypaides, I've heard, <1197-1201>

Who to mortals announces plough
In season, what darkened my mood -
For others my fertile fields now own,
Mules drag the plough's bent yoke not for me.

While contemplating this, he was so seized by an inextinguishable anger and hatred against the plebeians, that he demanded vengeance from Zeus:

Rather I die from sorrow if no relief can I <343-44>
Find, than grief for grief's sake bestowed.
Could only I drink their black blood. <349>
Woe shrivels a man's heart, Cyrnus, <361-362>
It swells again when wrong's avenged.

These verses seem to have been composed before the battle in which the optimates defeated the plebeians:

Aged turpitude besets us Cyrnus, <819-20>
Best we take the deadly plunge together!

After this battle (verses 949-54), it surprises me that Welcker believes that here lies hidden an offensive riddle.[47]

One fragment remains which in all likelihood was composed after exile [805-10], in which Theognis advises Cyrnus, who is supposed to consult an oracle, that he is to heed diligently what is ordered by the gods.

Now if I seem to have carried on excessively in expounding on these matters, this must suffice as my apology. Since it is my intention to refute in this fashion what Bergk recently wrote about the contents of the Theognide corpus, namely that nothing of Theognis still exists except a disparate succession of disjunct aphorisms. It seems to me that he is quite mistaken. And besides, I believe that I have shown that in this hodge-podge there are not a few traces by which we can be led to certain events and facts and to certain biographical details which can be recognised without difficulty. I concede most willingly that I am in no way content with my selec-

tion and arrangement of these fragments: this is because fragments with diverse contents had to be quoted and discussed on the same page.

III Theognis' views about gods, morals and states are investigated.

14. Since enough seems to have been said about Theognis' life and writings, what remains is the proposed third point, namely to try to explain Theognis' views on matters divine and human. Since, however, not many scholars have expressed a particular opinion about this matter, it might perhaps at the beginning of this investigation be helpful to have read the words of Bernhardy, in which he succinctly states the customary conviction of scholars (II, 457): *"The entire corpus of elegies is based on the political and ethical beliefs of the Dorians, that is a caste-based moral doctrine which attaches every merit of the soul and social education* [i.e. nature and nurture], *the ownership of property and worldly wisdom to noble birth. The poet, characterised by a deep repulsion towards the ruling rabble, bore witness to the inalienable rights of the good men in a kernel of solid sentences and experiences."*[48]

In fact, Welcker has already cautioned that when we give ear to Theognis, we must not forget that a noble Dorian citizen is speaking. The only one opposed to this judgement is Grote (*History of Greece* III c. 9),[49] who acknowledges that he is unable to discern that peculiar Dorian energy and nature in Theognis. Although he does not further discuss this matter, this judgement is nonetheless most worthy of consideration.

Indeed, Theognis hailed from an old and illustrious family and throughout his life was earnestly engaged in the pursuit of nobleness — its restoration and extension directed all his thoughts and desires. Without doubt, he lived in a situation in which the genuine nobility of the Dorians had by then been completely overthrown and its precepts had been trodden, as it were, in the total revolu-

tion. As a result of this, Theognis himself began to doubt some of those precepts and had begun to fashion a new conviction. In fact, the path which Theognis took, so that as an old man he was able to think somewhat more freely about the republic as well as about human and divine matters, can still be discerned from many clues.

The poetry of Theognis truly displays the peculiarity that opinions about the gods and morals are most closely connected with his judgement of the republic, which is why we may not discuss them separately. The cause of this is to be derived from the unique form of the Megarian citizenry which was separated and divided into various classes, or rather castes as they called them, so that different opinions about human and divine matters originated from and were maintained by the different classes. When, however, a bitter struggle between these classes arose, and Theognis began to manifest himself most fiercely as the champion of the class of the optimates, he also separated the population in his poetry in such a way that he pronounced one part *the good*, i.e. the optimates: the good men among whom was supposed to be every religious piety to the gods; and towards men, every righteousness and goodness. The other part he called *the bad* or *the lowly*, among whom every moral depravity, irreverence and ungodliness was said to exist. Whence, it is evident why, in Theognis' opinion, matters divine and human are so closely related.

First of all though, it must be asked by what right did Theognis so judge the nobles and plebeians and how this judgement is to be understood.

15. Five characteristic factors of the optimate's authority and dignity can be noted — so that we may grasp just how much the nobles were valued at that time and how superior they were in relation to the plebeians. Firstly, the antiquity and distinguished lineage of a great family was valued by all, especially when its origins hearkened back to heroes, and even gods, as progenitors. In contrast, a plebeian who so to speak sprang up from a useless and pernicious stock was shrouded in obscurity and his name not remembered beyond his life. This Theognis expresses very accurately

in a pair of distichs:

Some censure the good, others praise them, <797-98>
But about the bad nobody really cares.
Never do the enslaved go upright, <535-38>
But the crooked necked are ever gnarled;
As a squill doesn't bear roses or hyacinths,
So neither does a slavette *a free child.*

Secondly, the nobles — because theirs was the use of weapons and military understanding, though above all since they of old had entrusted themselves alone with the duty to govern public affairs and to exclude plebeians from administration — were always convinced that they ran public affairs in the most beneficial manner with the most success:

Good men, Cyrnus, have never destroyed a single city <43>

And he continues:

But whenever it pleases the bad to run wanton
They corrupt the people ...
From this ... comes discord and civil war <51>

Furthermore, only the nobles had an understanding of the legal system and the interpretation of the laws, whence it appeared to Theognis that the plebeians (45) *gave justice to the unjust*:

It is usual for a bad man to enact bad as right, <279-80>
And have no fear of retribution thereafter.

In these last words, the poet determines that the plebeians, unrestrained by religion, did not fear the gods. This is the third point by which the nobles believed that their authority was ordained: the complete administration of all sacred rites was their sole prerogative. For that reason, they imagined the gods were propitious towards them, but irate toward the plebeians.

At this point, one must recall the mood of the period in which

Theognis lived. Or rather, to define the matter more correctly, the opinion passed on from the most ancient period of the Greeks until that of Theognis, which clearly illustrates how much dignity the nobles claimed for themselves. They clearly believed that there was a covenant between gods and men which stipulated that, provided the gods received honours and rites from men, they, for their part, would confer on them goodness and favours. This is no different from the sentiment expressed by Pindar (*Pythian* 2, 73[50]): "Inasmuch as a man follows the path of truth and justice, it can only be because divine favour has come upon him." I shrink though from asserting that such an early period judged so frankly the *happiness* and *hatred of the gods* as did Pindar. On the contrary, even in the period of Sophocles, if we were wont to summon King Oedipus to this question, the general mental attitude which cannot easily be doubted, seems to have been that whom the gods love they furnish with good(s), they pick and choose as they please without artifice, they certainly cannot be compelled, even by piety, to embrace someone in love who they themselves have not chosen. However, in order that we may return whence we have somewhat deviated, how greatly a bygone age was dependent on these beliefs can be inferred from many passages in Theognis. Here and there it is often evident that virtue, wealth and honour cannot be understood if they are not united and entwined by close ties:

Let me be prosperous and a friend to the immortal gods, <653-54>
Cyrnus, no other excellence do I love.
It does befit the good to have wealth, <525-26>
Poverty is to be borne by the bad.
Pray to the gods, 'tis in their power. Indeed, <171-72>
Without the gods, men will neither become good nor bad.
According to Zeus' will, money comes to the man, <197-98>
'Tis pure and ever abiding.

Theognis, however, believes that from the penury of the plebeian

wretched exigency (*helplessness*) is born, through which he is driven to crime:

... poverty <384-92>
The mother of helplessness has seized them ...
Who leads the soul of man astray to sin,
To pervert his body by severe necessity,
. . . . . .
Yielding to need, who teaches every badness,
Lies, deceits and accursed quarrels.
. . . . . .
For need engenders harsh helplessness.

How important though riches, refined luxury and splendour are for the pursuit of dignity can still often be seen in our times.

One must also add that among the aforementioned Greek nobility, riches were allied with formal instruction and the pursuit of the liberal arts, whereas the plebeians were entirely deprived of erudition and, being ignorant, subsisted in miserable living conditions:

These ... have known neither customs nor laws, <54-56>
But wore out goat skins clothing their sides,
They dwelt there like deer beyond this city.
. . . . . .

Yet among the nobles, there was some copiousness of precepts for instituting correct living according to the norms of the nobility which had been confided by the forefathers to their children and successors. These norms, as Theognis himself acknowledges to Cyrnus, confide nothing but

... of what I myself <27-28>
Cyrnus, was privileged to learn from the good as a child

In contrast, the plebeian is unable by any means to repair and im-

prove the depraved character and disposition already inherited from his parents, and by keeping bad company, the growing boy becomes increasingly corrupted by the day:

The bad are not all bad straight from the womb, but <305-307>
Transform in the friendly company of bad men
Learning base deeds, shameful words and lewdness
... by teaching <384-92>
You will never be able to make a bad man good.

Since the dignity of the nobles, by means of which they were able to keep the plebeians subjected and servile, was based on the fame of an ancient lineage; on the ability to manage military and public affairs; on the administration of the *sacra*; on the splendour of wealth and luxury; and finally on formation in the most noble arts – is it surprising that Theognis, who was of the opinion that much separated the nobles from the plebeians, said that a noble ought to have absolutely no dealings with the plebeians? I fear that in verses 343 and 347 the plebeians are also intended. In these verses, nobles are even forbidden from undertaking business ventures with plebeians. In fact, he argues that there is nothing more vain and useless than aiding a plebeian, seeing that he is unable to show gratitude:

There is no glory in helping the lowborn, <105-08>
Just like sowing the grey, salty sea —
Sowing the sea brings not a rich harvest
Nor will doing good to the bad return good.

If, however, circumstances dictate that a noble must associate with a plebeian, he should present himself with a most friendly demeanour, while, in fact, an inextinguishable anti-plebeian hatred burns within him. As Teuffel notes: *"One's disposition to* commoners *must be one of absolute mistrust and deep personal contempt. Only in order to display one's intellectual superiority ought one to take on the most polished and cordial countenance. The poet had the naïveté to present this unworthy teaching with the greatest barefacedness and recommended it as adroitness"*[51], e.g. verses 283, 213, 313, 363-365.

Thus we are confronted here with the haughty conviction of the Dorian nobility. No one would deny that their judgement was shared by Theognis, although it is possible to doubt whether Theognis stood consistently firm when public discord and total revolution had thoroughly shattered the foundations of those convictions, based on the aforementioned *happiness.*

16. If we were to ask how it had come to pass that the authority of the weakened nobility gradually slipped by the day, the first and foremost cause must be sought in the fact that many plebeians, especially in the maritime cities, were increasing their fortunes on account of the rich and booming trade. They began quickly to rival the nobles in wealth, though in extravagance and luxury they surpassed them because they now were no longer averse to every refined elegance, and were also investing in moral and personal improvement, particularly after returning from long voyages enriched by knowledge. In addition, the nobles were no longer upholding the ancient morals, but having often given themselves over to luxury and pleasure, they had gradually become estranged from military duty, nor did they any longer look after their private affairs effectively. Instead, they heaped up debt so that some fell into shameful poverty. So it came about that the nobles no longer separated themselves from the plebeians, but rather by intermarrying, they sought wealth, whilst the plebeians by such means strove after and received dignity – Theognis said *"Wealth dilutes birthright"* (190).

Indeed, everything we have already said about the gradual decline of the nobility and the flourishing of the plebeians among the Megarians took place as a result of the tyranny of Theagenes. Assuredly, nothing was more detrimental to the nobles than the tyranny of Theagenes, who, born of an illustrious lineage, carried on for a while as a populist. Then, with the approbation of the plebeians, he seized power. As Aristotle, *Politics* 5,3,1 noted *"Oligarchies come to an end, especially when a leader of the people emerges from out of these oligarchs."*

Theognis lived during this period which we have briefly de-

scribed. He was raised on the precepts of the nobility from childhood, which as an adult he saw neglected by everyone. Hence, it was inevitable that he began to doubt the righteousness of the gods, something he himself frankly admitted in verses 373-380 and 743-46:

O Zeus my friend! I admire you, who art lord over all, <373-380>
You yourself have honour and great power
. . . . . .
How, Chronos' son, can your mind dare to treat wicked men
in the same manner as the just ?
. . . . . .
How, then, oh king of the immortals, can it be just <743-46>
That a man without unrighteous works,
Knowing neither misstep nor perjury,
But is righteous, does not experience righteousness?

He mainly lamented that when plebeians die in well-endowed circumstances, there is no one to punish them except when perchance their children and heirs absolve the paternal crimes by indemnification. This is why he suggests to Zeus that he make known the path through which he intended to punish bad men:

O Zeus, father! Would that it please the gods, that the wicked
Should delight in lewd outrages if they so desire,
But supercilious perpetrators of premeditated crimes
Who fear not the gods, may they
Pay the price forthwith and let not
Children latterly pay for paternal sins
. . . . . .
If only this were the gods' delight, but alas
The doer gets off and another is punished <731-42>

If men had already began to doubt the righteousness of the gods, Theognis fears he then knows neither a way nor a means by which one could hope to procure the favour of the gods:

The deities have not for mere mortals decided <381-82>

Upon a path to go which pleases the immortals

which is why men become daily more corrupt and increasingly alienated from the gods.

Hence, there are a few verses in which he laments that there is not a single man entirely free from fault:

None of the men on earth are blameless. <799>
Of the men the sun now looks upon <615-16>
No one is entirely good or measured.
Since there is no man without reproach, <1185-86>
None, Cyrnus, discern the sunbeams' rays.

In addition, the nobles harassed by the hardest want, were obliged to stray from the right path, especially since the burden of poverty was diverted onto them by the plebeians. However, for the optimates this was unheard of and quite uncustomary, so that they attempted to free themselves by whatever means they were able, cf. 649-52:

Wretched poverty ...
. . . . . .
Disgraceful ... against my will teaching much shame.
Yet scrape by on land or on the broad-backed sea - <179-80>
Seek release, Cyrnus, from oppressing poverty.

Finally, robbed of his goods and homeland, he, for a while seems to have almost despaired for his welfare and longed for death itself:

To die, my friend Cyrnus, is preferable for a poor man <181-82>
Than being oppressed by harsh poverty

see also 425-29.

Hereafter, however, he increasingly adapted to the times and bore with a more moderate attitude all the vicissitudes. Indeed, he even fell so far that he took to saying (444-46):

... The gifts of the immortals

Come in all kinds to mortals, but we've to keep
Those gifts of the immortals such as they may be
. . . . . .
About things that can't be done, don't let grow <1031-36>
Anger nor wrath, neither upset you friends
Nor gladden your enemies. Gifts from the gods
A mortal man can't easily escape from,
Whether he sink to the bottom of the surging sea,
Or when dark hell holds him fast.

17. One matter remains, which one is more able to prove with a conjecture than with facts. It is quite likely that after Theognis had returned to his homeland, his life was already nearing its end as he adopted a more lenient attitude towards the republic. By this time, he had also distanced himself from his former opinions on gods and men, now judging somewhat more liberally, especially with regard to the dignity of the plebeians. He then also cautions Cyrnus that he should not reproach anyone for being poor:

When angry with a man, never hold life-sucking <155-58>
Poverty or cursed pennilessness against him -
For Zeus tilts the scales this way and that
Now to those with wealth, then to those without.

In this deliberation, he seems to have conceded entirely that both good and bad are exclusively allotted by the gods to mortals, and that it lies entirely within their purview:

No one, Cyrnus, is responsible for his own loss or gain, <133-42>
But rather the gods are the givers of each
No man labours knowing in his heart
Whether 'tis to a good or a bad end
. . . . . .
We men pursue vanity, not knowing
While the gods act as they see fit.

Finally then, I return to Grote from whence I set out. I am of the opinion that Theognis demonstrates one thing: since his life coin-

cided with the overthrow of all beliefs, it is not possible that he persisted in the same views in which he was instructed as a boy. Thus it becomes clear what Grote meant: "Assuredly it must be admitted that the authentic Dorian strength and peculiarity can be perceived in a diminished and broken manner in the Theognidian corpus."

Notes

[1]F. T. Welcker, *Theognidis reliquiæ, novo ordine disposuit, commentationem criticam et notas adiecit ...* (Frankfurt/M, 1826).

[2]G. Bernhardy, *Grundriß der griechischen Literatur. Zweite Bearbeitung* (Halle, 1856) vol. 2/I 463f.

[3]... παράδειγμά ἐστιν: οἷον ὅτι ἐπεβούλευε τυραννίδι Διονύσιος αἰτῶν τὴν φυλακήν: καὶ γὰρ Πεισίστρατος πρότερον ἐπιβουλεύων ἤτει φυλακὴν καὶ λαβὼν ἐτυράννησε, καὶ Θεαγένης ἐν Μεγάροις: καὶ ἄλλοι ὅσους ἴσασι, παράδειγμα πάντες γίγνονται τοῦ Διονυσίου, ὃν οὐκ ἴσασίν πω εἰ διὰ τοῦτο αἰτεῖ. πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ὑπὸ τὸ αὐτὸ καθόλου, ὅτι ὁ ἐπιβουλεύων τυραννίδι φυλακὴν αἰτεῖ.

[4]Τούτων δὲ ὕβρις μὲν καὶ κέρδος τίνα ἔχουσι δύναμιν καὶ πῶς αἴτια, σχεδόν ἐστι φανερόν: ὑβριζόντων τε γὰρ τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς καὶ πλεονεκτούντων στασιάζουσι καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους καὶ πρὸς τὰς πολιτείας τὰς διδούσας τὴν ἐξουσίαν: ἡ δὲ πλεονεξία γίνεται ὁτὲ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν [10] ἰδίων ὁτὲ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν κοινῶν. —δῆλον δὲ καὶ ἡ τιμή, καὶ τί δύναται καὶ πῶς αἰτία στάσεως: καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀτιμαζόμενοι καὶ ἄλλους ὁρῶντες τιμωμένους στασιάζουσιν: ταῦτα δὲ ἀδίκως μὲν γίνεται ὅταν παρὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἢ τιμῶνταί τινες ἢ ἀτιμάζωνται, δικαίως δὲ ὅταν κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν.

[5]Cylon, the son-in-law of Teagenes, attempted to seize power in 632. This is one of the first reliably dated events in Athenian history.

[6]H. F. Clinton, *An Epitome of the Civil and Literary Chronology of Greece: from the earliest accounts to the death of Augustus* (Oxford, 1851), 155 *et passim.*

[7]M. Raoul-Rochette, *Histoire critique de l'établissement des colonies grecque* vol. 4 (Paris, 1815), 407.

[8]In Bithynia on the Black Sea coast at the mouth of the river Lycos. Modern Karadeniz Ereğli.

[9]H. G. Plaß, *Die Tyrannis in ihren beiden Perioden bei den alten Griechen. Dargestellt nach Ursachen, Verlauf und Wirkungen* (Bremen, 1852).

[10]Hippias of Athens succeeded his father Peisistratus in 527 and was exiled by a Spartan-led coallition in 510.

[11]Ed. I. Bekker, *Suidæ Lexicon* (Berlin, 1854), 493: Θ136. The full entry reads: Θέογνις, Μεγαρεύς, τῶν ἐν Σικελίᾳ Μεγάρων, γεγονὼς ἐν τῇ νθ ὀλυμπιάδι. ἔγραψεν ἐλεγείαν εἰς τοὺς σωθέντας [Schneidewin: ἀναλωθέντας] τῶν Συρακουσίων ἐν τῇ πολιορκίᾳ, γνώμας δι' ἐλεγείας εἰς ἔπη βω, καὶ πρὸς Κῦρον, τὸν αὐτοῦ ἐρώμενον, Γνωμολογίαν δι' ἐλεγείων καὶ ἑτέρας ὑποθήκας παραινετικάς. τὰ πάντα ἐπικῶς ...; "A Megarian, from the Megara in Sicily, born in the 59th Olympiad. He wrote an elegy on the Syracusans who were saved [Schneidewin: killed] in the siege, aphorisms in elegiacs in 2800 verses, and to Kyros, his beloved, a Maxim-collection in elegiacs and other hortatory poems of advice. All epic in style ..." ("Theognis." *Suda On Line*, Tr. C. Roth; 24 June 2004; last referenced 22 December 2014; <http://www.stoa.org/sol-entries/theta/136>.

[12]Cf. A. Schoene, *Eusebi Chronicorum Libri*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1875), 99.

[13]Ed. L. Dindorf, *Chronicon Paschale* vol. 1 (Bonn, 1832), 269, cf. gloss. "Theognis poëta agnoscebatur."

[14]Ed. E. Spanheim, *Iuliani imp. opera et S. Cyrilli contra eundem libri decem* (Leipzig, 1696).

[15]Αἲ γὰρ ἄτερ νούσων τε καὶ ἀργαλέων μελεδωνέων / ἑξηκονταέτη μοῖρα κίχοι θανάτου."Would that my fated death might come at sixty, unattended by sickness and grievous cares" (translation D. E. Gerber, *Greek Elegiac Poetry* (Loeb ed.,1999),85.

[16]Ἀλλ' εἴ μοι κἂν νῦν ἔτι πείσεαι, ἔξελε τοῦτον: / μηδὲ μέγαιρ' ὅτι σεῦ λῷον ἐπεφρασάμην: / καὶ μεταποίησον, Λιγυαιστάδη, ὧδε δ' ἄειδε.

[17]M. Duncker, *Die Geschichte der Griechen* vol. 2 / *Die Geschichte des Alterthums* vol. 4 (Berlin, 1856), 70f. n8: "Die Aristokratie muß demnach damals [510] in Megara wiederhergestellt gewesen sein. Früher als 515 kann diese Restauration aber auch nicht erfolgt sein, da Theognis noch in dem Jahre 479 lebte und dichtete. Die Verse 775 bis 780 können nicht auf die Schlacht bei Marathon bezogen werden. ... Endlich ist das ... Megara, dessen Fall Theognis besang, dem Gelon erst zwischen 485 und 480 erlegen."

[18]A Median general who allegedly helped the first Achæmenid king, Cyrus the Great, to the throne. On the event being related, cf. Herodotus, *Histories* 1,171.

[19]The site approximately twenty kilometres NNW of Syracuse. On its foundations cf. Thucydides vi 4: κατὰ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον καὶ Λάμις ἐκ Μεγάρων ἀποικίαν ἄγων ἐς Σικελίαν ἀφίκετο, καὶ ὑπὲρ Παντακύου τε ποταμοῦ Τρώτιλόν τι ὄνομα χωρίον οἰκίσας, καὶ ὕστερον αὐτόθεν τοῖς Χαλκιδεῦσιν ἐς Λεοντίνους ὀλίγον χρόνον ξυμπολιτεύσας καὶ ὑπὸ αὐτῶν ἐκπεσὼν καὶ Θάψον οἰκίσας αὐτὸς μὲν ἀποθνήσκει, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι ἐκ τῆς Θάψου ἀναστάντες Ὕβλωνος βασιλέως Σικελοῦ προδόντος τὴν χώραν καὶ καθηγησαμένου Μεγαρέας ᾤκισαν τοὺς Ὑβλαίους καλεῖσθαι. καὶ ἔτη οἰκήσαντες πέντε καὶ τεσσαράκοντα καὶ διακόσια ὑπὸ Γέλωνος τυράννου Συρακοσίων ἀνέστησαν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως καὶ χώρας. πρὶν δὲ ἀναστῆναι, ἔτεσιν ὕστερον ἑκατὸν ἢ αὐτοὺς οἰκίσαι, Πάμιλλον πέμψαντες Σελινοῦντα κτίζουσι, καὶ ἐκ Μεγάρων τῆς μητροπόλεως οὔσης αὐτοῖς ἐπελθὼν ξυγκατῴκισεν.

[20]The German edition was unavailable to the translator. Cf. C. O. Müller, *The History and Antiquities of the Doric Race. Second edition* (London, 1839) vol. 2, 460f. note III. The 'siege' in question (see n. 11) is otherwise unknown and may indeed be apocryphal, cf. T. J. Figueira and G. Nagy (edd.), *Theognis of Megara: Poetry and the Polis* (Baltimore–London 1985), 25-27.

[21]Μεγαρέας τε τοὺς ἐν Σικελίῃ, ὡς πολιορκεόμενοι ἐς ὁμολογίην προσεχώρησαν, ... and Thucydides *supra* n 19.

[22]*Leges* I 630a: ... ποιητὴν δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς μάρτυρ' ἔχομεν, Θέογνιν, πολίτην τῶν ἐν Σικελίᾳ Μεγαρέων.

[23]The patronymic Πολυπαΐδης means 'son of Polu-pāos'. This form *Polu-pāos* 'he who has acquired much' is composed of the same formal elements—*polu-* 'much' and *pā-omai* 'acquire'—that are used in the diction of Theognis to designate the generic rich man: ... ὃς μάλα πολλὰ πέπαται Theognis 663 ... 'he who has acquired much.' T. Figueria and G. Nagy (edd.), *Theognis of Megara: Poetry and the Polis* (Baltimore—London, 1985), §43. Another word-play might also be involved with Κύρνος which according to Photius and Hesychius can be an appellative for *bastard* (see *LSJ* s.v.).

[24]K. O. Müller, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur bis auf das Zeitalter Alexanders* vol. 1 (Breslau, 1841), 213.

[25]Nietzsche does not cite here the edition he uses. In the edition of Meineke, *Ioannis Stobæi Florilegium recognovit Agustus Meinike* (Leipzig, 1856), it is vol. 3

p. 167 sub 4 Ξενοφῶντος ἐκ τοῦ περὶ Θεόγνιδος.

[26]Σημεῖον δ' ἄν τις ποιήσαιτο τὴν Ἡσιόδου καὶ Θεόγνιδος καὶ Φωκυλίδου ποίησιν: καὶ γὰρ τούτους φασὶ μὲν ἀρίστους γεγενῆσθαι συμβούλους τῷ βίῳ τῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ταῦτα δὲ λέγοντες αἱροῦνται συνδιατρίβειν ταῖς ἀλλήλων ἀνοίαις μᾶλλον ἢ ταῖς ἐκείνων ὑποθήκαις.

[27]J. J. Reiske, *Oratorum Græcorum Volumen Tertium Aeschinis Omnia Complectens* (Leipzig, 1771) =3.32.

[28]=16c-d: Τὰ δ' Ἐμπεδοκλέους ἔπη καὶ Παρμενίδου καὶ Ἠριακὰ Νικάνδρου καὶ γνωμολογίαι Θεόγνιδος λόγοι εἰσὶ κιχράμενοι παρὰ ποιητικῆς ὥσπερ ὄχημα τὸ μέτρον καὶ τὸν ὄγκον, ἵνα τὸ πεζὸν διαφύγωσιν. "The verses of Empedocles and of Parmenides, the Antidotes against Poisons of Nicander, and the maxims of Theognis, are merely compositions which have borrowed from poetic art its metre and lofty style as a vehicle in order to avoid plodding along in prose."

[29]Dio Chrysostom 2.5 completes this with a quote from Homer, *Iliad* 1.288: "aspires to be / The master, over all to domineer." 2.(4-)5: Τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα ποιήματα ἔγωγε ἡγοῦμαι τὰ μὲν συμποτικὰ αὐτῶν, τὰ δὲ ἐρωτικά. τὰ δὲ ἐγκώμια ἀθλητῶν τε καὶ ἵππων νικώντων, τὰ δ' ἐπὶ τοῖς τεθνεῶσι θρήνους, τὰ δὲ γέλωτος ἕνεκεν ἢ λοιδορίας πεποιημένα, ὥσπερ τὰ τῶν κωμῳδοδιδασκάλων καὶ τὰ τοῦ Παρίου ποιητοῦ: ἴσως δέ τινα αὐτῶν καὶ δημοτικὰ λέγοιτ' ἄν, συμβουλεύοντα καὶ παραινοῦντα τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ ἰδιώταις, καθάπερ οἶμαι τὰ Φωκυλίδου καὶ Θεόγνιδος: ἀφ' ὧν τί ἂν ὠφεληθῆναι δύναιτο ἀνὴρ ἡμῖν ὅμοιος, "πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἐθέλων <sic!> / πάντεσσι δ' ἀνάσσειν."

[30]Echoed for example by E. Harrison (*Studies in Theognis: together with a text of the poems* (Cambridge, 1902), 92) "And indeed he [scil. Cyril] must have been very ill acquainted with Theognis in any form', or he could never have called his poems 'such stuff as nurses tell their charges.' That is not at all the character of Theognis, whose teaching is throughout a very mature kind of worldly wisdom. If Theognis were to be made fit for the nursery, changes would be needed more sweeping even than Welcker's."

[31]= Review of W. E. Weber, *Die elegischen Dichter der Hellenen: nach ihren überresten übersetzt und erläutert* (Frankfurt/Main, 1826).

[32]Loc. cit.

[33]Ἀφ' ὧν Θέογνις ὁ τὰς παραινέσις γραψας. Ed. A. Meineke, *Stephani Byzantii ethnicorum quæ supersunt* (Berlin, 1849), 439 s.v. Μέγαρα.

[34]Aphthonius of Antioch, *Protogymnasta* 8.14: Κατηγορεῖσθαι τὴν ποίησιν οὐκ ἀφῆκεν ὁ Θέογνις ἀντὶ τῶν μύθων ἀσκήσας παραίνεσιν. s.v. Ἐγκωμιαστικόν ed. L. von Spiegel, *Rhetores Græci* Vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1856), 26. Note here also the scholia on Theognides 2.43.5: ὁ ποιήσας τὰς ὑποθήκας,i.e. 'warnings' (see H. Selle, *Theognis und die Theognidea* (Berlin, 2008), 423).

[35]31-35: ... καὶ παρὰ τοῖσιν πῖνε καὶ ἔσθιε, καὶ μετὰ τοῖσιν // ἵζε, καὶ ἄνδανε τοῖς, ὧν μεγάλη δύναμις. // ἐσθλῶν μὲν γὰρ ἄπ' ἐσθλὰ διδάξεαι ἢν δὲ κακοῖσιν // συμμίσγηις, ἀπολεῖς καὶ τὸν ἐόντα νόον ... "To eat and to drink, and to sit with them and to please them, for their power is great. You will learn good from good men, but if you associate with the bad, you will even loose what sense you have."

[36]Εἰπέ μοι.πότερα περὶ μέτρων ἢ περὶ ἐπῶν ἢ ῥυθμῶν. "Tell me -about measures or *verses* or rhythms?"

[37]Nietzsche is correct in his observation, the translation of ἐν ποίοις ἔπεσιν is "in which verses of his poetry", cf. *LSJ* s.v. ἔπος IVb-c.

[38]Rather -80.

[39]E.g. Act 2: "Ein unterdrücktes Heldenvolk mich sendet – // Denn jetzt steh' ich als Roderich nicht hier,
Nicht als des Knaben Carlos Spielgeselle ...

[40]Julianus, *Contra Galileos* apud Cyril loc.cit. : Ὁ σοφώτατος Σαλομὼν παρόμοιος ἐστι τῷ παρ' Ἕλλησι Φωκυλίδῃ, ἢ Θεόγνιδι, ἢ Ἰσοκράτει; πόθεν; εἰ γοῦν παραβάλοις τὰς Ἰσοκράτους παρινέσεις ταῖς ἐκείνου παροιμίαις, εὕροις ἄν, εὖ οἶδα, τὸν τοῦ Θεοδώρου κρείττονα τοῦ σοφωτάτου βασιλέως. "Is their 'wisest' man Solomon at all comparable with Phocylides or Theognis or Isocrates among the Hellenes? Certainly not. At least, if one were to compare the exhortations of Isocrates with Solomon's proverbs, you would, I am very sure, find that the son of Theodoras is superior to their 'wisest' king."

[41]*Orationes* Second Discourse on Kingship 5.

[42]*The Deipnosophists* 310a 85.

[43]Actually, δειλοὺς εὖ ἔρδοντι ματαιοτάτη χάρις ἐστίν

[44]Rather 407-08

[45]Welcker 1826: lxxvii ff. "Cyrni allocutionem ad solam adeo libri formam pertinere demonstrari portest. Primum didascalio carmini communi usu antiquitatis inhærebat apostrophe. Ac profecto, qui apud lyricos quoque poetas obtinuit mos, ut amico blande compellando speciem quandam rei non fictæ, sed veræ efficerent, qua maxime movetur affectus, vel, quo vellent animo sensa sua excipi, significarent, quasi non alienissimo cuique, sed amicis tantum penetralia pectoris aperientes, is gnomicæ pesi magis etiam conveniebat. Mitigata enim per paternæ benovolentiæ significationem præceptorum severitate, facilius illa se in juvenum animos insinuabant. ..."

[46]Op. cit. 134f. on νεβρός: "Nostri ænigmatis sensum aperit Rhiani comparatio pueri cum hinnuleo, amatoris cum venatore ..."

[47]G. Bernhardy, *op. cit.*

[48]G. Grote, *History of Greece* vol. 3 (London, 1859), 44 "Still less can we discover in the verses of Theogenes that strength and peculiarity of pure Dorian feeling ..."

[49]Ὁ δὲ Ῥαδάμανθυς εὖ πέπραγεν, ὅτι φρενῶν ἔλαχε καρπὸν ἀμώμητον, οὐδ' ἀπάταισι θυμὸν τέρπεται ἔνδοθεν. "But Rhadamanthys has prospered, because his allotted portion was the blameless fruit of intelligence, and he does not delight his inner spirit with deceptions." (trans. Arnson Svarlien).

[50]W. S. Teuffel, art. "Theognis" in *Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Althertumswissenschaft* Vol. 6.2 (Stuttgart, 1849).

BERSERKER

BOOKS