

The theory is explained in the most famous of the "Problems" attributed to Aristotle, which shall be rendered in full.

PROBLEM XXX, 1<sup>54</sup>

Διὰ τί πάντες ὅσοι περιττοὶ γεγόνασιν ἄνδρες ἢ κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν ἢ πολιτικὴν ἢ ποιήσιν ἢ τέχνας φαίνονται μελαγχολικοὶ ὄντες, καὶ οἱ μὲν οὕτως ὥστε καὶ λαμβάνεσθαι τοῖς ἀπὸ μελαίνης χολῆς ἀρρωστήμασιν, οἷον λέγεται τῶν τε ἡρωϊκῶν τὰ περὶ τὸν Ἡρακλέα; καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος ἔοικε γενέσθαι ταύτης τῆς φύσεως, διὸ καὶ τὰ ἀρρωστήματα τῶν ἐπιληπτικῶν ἀπ' ἐκείνου προσηγόρευον οἱ ἀρχαῖοι ἱεράν νόσον. καὶ ἡ περὶ τοὺς παῖδας ἕκστασις καὶ ἡ πρὸ τῆς ἀφανίσεως ἐν Οἴτῃ τῶν ἐλκῶν ἐκφυσις γενομένη τοῦτο δηλοῖ· καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο γίνεται πολλοῖς ἀπὸ μελαίνης χολῆς. συνέβη δὲ καὶ Λυσάνδρῳ τῷ Λάκωνι πρὸ τῆς τελευτῆς γενέσθαι τὰ ἐλκῆ ταῦτα. ἔτι δὲ τὰ περὶ Αἴαντα καὶ Βελλεροφόντην, ὧν ὁ μὲν ἕκστατικός ἐγένετο παντε-

Why is it that all those who have become eminent in philosophy or politics or poetry or the arts are clearly melancholics, and some of them to such an extent as to be affected by diseases caused by black bile? An example from heroic mythology is Heracles. For he apparently had this constitution, and therefore epileptic afflictions were called after him "the sacred disease" by the ancients.<sup>54</sup> His mad fit in the incident with the children points to this, as well as the eruption of sores which happened before his disappearance on Mount Oeta; for this is with many people a symptom of black bile. Lysander the Lacedaemonian too suffered from such sores before his death. There are also the stories of Ajax and Bellerophon: the one went completely out of his mind, while the other sought out desert

λῶς, ὁ δὲ τὰς ἐρημίας ἐδίωκεν, διὸ οὕτως ἐποίησεν Ὅμηρος

“αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ καὶ κείνος ἀπήχθετο  
πᾶσι θεοῖσιν,  
ἦτοι ὁ κάπ πεδίον τὸ Ἀλήϊον οἶος  
ἄλᾳτο,  
ὄν θυμὸν κατέδων, πάτον ἀνθρώπων  
ἀλεείνων”.

καὶ ἄλλοι δὲ πολλοὶ τῶν ἡρώων ὁμοιοπαθεῖς φαίνονται τούτοις. τῶν δὲ ὕστερον Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ Πλάτων καὶ Σωκράτης καὶ ἕτεροι συχνοὶ τῶν γνωρίμων· ἔτι δὲ τῶν περὶ τὴν ποιήσιν οἱ πλείστοι. πολλοῖς μὲν γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων γίνεται νοσήματα ἀπὸ τῆς τοιαύτης κράσεως τῷ σώματι, τοῖς δὲ ἡ φύσις δῆλη βέπουσα πρὸς τὰ πάθη. πάντες δ' οὖν ὡς εἶπεν ἀπλῶς εἰσι, καθάπερ ἐλέχθη, τοιοῦτοι τὴν φύσιν. δεῖ δὲ λαβεῖν τὴν αἰτίαν πρῶτον ἐπὶ παραδείγματος προχειρισαμένου. ὁ γὰρ οἶνος ὁ πολὺς μάλιστα φαίνεται παρασκευάζειν τοιούτους οἶους λέγομεν τοὺς μελαγχολικοὺς εἶναι, καὶ πλείστα ἦθη ποιεῖν πινόμενος, οἷον ὀργίλους, φιλανθρώπους, ἐλεήμονας, ἱταμούς· ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τὸ μέλι οὐδὲ τὸ γάλα οὐδὲ τὸ ὕδωρ οὐδ' ἄλλο τῶν τοιούτων οὐδέν. ἴδοι δ' ἂν τις ὅτι

places for his habitation; wherefore Homer says:

“And since of all the Gods he was hated,  
Verily o'er the Aleian plain alone he would wander,  
Eating his own heart out,  
avoiding the pathway of mortals;”

Among the heroes many others evidently suffered in the same way, and among men of recent times Empedocles, Plato, and Socrates, and numerous other well-known men, and also most of the poets. For many such people have bodily diseases as the result of this kind of temperament; some of them have only a clear constitutional tendency towards such afflictions, but to put it briefly, all of them are, as has been said before, melancholics by constitution.

In order to find out the reason, we must begin by making use of an analogy: Wine in large quantity manifestly produces in men much the same characteristics which we attribute to the melancholic, and as it is being drunk it fashions various characters, for instance irritable, benevolent, compassionate or reckless ones; whereas honey or milk or water, or anything else of this kind, do not have this effect. One can see that wine makes the most varied characters, by observing how it

<sup>54</sup> Editions, translations, critical works: ARISTOTELES, *Problemata physica* edd. Ruelle, Knoelinger, Klek, Leipzig 1922 = Ruelle; *Aristotelis, Alexandri et Cassii Problemata cum Theophrastorum quorundam collectaneis*, cum praefatione Frid. Sylburgii, Francof. 1585 = Sylburg; H. P. Richards, *Aristotelica*, London 1915 = Richards; *The Works of Aristotle transl. into English*, ed. W. D. Ross, vol. VII: *Problemata*, tr. E. S. Forster, Oxford 1927 = Forster.—Except where stated in the apparatus, we follow the text of Ruelle.

<sup>55</sup> The close connexion between melancholy and epilepsy was pointed out by the Hippocrateans; see p. 15, note 41.

παντοδαπούς ἀπεργάζεται, θεωρῶν ὡς μεταβάλλει τοὺς πίνοντας ἐκ προσ-αγωγῆς· παραλαβὼν γὰρ ἀπεφυγμένους ἐν τῷ νήφειν καὶ σιωπηλοὺς μικρῶ μὲν πλείων ποθεῖς λαλιστέρους ποιεῖ, ἔτι δὲ πλείων ῥητορικούς καὶ θαρραλέους, προϊόντας δὲ πρὸς τὸ πράττειν ἰταμούς, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον πινόμενος ὑβριστάς, ἔπειτα μανικούς, λίαν δὲ πολὺς ἐκλύει· καὶ ποιεῖ μωρούς, ὥσπερ τοὺς ἐκ παιδῶν ἐπιλήπτους ἢ καὶ ἐχομένους τοῖς μελαγχολικοῖς ἄγαν. ὥσπερ οὖν ὁ εἰς ἀνθρώπος μεταβάλλει τὸ ἦθος πίνων καὶ χρώμενος τῷ οἴνῳ ποσῶ τινί, οὕτω καθ' ἕκαστον τὸ ἦθος εἰσὶ τινες ἀνθρώποι. οἷος γὰρ οὗτος μεθύων νῦν ἐστίν, ἄλλος τις τοιοῦτος φύσει ἐστίν, ὁ μὲν λάλος, ὁ δὲ κεκινημένος, ὁ δὲ ἀριδακρυσ· πόκει γὰρ τινὰς καὶ τοιοῦτους, διὸ καὶ Ὁμηρὸς ἐποίησε

“καὶ μέ φησι δακρυπλῶειν βεβαρη-  
μένον οἴνῳ”.

καὶ γὰρ ἐλεήμονές ποτε γίνονται καὶ ἄγριοι καὶ σιωπηλοί· ἔνιοι γὰρ αὐτῶ ἀποσιωπῶσι, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν μελαγχολικῶν ὅσοι ἐκστατικοί. ποιεῖ δὲ καὶ φιλητικούς ὁ οἶνος· σημεῖον

gradually changes those who drink it; for those who, to begin with, when sober, are cool and taciturn become more talkative when they have drunk just a little too much; if they drink a little more it makes them grandiloquent and boisterous and, when they proceed to action, reckless; if they drink still more it makes them insolent, and then frenzied; while very great excess enfeebles them completely and makes them as stupid as those who have been epileptic from childhood or as those who are a prey to excessive melancholy. Now, even as one individual who is drinking changes his character according to the quantity of wine he consumes, so there is for each character a class of men who represent it. For as one man is momentarily, while drunk, another is by nature: one man is loquacious, another emotional, another easily moved to tears; for this effect, too, wine has on some people. Hence Homer said in the poem:

“He says that I swim in tears  
like a man that is heavy  
with drinking.”

Sometimes they also become compassionate or savage or taciturn—for some relapse into complete silence, especially those melancholics who are out of their minds. Wine also makes

δὲ ὅτι προάγεται ὁ πίνων καὶ τῷ στόματι φιλεῖν, οὗς νήφων οὐδ' ἂν εἰς φιλήσειεν ἢ διὰ τὸ εἶδος ἢ διὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν. ὁ μὲν οὖν οἶνος οὐ πολλὸν χρόνον ποιεῖ περιττόν, ἀλλ' ὀλίγον, ἢ δὲ φύσις αἰεὶ, ἕως τις ἂν ἦ· οἱ μὲν γὰρ θρασεῖς, οἱ δὲ σιωπηλοί, οἱ δὲ ἐλεήμονες, οἱ δὲ δειλοὶ γίνονται φύσει. ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι διὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ<sup>(a)</sup> ποιεῖ ὁ τε οἶνος καὶ ἡ φύσις ἕκαστου<sup>(b)</sup> τὸ ἦθος· πάντα γὰρ κατεργάζεται τῇ θερμότητι ταμιευόμενα. ὁ τε δὴ χυμὸς καὶ ἡ κρᾶσις ἢ τῆς μελαίνης χολῆς πνευματικά ἐστίν· διὸ καὶ τὰ πνευματώδη πάθη καὶ τὰ ὑποχονδριακά μελαγχολικά οἱ ἰατροὶ φασιν εἶναι. καὶ ὁ οἶνος δὲ πνευματώδης τὴν δύναμιν. διὸ δὴ ἐστὶ τὴν φύσιν ὁμοία ὁ τε οἶνος καὶ ἡ κρᾶσις. δηλοῖ δὲ ὅτι πνευματώδης ὁ οἶνός ἐστιν ὁ ἀφρός· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἔλαιον θερμόν ἐν οὐ ποιεῖ ἀφρόν, ὁ δὲ οἶνος πολὺν, καὶ μᾶλλον ὁ μέλας τοῦ λευκοῦ, ὅτι θερμότερος καὶ σωματωδέστερος.

καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὁ τε οἶνος ἀφροδισιαστικούς ἀπεργάζεται, καὶ ὀρθῶς Διόνυσος καὶ Ἀφροδίτη λέγονται μετ' ἀλλήλων εἶναι, καὶ οἱ μελαγχολικοὶ οἱ πλείστοι λάγνοι εἰσίν. ὁ τε γὰρ ἀφροδισιασμός πνευματώδης. σημεῖον δὲ τὸ αἰδοῖον,

men amorous; this is shown by the fact that a man in his cups may even be induced to kiss persons whom, because of their appearance or age, nobody at all would kiss when sober. Wine makes a man abnormal not for long, but for a short time only, but a man's natural constitution does it permanently, for his whole lifetime; for some are bold, others taciturn, others compassionate and others cowardly by nature. It is therefore clear that it is the same agent that produces character both in the case of wine and of the individual nature, for all processes are governed by heat. Now melancholy, both the humour and the temperament, produce air<sup>56</sup>; wherefore the physicians say that flatulence and abdominal disorders are due to black bile. Now wine too has the quality of generating air, so wine and the melancholy temperament are of a similar nature. The froth which forms on wine shows that it generates air; for oil does not produce froth, even when it is hot, but wine produces it in large quantities, and dark wine more than white because it is warmer and has more body.

It is for this reason that wine excites sexual desire, and Dionysus and Aphrodite are rightly said to belong together,

<sup>(a)</sup> διὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Richards] διὰ τὸ αὐτὸ *codd.*

<sup>(b)</sup> ἕκαστον Richards.

ὡς ἐκ μικροῦ ταχέϊαν ποιεῖται τὴν αὔξησιν διὰ τὸ ἐμφυᾶσθαι. καὶ ἔτι πρὶν δύνασθαι προΐεσθαι σπέρμα, γίνεται τις ἡδονὴ ἔτι<sup>(c)</sup> παισὶν οὔσιν, ὅταν ἐγγύς ὄντες τοῦ ἡβᾶν ξύωνται τὰ αἰδοῖα δι' ἀκολασίαν· γίνεται δὲ δῆλον διὰ τὸ πνεῦμα διεξιέναι διὰ τῶν πόρων, δι' ὧν ὑστερον τὸ ὑγρὸν φέρεται. ἢ τε ἔκχυσιν τοῦ σπέρματος ἐν ταῖς ὀμιλίαις καὶ ἢ ῥίψιν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος ὠθοῦντος φανερόν ὅτι γίνεται.<sup>(d)</sup> ὥστε καὶ τῶν ἔδεσμάτων καὶ ποτῶν εὐλόγως ταῦτ' ἐστὶν ἀφροδισιαστικά, ὅσα πνευματώδη τὸν περὶ τὰ αἰδοῖα ποιεῖ τόπον. διὸ καὶ ὁ μέλας οἶνος οὐδενὸς ἦττον τοιοῦτους ἀπεργάζεται, οἷοι καὶ οἱ μελαγχολικοὶ (πνευματώδεις).<sup>(e)</sup> δῆλοι δ' εἰσὶν ἐπ' ἐνίων· σκληροὶ γὰρ οἱ πλείους τῶν μελαγχολικῶν, καὶ αἱ φλέβες ἐξέχουσιν· τούτου δ' αἴτιον οὐ τὸ τοῦ αἵματος πλῆθος, ἀλλὰ τοῦ πνεύματος· διότι δὲ οὐδὲ πᾶντες οἱ μελαγχολικοὶ σκληροὶ οὐδὲ [οἱ]<sup>(f)</sup> μέλανες, ἀλλ' οἱ μᾶλλον κακόχυμοι, ἄλλος λόγος.

περὶ οὗ δὲ ἐξ ἀρχῆς προειλόμεθα διελεῖν, ὅτι ἐν τῇ φύσει εὐθύς ὁ τοιοῦτος χυμὸς ὁ μελαγχολικὸς κεράννυται·

and most melancholy persons are lustful. For the sexual act is connected with the generation of air, as is shown by the fact that the virile organ quickly increases from a small size by inflation. Even before they are capable of emitting semen, boys approaching puberty already find a certain pleasure in rubbing their sexual organs from wantonness, the manifest reason being that the air escapes through the passage through which the fluid flows later on. Also the effusion and impetus of the semen in sexual intercourse is clearly due to propulsion by air. Accordingly those foods and liquids which fill the region of the sexual organs with air have an aphrodisiac effect. Thus dark wine more than anything else makes men such as the melancholics are. That they contain air is obvious in some cases; for most melancholy persons have firm flesh and their veins stand out, the reason being the abundance not of blood but of air. However, the reason why not all melancholics have hard flesh and why not all of them are dark but only those who contain particularly unhealthy humours, is another question.

But to return to our original subject: the atrabillious humour in the natural constitution is already something mixed as it

θερμοῦ γὰρ καὶ ψυχροῦ κρᾶσις ἐστὶν· ἐκ τούτων γὰρ τῶν δυοῖν ἡ φύσις συνέστηκεν. διὸ καὶ ἡ μέλαινα χολὴ καὶ θερμότερον καὶ ψυχρότερον γίνεται. τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ πάσχειν πέφυκε ταῦτ' ἄμφω, οἶον καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ὃν ψυχρόν, ὅμως ἐὰν ἰκανῶς θερμανθῇ, οἶον τὸ ζέον, τῆς φλογὸς αὐτῆς θερμότερόν ἐστι, καὶ λίθος καὶ σίδηρος διάπτωρα γενόμενα μᾶλλον θερμὰ γίνεται ἄνθρακος, ψυχρὰ ὄντα φύσει. εἴρηται δὲ σαφέστερον περὶ τούτων ἐν τοῖς περὶ πυρός.

καὶ ἡ χολὴ δὲ ἡ μέλαινα φύσει ψυχρὰ καὶ οὐκ ἐπιπολαίως<sup>(g)</sup> οὔσα, ὅταν μὲν οὕτως ἔχη ὡς εἴρηται, ἐὰν ὑπερβάλλῃ ἐν τῷ σώματι, ἀποπληξίας ἢ νάρκας ἢ ἀθυμίας ποιεῖ ἢ φόβους, ἐὰν δὲ ὑπερθερμανθῇ, τὰς μετ' ὠδῆς εὐθυμίας καὶ ἐκστάσεις καὶ ἐκζέσεις ἐλκῶν καὶ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα. τοῖς μὲν οὖν πολλοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς καθ' ἡμέραν τροφῆς ἐγγινομένη οὐδὲν τὸ ἦθος ποιεῖ διαφόρους, ἀλλὰ μόνον νόσημά τι μελαγχολικόν

is a mixture of heat and cold, for of these two things nature is composed. Black bile can therefore become both very hot and very cold, for one and the same substance can naturally undergo both: for example water, which although in itself cold, yet when sufficiently heated (for example, when boiling) is hotter than the flame itself. And stone and iron when red-hot become hotter than charcoal, though they are cold by nature. This subject is dealt with in more detail in the book concerning fire.<sup>57</sup>

Now, if black bile, being cold by nature and not superficially so, is in the stated condition, it can induce paralysis or torpor or depression or anxiety when it prevails in the body; but if it is overheated it produces cheerfulness, bursting into song, and ecstasies and the eruption of sores and the like. To most people the bile engendered from their daily nutriment does not give a distinctive character but merely results in some atrabillious disease. But among those who constitutionally possess this temperament there is

<sup>(g)</sup> ἐπιπόλαιος Sylburg.

<sup>57</sup> It has been observed (C. PRANTL, *Abh. d. bayer. Akad.*, VI, 2, 353) that this reference clearly points to a connexion of our Problem with Theophrastus. It evidently refers to Theophrastus *Περὶ πυρός* (ed. A. Gercke, Greifswald 1896), ch. 35 which deals with materials like iron and stone which, though 'naturally cold', get very hot. As we know from the list of his writings given in Diogenes Laertius (v, 44) that Theophrastus wrote a book *On Melancholy*, the inference that our Problem is connected with this book seems safe. Cf. also below, p. 41, and O. REGENBOGEN, Art. 'Theophrastos', Pauly-Wissowa, *Realenz. d. Kl. Allertumswissenschaft*, Suppl. 7, cols. 1402, 1406.

<sup>(c)</sup> ἔτι Bonitz, Richards] ἐπὶ *codd.*

<sup>(d)</sup> ὅτι γίνεται Richards] γίνεσθαι *codd.*

<sup>(e)</sup> πνευματώδεις *secl.* Forster.

<sup>(f)</sup> οἱ *secl.* Bekker.

ἀπειργάσατο. ὅσοις δὲ ἐν τῇ φύσει συνέστη κρᾶσις τοιαύτη, εὐθύς οὗτοι τὰ βίη γίνονται παντοδαποί, ἄλλος κατ' ἄλλην κρᾶσιν· οἷον ὅσοις μὲν πολλή καὶ ψυχρὰ ἐνυπάρχει, νωθροὶ καὶ μωροί, ὅσοις δὲ λίαν πολλή καὶ θερμή, μανικοὶ καὶ εὐφρεῖς καὶ ἐρωτικοὶ καὶ εὐκίνητοι πρὸς τοὺς θυμούς καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας, ἔνιοι δὲ καὶ λάλοι μᾶλλον. πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ διὰ τὸ ἐγγύς εἶναι τοῦ νοεροῦ τόπου τὴν θερμότητα ταύτην νοσημασιν ἀλίσκονται μανικοῖς ἢ ἐνθουσιαστικοῖς· ὅθεν Σίβυλλα καὶ Βάκιδες καὶ οἱ ἔνθεοι γίνονται πάντες, ὅταν μὴ νοσήματι γένωνται ἀλλὰ φυσικῇ κρᾶσει.—Μαρακὸς δὲ ὁ Συρακούσιος καὶ ἀμείνων ἦν ποιητής, ὅτ' ἐκσταίη.—ὅσοις δ' ἂν ἐπανεθῆ<sup>(b)</sup> τὴν ἄγαν θερμότητα πρὸς τὸ μέσον, οὗτοι μελαγχολικοὶ μὲν εἰσι, φρονιμώτεροι

straight away the greatest variety of characters, each according to his individual mixture. For example, those who possess much cold black bile become dull and stupid, whereas those who possess much hot bile are elated and brilliant or erotic or easily moved to anger and desire, while some become more loquacious. Many too are subject to fits of exaltation and ecstasy, because this heat is located near the seat of the intellect; and this is how Sibyls and soothsayers arise and all that are divinely inspired, when they become such not by illness but by natural temperament.—Maracus, the Syracusan, was actually a better poet when he was out of his mind.—Those, however, in whom the black bile's excessive heat is relaxed towards a mean,<sup>58</sup> are melancholy, but they are more rational

<sup>(b)</sup> ἐπανεθῆ Bywater] ἐπανθῆ *codd.*

<sup>58</sup> The sentence ὅσοις δ' ἂν ἐπανεθῆ τὴν ἄγαν θερμότητα πρὸς τὸ μέσον is unintelligible as it stands (H. Bonitz in his admirable *Index Aristotelicus*, p. 265, also cites the verb ἐπανεθῆ as corrupt), and has given rise to several emendations, none entirely satisfactory; the best, perhaps, is Bywater's ἐπανεθῆ ἢ ἄγαν θερμότης. According to the context the meaning must be that reasonable (and therefore highly gifted) melancholics are protected both from over-heating (as occurs among μανικοί, and especially among Βακίδες, Sibyls, etc.) and from chill (as occurs among νωθροὶ καὶ μωροί), thus, to that extent, achieving a "μέσον". It might be suggested to replace "ἐπανεθῆ" by "ἐπανισωθῆ", thus not only making the sentence correct grammatically, and giving it a meaning, but making it accord with Aristotle's usage elsewhere: cf. *Περὶ ἀναπνοῆς* 14, 478 a 3: . . . ἐπανισοί γὰρ εἰς τὸ μέτριον ὁ τύπος τὴν τῆς ἕξεως ὑπερβολὴν. However, we prefer to read ἐπανεθῆ τὴν ἄγαν θερμότητα (understood as "accusative of respect"). Earlier translators were also agreed as to the necessity for emending this passage. Theodorus of Gaza translates it: "at quibus minus [*sic* for 'nimius'] ille calor remissus ad mediocritatem sit"; the Venice edition of 1501 (*Aristotelis Problemata*, fol. 244<sup>r</sup>) has "quibuscunque autem valde caliditatem reducit ad medium", and the edition with excellent commentary of LUDOVICUS SEPTALIUS (*In Aristotelis Problemata commentaria*, Lyons 1632, VOL. III, p. 346) has "At quibus caliditas magna ad mediocritatem reducitur".

δέ, καὶ ἤττον μὲν ἔκτοποι, πρὸς πολλὰ δὲ διαφέροντες τῶν ἄλλων, οἱ μὲν πρὸς παιδείαν, οἱ δὲ πρὸς τέχνας, οἱ δὲ πρὸς πολιτείαν. πολλὴν δὲ καὶ εἰς τοὺς κινδύνους ποιεῖ διαφορὰν ἡ τοιαύτη ἕξις τῶν<sup>(i)</sup> ἐνίοτε ἀνωμάλους εἶναι ἐν<sup>(k)</sup> τοῖς φόβοις πολλοὺς τῶν ἀνδρῶν. ὡς γὰρ ἂν τύχῃσι τὸ σῶμα ἔχοντες πρὸς τὴν τοιαύτην κρᾶσιν, διαφέρουσιν αὐτοὶ αὐτῶν. ἡ δὲ μελαγχολικὴ κρᾶσις, ὡσπερ καὶ ἐν ταῖς νόσοις ἀνωμάλους ποιεῖ, οὕτω καὶ αὐτὴ ἀνωμάλος ἐστίν· ὅτε μὲν γὰρ ψυχρὰ ἐστίν ὡσπερ ὕδωρ, ὅτε δὲ θερμή. ὥστε φοβερὸν τι ὅταν εἰσαγγελθῆ, ἔαν μὲν ψυχροτέρας οὐσης τῆς κρᾶσεως τύχῃ, δειλὸν ποιεῖ· προωδοπεποιήκε γὰρ τῶν φόβων, καὶ ὁ φόβος καταψύχει. δηλοῦσι δὲ οἱ περίφοβοι· τρέμουσι γάρ. ἔαν δὲ μᾶλλον θερμή, εἰς τὸ μέτριον κατέστησεν ὁ φόβος, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀπαθῆ.

ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὰς καθ' ἡμέραν ἀθυμίας· πολλάκις γὰρ οὕτως ἔχομεν ὥστε λυπεῖσθαι, ἐφ' ὅτω δέ, οὐκ ἂν ἔχομεν εἰπεῖν· ὅτε δὲ εὐθύμως, ἐφ' ᾧ δ' οὐ δῆλον. τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα

and less eccentric and in many respects superior to others either in culture or in the arts or in statesmanship. Such a constitution also makes for great differences in behaviour in dangerous situations in that many of these people react inconsistently in frightening circumstances; for according to the condition of their bodies at a given time in relation to their temperament, they behave now one way now another: the melancholy temperament, just as it produces illnesses with a variety of symptoms, is itself variable, for like water it is sometimes cold and sometimes hot. Therefore if it so happens that something alarming is announced at a time when the admixture is rather cold, then it makes a man cowardly;—for it has prepared a way for the fear, and fear makes one cold, as is shown by the fact that those who are frightened tremble.—If however the mixture is rather warm, fear reduces it to a moderate temperature and so he is self-possessed and unmoved.

So too with the despondency which occurs in everyday life, for we are often in a state of grieving, but could not say why, while at other times we feel cheerful without apparent reason. To such affections and

<sup>(i)</sup> τῶν Richards] τοῦ *codd.*

<sup>(k)</sup> ἐν Richards] μὲν *codd.*

πάθη· καὶ τὰ πάλαι<sup>(1)</sup> λεχθέντα κατὰ μὲν τι μικρὸν πᾶσι γίνεται· πᾶσι γὰρ μέμικται τι τῆς δυνάμεως· ὅσοις δ' εἰς βᾶθος, οὗτοι δ' ἤδη ποιοὶ τινὲς εἰσι τὰ ἤθη. ὥσπερ γὰρ τὸ εἶδος ἕτεροι γίνονται οὐ τῷ πρόσωπον ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ποιόν τι τὸ πρόσωπον, οἱ μὲν καλόν, οἱ δὲ αἰσχρόν, οἱ δὲ μὴθὲν ἔχοντες περιττόν, οὗτοι δὲ μέσοι τὴν φύσιν, οὕτω καὶ οἱ μὲν μικρὰ μετέχοντες τῆς τοιαύτης κράσεως μέσοι εἰσίν, οἱ δὲ πλήθους ἤδη ἀνόμοιοι τοῖς πολλοῖς. ἔαν μὲν γὰρ σφόδρα κατακορῆς ἦ ἡ ἔξις, μελαγχολικοὶ εἰσι λίαν, ἔαν δὲ πῶς κραθῶσι, περιττοί. ῥέπουσι δ', ἂν ἀμελῶσιν, ἐπὶ τὰ μελαγχολικὰ νοσήματα, ἄλλοι περὶ ἄλλο μέρος τοῦ σώματος· καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἐπιληπτικὰ ἀποσημαίνει, τοῖς δὲ ἀποπληκτικὰ, ἄλλοις δὲ ἄθυμια ἰσχυραὶ ἢ φόβοι, τοῖς δὲ θάρρη λίαν, οἶον καὶ Ἀρχελάφ συνέβαινε τῷ Μακεδονίας βασιλεῖ. αἴτιον δὲ τῆς τοιαύτης δυνάμεως ἡ κρᾶσις, ὅπως ἂν ἔχη ψύξεώς τε καὶ θερμότητος. ψυχροτέρα μὲν γὰρ οὖσα

to those mentioned before<sup>59</sup> we are all subject in some small degree, for a little of the stuff which causes them is mixed in with everybody. But with people in whom this quality goes deep, it determines the character. For as men differ in appearance not because they possess a face but because they possess such and such a face, some handsome, others ugly, others with nothing extraordinary about it (those whose looks are ordinary); so those who have a little of this temperament are ordinary, but those who have much of it are unlike the majority of people. For if their melancholy habitus is quite undiluted they are too melancholy; but if it is somewhat tempered they are outstanding. If they are not careful they tend to melancholy sicknesses, different individuals being affected in different parts of the body: some people suffer from epileptic symptoms, others from paralytic ones, others from violent despondency or terrors, others from over-confidence, as happened to Archelaus, King of Macedonia.

Such tendencies are caused by the temperament, according to whether it is hot or cold. If it is

<sup>(1)</sup> πάλαι Sylburg (*superius Theodorus Gaza*) ] παλαιὰ *codd.*

<sup>59</sup> Sylburg's conjecture seems necessary and restores an expression frequently used by Aristotle when referring to something 'said above', cf. *Polit.* B4, 1262 b 29; and Γ11, 1282 a 15. The reference here is to the melancholy symptoms described before. There is, however, the possibility, that the reference as such has been lifted from the original source of the *Problema*, just as the one above (see note 57), and refers to a passage in Theophrastus's work now lost.

τοῦ καιροῦ δυσθυμίας ποιεῖ ἀλόγους· διὸ αἱ τ' ἀγχόνα μάλιστα τοῖς νέοις, ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ πρεσβυτέροις. πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ μετὰ τὰς μέθας διαφθεύουσιν ἑαυτούς· ἐνιοὶ δὲ τῶν μελαγχολικῶν ἐκ τῶν πότων ἀθύμως διάγουσιν, σβέννυσι γὰρ ἢ τοῦ οἴνου θερμότης τὴν φυσικὴν θερμότητα. τὸ δὲ θερμὸν τὸ περὶ τὸν τόπον φῶ φρουνοῦμεν καὶ ἐλπίζομεν ποιεῖ εὐθύμους· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ πίνειν εἰς μέθην πάντες ἔχουσι προθύμως, ὅτι πάντας ὁ οἶνος ὁ πολὺς εὐέλπιδας ποιεῖ, καθάπερ ἡ νεότης τοὺς παῖδας· τὸ μὲν γὰρ γῆρας δύσελπί ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ νεότης ἐλπίδος πλήρης. εἰσὶ δὲ τινες ὀλίγοι οὗς πίνοντας δυσθυμίαι λαμβάνουσι, διὰ τὴν αὐτὴν αἰτίαν δι' ἣν καὶ μετὰ τοὺς πότους ἐνίοις. ὅσοις μὲν οὖν μαραινομένου τοῦ θερμοῦ αἱ ἄθυμια γίνονται, μᾶλλον ἀπάγχονται. διὸ καὶ οἱ νέοι [ἦ] καὶ οἱ πρεσβῦται μᾶλλον ἀπάγχονται· τὸ μὲν γὰρ γῆρας μαραίνει τὸ θερμὸν, τῶν δὲ τὸ πάθος, φυσικὸν ὄν καὶ αὐτό [τὸ μαραινόμενον θερμὸν].<sup>(m)</sup> ὅσοις ἐξ σβεννυμένου ἐξαίφνης, οἱ πλείστοι διαχρῶνται ἑαυτούς, ὥστε θαυμάζειν πάντας διὰ τὸ μὴθὲν ποιῆσαι σημεῖον πρότερον.

unduly cold, considering the circumstances, it produces irrational despondency; hence suicide by hanging occurs most frequently among the young, and sometimes also among elderly men. Many men, also, put an end to themselves after drunkenness, and some melancholics continue in a state of despondency after drinking; for the heat of the wine quenches their natural heat. (Heat in the region in which we think and hope makes us cheerful; and therefore all men are keen on drinking to the point of intoxication, for wine makes everybody hopeful, even as youth does children; for old age is pessimistic, but youth is full of hope.) There are a few who are seized with despondency while actually drinking, for the same reason as makes others despondent after drinking. Now those who become despondent as the heat in them dies down are inclined to hang themselves. Hence the young and the old are more likely to hang themselves; for in one case old age itself makes the heat die down, in the other, passion, which is something physical too. Most of those men in whom the heat is extinguished suddenly make away with themselves unexpectedly, to the astonishment of all, since they have given no previous sign of any such intention.

<sup>(m)</sup> τὸ μαραινόμενον θερμὸν *secl.* Forster.

ψυχροτέρα μὲν οὖν γινομένη ἢ κρᾶσις ἢ ἀπὸ τῆς μελαίνης χολῆς, ὡσπερ εἶρηται, ποιεῖ ἀθυμίας παντοδαπάς, θερμότερα δὲ οὖσα εὐθυμίας. διὸ καὶ οἱ μὲν παῖδες εὐθυμότεροι, οἱ δὲ γέροντες δυσθυμότεροι. οἱ μὲν γὰρ θερμοί, οἱ δὲ ψυχροί· τὸ γὰρ γῆρας κατάψυξις τις. συμβαίνει δὲ σβένυσσθαι ἐξαίφνης ὑπὸ τε τῶν ἐκτὸς αἰτιῶν, ὡς καὶ παρὰ φύσιν τὰ πυρωθέντα, οἷον ἄνθρακα ὕδατος ἐπιχυθέντος. διὸ καὶ ἐκ μέθης ἔνιοι ἑαυτοὺς διαχρῶνται· ἢ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴνου θερμότης ἐπέισακτός ἐστιν, ἣς σβεννυμένης συμβαίνει τὸ πάθος. καὶ μετὰ τὰ ἀφροδίσια οἱ πλείστοι ἀθυμότεροι γίνονται, ὅσοι δὲ περιττωμα πολὺ προίενται μετὰ τοῦ σπέρματος, οὗτοι εὐθυμότεροι· κουφίζονται γὰρ περιττώματός τε καὶ πνεύματος καὶ θερμοῦ ὑπερβολῆς. ἐκείνοι δὲ ἀθυμότεροι πολλάκις καταψύχονται γὰρ ἀφροδισιάσαντες διὰ τὸ τῶν ἱκανῶν τι ἀφαιρεθῆναι· δηλοῖ δὲ τοῦτο τὸ μὴ πολλὴν τὴν ἀπορροὴν γεγενῆσθαι.

ὡς οὖν ἐν κεφαλαίῳ εἶπεῖν, διὰ μὲν τὸ ἀνώμαλον εἶναι τὴν δύναμιν τῆς μελαίνης χολῆς ἀνώμαλοι εἰσιν οἱ μελαγχολικοί· καὶ γὰρ ψυχρὰ σφόδρα

When the mixture dominated by black bile is colder it gives rise, as has already been remarked, to despondency of various kinds, but when it is hotter, to states of cheerfulness. Hence children are more cheerful and the old more despondent, the former being hot and the latter cold; for old age is a process of cooling. Sometimes the heat is extinguished suddenly from external causes, just as red-hot objects being quenched against their natural tendency (i.e. artificially), for example, coal when water is poured on. Hence men sometimes commit suicide after drunkenness; for the heat of the wine is introduced from outside, and when it is quenched suddenly this condition is set up. Also after sexual intercourse most men become despondent; those however who emit abundant secretion with the semen become more cheerful, for they are relieved of superfluous liquid, of air, and of excessive heat. But the others often become rather despondent, for they become cooled by the sexual act, because they lose necessary constituents, as is shown by the fact that the amount of fluid emitted is not great.

To sum up: The action of black bile being variable, melancholics are variable, for the black bile becomes very hot and

γίνεται καὶ θερμῇ. διὰ δὲ τὸ ἠθοποιὸς εἶναι (ἠθοποιὸν γὰρ τὸ θερμὸν καὶ ψυχρὸν μάλιστα τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν ἐστιν) ὡσπερ ὁ οἶνος πλείων καὶ ἐλάττων κεραννύμενος τῷ σώματι ποιεῖ τὸ ἦθος ποιούς τινας ἡμᾶς. ἀμφω δὲ πνευματικά, καὶ ὁ οἶνος καὶ ἡ μέλαινα χολή. ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ καὶ εὐκρατον εἶναι τὴν ἀνωμαλίαν καὶ καλῶς πῶς ἔχειν, καὶ ὅπου δεῖ θερμότεραν εἶναι τὴν διάθεσιν καὶ πάλιν ψυχρὰν ἢ τούναντίον διὰ τὸ ὑπερβολὴν ἔχειν, περιττοὶ μὲν εἰσι πάντες οἱ μελαγχολικοί, οὐ διὰ νόσον <δὲ>,<sup>(1)</sup> ἀλλὰ διὰ φύσιν.

very cold. And as it determines the character (for heat and cold are the factors in our bodies most important for determining our character): like wine introduced in a larger or smaller quantity into the body, it makes us persons of such and such a character. And both wine and bile contain air. Since it is possible for this variable mixture to be well tempered and well adjusted in a certain respect—that is to say, to be now in a warmer and then again a colder condition, or vice versa, just as required, owing to its tendency to extremes—therefore all melancholy persons are out of the ordinary, not owing to illness, but from their natural constitution.

<sup>(1)</sup> δὲ *add.* Richards.

Black bile—so runs the argument in the preceding Problem XXX, I, which has been called “a monograph on black bile”—is a humour present in every man without necessarily manifesting itself either in a low bodily condition or in peculiarities of character. These latter depend rather, either on a temporary and qualitative alteration of the melancholy humour as caused by digestive disturbances or by immoderate heat or cold, or on a constitutional and quantitative preponderance of the melancholy humour over the others. The first generates “melancholic diseases” (among them epilepsy, paralysis, depression, phobias, and, if immoderate heat be the cause, recklessness, ulcers and frenzy); the second makes a man a melancholic by nature (μελαγχολικός διὰ φύσιν)—and here for the first time the difference, present in the theories of medical writers as a tacit presupposition of which they were at most only partially aware, was clearly shown and expressed. Evidently the second possibility did not exclude the first, for it was obvious that the natural melancholic would be particularly subject to melancholy diseases, and in a particularly virulent form. On the other hand, men normal by nature—οἱ πολλοί—could never acquire the qualities proper to the natural melancholic