NARRATIVE COMPRESSION AND THE MYTHS OF PROMETHEUS IN HESIOD

READERS OF HESIOD have long been distressed when they attempt to understand and reconcile the two accounts which he relates about Prometheus. The version in the *Theogony* seems so different from that in the *Works and days* that a vast amount of scholarly energy has been expended in discussing and attempting to explain the peculiarities. We may be able to approach the problem with some success if we do so from the point of view of the context of the poet—if, that is, we try to determine the nature of the mythic material with which Hesiod was working and then to investigate his versions in their relationship to the pre-Hesiodic material and to the purposes of the poet in each poem. Such an approach may teach us much not only about the myths of Prometheus but about the literary techniques of Hesiod as well. In addition to what a new study of Prometheus may teach us about the myth itself, it may help us to understand better Hesiod's techniques of composition and his uses of myth, since this myth is the only significant narrative material treated twice by a Greek poet of the Archaic age. I should like to suggest that compression is an important feature of Hesiod's style and that it may explain satisfactorily many peculiarities within his poetry without need of traditional scholarly devices such as wholesale excision of verses. The two versions of the myth of Prometheus, since they are among the most problematic passages of Hesiod's poems, should provide an excellent test for compression as a possible device in understanding the poet.

Studies of recent years[1] have shown that Hesiod (like Homer) stands at the end of a long tradition of oral poetry. Knowledge of the contents of this tradition may be limited, but we need no longer adopt the bias of earlier mythologists and literary critics who saw Homer and Hesiod as the *beginning* of a tradition.[2] We must remember at all times that both poets were composing for audiences who were generally familiar with the body of myths known to the poets. Not, of course, that every Greek listening to Hesiod knew all the myths in detail; but there was within that culture a general familiarity that could be responsive to the allusions of a bard. Conversely, Hesiod's silence on a particular matter can hardly be explained *per se* as an indication of his ignorance about it. There are, naturally, known motifs and stories about which Homer or Hesiod is silent for the simple reason that the material was created at a later date; but frequently the correct explanation of silence may be that the poet has omitted material which was familiar to him and his audience but ἔξω τοῦ δράματος and therefore irrelevant. A normal feature of oral principles of composition is the varied treatment which can be given to a particular theme: it may appear in an expanded form or be given minimal treatment or even be omitted. Whereas Homer frequently uses elaborate techniques of thematic ornamentation, Hesiod often finds more suitable for his own poetry the compression of themes into a minimal length or even the omission of themes which might normally be part of a given narrative.

1 On the subject of Hesiod and oral poetry, the following may be consulted: A. Hoekstra, 'Hésiode et la tradition orale: contribution à l'étude du style formulaire," *Mnemosyne* 10 (1957) 193-225; James A. Notopoulos, "Homer, Hesiod and the Achaean heritage of oral poetry," *Hesperia* 29 (1960) 177-197; and H. B. Peabody, Jr., "Hesiod's *Works and days*: an exemplar of the ancient Greek oral style" (unpubl. diss., Harvard University 1962).

2 The early development of Greek mythology has been discussed by G. S. Kirk in his vol. of Sather Classical Lectures, *Myth: its meaning and functions in ancient and other cultures* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1970). He demonstrates with a convincing argument that the formative stages of Greek mythology are far older than Homer and Hesiod.

Throughout Hesiod's poetry occur several types of compression which emphasize his usual brevity and haste, including such devices as a non-dramatic technique coupled with a normal omission of speeches and the absence of characterization.[3] Whereas Homer's style is expansive and leisurely, utilizing relaxed dramatic techniques and direct speeches as the means of furthering the action, Hesiod refers to narrative material in as compressed a manner as possible, sometimes alluding to a myth so cryptically that the outline of the plot cannot be discerned. Especially in the *Theogony*, where the poet has included by Homeric standards an enormous amount of narrative material in a poem of only a thousand lines, is the presence of compression obvious.

Before turning to the more complex and controversial myths of Prometheus for an example of compression, we may look at another instance or two. One is *Theogony* 325, a single-line reference to Bellerophon and Pegasus, although Pegasus is mentioned more extensively in 280-286. This is not the place to debate exactly what Hesiod knew about Bellerophon;[4] but one cannot believe that the poet knew only that he killed the Chimaera, whose fate is the only reason for the mention of Bellerophon in the first place. There was no justification for a further reference to Bellerophon, whose full story was presumably familiar to the Hesiodic audience but completely irrelevant to Hesiod's immediate theme. A second example occurs in *Theogony* 992-1002, in a brief glance at the story of Jason and Medea. To such integral portions of the legend as the Argonauts, the trials of Jason, the witchcraft of Medea, and the unfortunate end of the marriage, we have either no reference or only a very brief one. We are left to wonder about their son Medeus: was there anything else to tell about him besides the fact that he was reared by Chiron? One would assume so; but such matters were not among Hesiod's interests, his purpose being simply to establish Medea among the divine or semi-divine women who bear offspring to mortal men. In a poem whose content was basically genealogical, all narratives—no matter how necessary to give life to lengthy lists of names—are technically digressions which have to be controlled in order to prevent a loss of direction. In such poetry genealogies and narrative myths form conflicting principles of organization for which no completely satisfactory scheme could ever be devised. Historians have yet to surmount essentially the same problem occasioned by having to choose between a chronological and a thematic presentation. Hesiod's solution, an extensive use of narrative compression, was ideally suited for his audience and his medium; and it is the lack of comprehension of this technique and its purposes which has contributed in the past, I believe, to the misunderstandings which have frequently plagued Hesiodic scholarship.

In turning now to the myths of Prometheus and Hesiod's handling of them, we need to be aware of the complex problems which they present the mythologist, aside from difficulties related specifically to Hesiod's two accounts. These myths evidently belonged outside the mainstream of Greek literature as part of a more popular tributary of tales than those which were "canonized" by various poets. Hence, although these stories were widely known from quite early times, they seem to have been subject to a rather large number of variants at all stages. More canonical tales, such as the Succession Myth, seem to have been rather more fixed in form. Because of their popular nature and their home in folk-literature, we should not be surprised to discover that nowhere in ancient literature, not even in the late handbooks of Apollo-

3 For a detailed treatment of this topic, consult chap. 6 of my diss., "Compression in the *Theogony*: a study in the style of Hesiod" (University of Pennsylvania 1969; University Microfilms order no. 70-7841).

4 I have attempted to do this on p. 171-177 of my diss. (above, n. 3).

dorus and Hyginus, do we have a complete account of the stories of Prometheus. There is simply no connected narrative more extensive than the two of Hesiod. Hyginus gives us only parts in several short *fabulae*, and Apollodorus makes references which are even shorter and more casual. From other authors we do have additional isolated elements, some of which may have been invented before Hesiod and could thus have been known to him, while others were clearly not. Even the largely lost trilogy of Aeschylus was a unique treatment of only parts of the story, so that even there we could not hope to learn much about the full scope of the myths of Prometheus.

One of the chief deeds credited to Prometheus was the creation of mankind; and it is difficult to believe that this story was composed only long after Hesiod's time, in spite of the fact that Hesiod makes no mention of it.[5] In fact, it would actually be rather surprising if Hesiod *had* given the story, since it is not germane to theogonic themes nor to the specific purposes for which he tells the story of Prometheus in either of his poems. For Greece not to have had a myth concerning the creation of mankind would be remarkable.[6] Although one late author, Lactantius Placidus, did state (ca. A.D. 300) that Hesiod told of Prometheus as the creator of mankind,[7] we do not know what his source was; and the Hesiodic corpus which we possess, as we are too well aware, does not say so at all. Skepticism about Hesiod himself as the source is justified. The earliest extant references to this element of the myth are from the fourth century B.C., but the argument *ex silentio* is particularly hazardous in this situation. The myth appears in numerous authors and in many variant forms as well,[8] the variability being characteristic of a story which had apparently belonged chiefly to a popular tradition and which had never found a canonical form in literature. Apollodorus, who is a far more reliable source than has often been assumed and one who often uses early authors for his material,[9] gives us (1.7.1) a clear statement of the myth in its simplest form, saying that Prometheus "molded men from water and

5 Although Peter Walcot, in *Hesiod and the Near East* (Cardiff 1966), p. 63, concludes that Hesiod knew of Prometheus only as the benefactor of mankind and that later generations, feeling a gap in the narrative, completed the story by making him the creator as well.

6 Such stories existed widely in the Near Eastern cultures and, if not indigenous, would probably have entered Greece along with other themes. For example, in *Enuma elish* Ea creates man from the blood of the slain Kingu (p. 68 in James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern texts* [= *ANET*], 2nd ed., corrected and enlarged [Princeton 1955]), and another Babylonian version is found in the "Creation of man by the mother goddess" (*ANET*, p. 99-100), where man is fashioned from clay and the blood of a slain god. The latter myth had an Assyrian version, given there also. In addition, see S. N. Kramer, *Mythologies of the ancient world* (Garden City 1961), p. 121-124, and Walcot (above, n. 5), p. 55-57.

7 Hesiod, fr. 382. In all references to ancient authors the standard editions have been used, including that of Rzach (Leipzig 1913) for Hesiod. References are also made to M. L. West's ed. of and commentary on the *Theogony* (Oxford 1966), cited simply as "West." Unless otherwise specified, all fragments are cited in the following editions: Hesiod, that of R. Merkelbach and M. L. West (Oxford 1967); Aesop, that of Ben E. Perry (Urbana, Ill. 1952); comedy, John Maxwell Edmonds (Leiden 1957-1961); and tragedy, A. Nauck (suppl. by Bruno Snell, Hildesheim 1964).

8 Philem. fr. 89, Heraclid. Pont. (Hyg. *Poet. astr.* 2.42), Erinn. fr. 4 (Diehl), Men. fr. 535, Pl. *Prt.* 320C-D, and Aesop 240. The testimonia on Prometheus as the creator of man are collected and discussed by K. Bapp, in Roscher, *Lex.*, vol. 3.2, col. 3044-3047; Walther Kraus, *RE* 23.1, col. 696-698; and Carl Robert, "Pandora," *Hermes* 49 (1914) 34-37.

9 The so-called *Library* of Apollodorus, which probably dates from the first century of our era and of which we possess only part plus an epitome, is often scorned as a source, since its lateness causes the assumption to arise that its sources are themselves late and unreliable. The relevant studies are few: the introduction to the Loeb ed. (1921) by J. G. Frazer; M. van der Valk, "On Apollodori 'Bibliotheca,' " *REG* 71 (1958) 100-168; and Joseph Fontenrose, "Typhon among the

earth." The obvious and simple, as well as the most logical, assumption is that Hesiod knew of Prometheus as the creator of mankind. The burden of proof should really lie with those who would wish to say otherwise. In all likelihood Hesiod ignored the myth simply because it did not pertain to his themes. Compression is such a regular feature of Hesiod's style that its use here seems nearly certain, especially since there are no compelling reasons for doubting the existence of the myth at an earlier stage.

The next event in Prometheus' story is the division of the sacrifice, which occurs at what must be interpreted, I think, as a gathering of men and gods for a banquet at Mecone, perhaps shortly after the creation of mankind. (In *Enuma elish* there is a celebration feast of the gods shortly after the creation of man.) At this banquet a dispute arises as to how the ox which is to be eaten should be divided between the gods and the men. Prometheus volunteers to divide the animal into two portions and suggests that Zeus and the other gods be allowed the first choice.[10] His cunning nature and partiality for man cause him to attempt to trick Zeus into choosing the inferior portion, and his trickery is successful. The implication of the story is that the division was intended to set the pattern for all future banquets at which meat was to be eaten, since, throughout Greek history on those occasions when meat was prepared for eating, the responsible officials gave to the gods the portion which Zeus had "chosen" and kept for men what had been allotted to them.[11]

There are two important matters to notice about this myth. The first is that it is basically aetiological in nature, designed to provide an explanation for the normal Greek method of sacrificing an animal. Hesiod has not told the myth for an aetio-

Arimoi," in *The Classical tradition*, ed. Luitpold Wallach (Ithaca, N. Y. 1966), p. 75-76. Although the question of the sources of Apollodorus demands much further study, we may now say that almost nothing in the *Library* is derived from Hellenistic writers, either the poets or anonymous compilers of mythological manuals. Only rarely, in fact, does he cite sources as late as the tragedians or Pindar. Almost always those cited are early: Hesiod, Pherecydes of Syros, Acusilaus, the cyclic poets, perhaps Hellanicus. It looks as if Apollodorus usually gained his information from the early logographers, who were themselves largely dependent upon the poets. Much of the material preserved by him was known to Greeks of the Archaic and early Classical periods, and with reasonable care he may serve as a guide to myths known at an earlier stage. Although he cannot be cited uncritically as a source, we may nevertheless give him some of the confidence shown in him by the D scholia of Homer or the scholiasts of Plato and Euripides.

10 That ἐκρίνοντο in 535 must imply a dispute seems necessary, although Hesiodic students have frequently been at a loss as to how to interpret the word. Κρίνω, though basically a legal word referring to some sort of settlement of an issue, does not have to have legal connotations (e.g., *Th.* 882 or *Op.* 801, 828) and may refer to a decision reached in a number of ways, such as force, a contest, or the taking of omens. The word seems to hint at a time after a common life together when the divine and human beings decided to separate, possibly amicably; but Hesiod's compression of a point incidental to him and familiar to his audience leaves us in ignorance of a rather fundamental matter. The background may best be determined by a consideration of what follows in the narrative. Since Prometheus in volunteering to supervise an impartial allotment actually intends secretly to see that an inferior portion goes to the gods, there seems no reason to assume anything other than that the gods and men have just had a quarrel over dividing the ox.

11 The exact nature of the trickery may well always remain a matter of dispute because of textual complications. Prometheus separated the ox into two portions—the delicious flesh and fat inner parts which were wrapped inside the stomach, and the bones which were concealed within rich and glistening fat. One portion seems to have been set by Prometheus in front of Zeus and the other before men. Zeus made a remark about the seeming extreme inequality of the division, and the crafty Prometheus told him to take his choice. The deceit worked, and Zeus and the other gods were left forever with the inedible parts of the sacrificed animal. The problem is to decide which part Prometheus placed before Zeus. Presumably Zeus was greedy enough to have said nothing if the portion which seemed better had been set on his side. But it was not: he complained, and with the permission of Prometheus he switched the portions—to his ultimate dismay. Unfortunately, if

logical purpose; but clearly that was the normal reason for telling it, as is shown by the two concluding lines (*Theogony* 556-557), which belong properly to an aetiological myth. Hesiod himself may have told it for that reason on other occasions, since the two concluding lines, which are out of place here, must have been such a regular part of the story that the poet unconsciously added them here.

The second matter of importance about the myth of the sacrifices follows logically upon the first: originally it was not a regular part of the story of Prometheus and must have had a separate existence. Hesiod is, as far as we know, the only serious Greek poet ever to have told the story in connection with the other events in the life of Prometheus; and it may well be that he himself connected the events for the first and last time. The chief references to the myth aside from Hesiod occur in the Attic poets, who use it as evidence of the pettiness of men toward the gods.[12] Aeschylus disregards the myth entierly. Our most coherent accounts of the story of Prometheus are preserved in Apollodorus and Hyginus, who are worth quoting here. Hyginus does not mention the creation of mankind, but he had already done so in *Fabula* 142:

> Προμηθεὺς δὲ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ γῆς ἀνθρώπους πλάσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ πῦρ, λάθρα Διὸς ἐν νάρθηκι κρύψας. ὡς δὲ ἤσθετο Ζεύς, ἐπέταξεν Ἡφαίστῳ τῷ Καυκάσῳ ὄρει τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ προσηλῶσαι· τοῦτο δὲ Σκυθικὸν ὄρος ἐστίν. ἐν δὴ τούτῳ προσηλωθεὶς Προμηθεὺς πολλῶν ἐτῶν ἀριθμὸν ἐδέδετο· καθ' ἑκάστην δὲ ἡμέραν ἀετὸς ἐφιπτάμενος αὐτῷ τοὺς λοβοὺς ἐνέμετο τοῦ ἥπατος αὐξανομένου διὰ νυκτός.
>
> καὶ Προμηθεὺς μὲν πυρὸς κλαπέντος δίκην ἔτινε ταύτην, μέχρις Ἡρακλῆς αὐτὸν ὕστερον ἔλυσεν, ὡς ἐν τοῖς καθ' Ἡρακλέα δηλώσομεν (*Bibl.* 1.7.1).

> Homines antea ab immortalibus ignem petebant, neque in perpetuum seruare sciebant; quod postea Prometheus in ferula detulit in terras, hominibusque monstrauit quomodo cinere obrutum seruarent. ob hanc rem Mercurius Iouis iussu deligauit eum in monte Caucaso ad saxum clauis ferreis, et aquilam apposuit quae cor eius exesset; quantum die ederat, tantum nocte crescebat. hanc aquilam post xxx annos Hercules interfecit, eumque liberauit (*Fab.* 144).

Both authors give the same basic story: Prometheus created men, befriended them with the gift of fire, and was therefore punished by Zeus.[13] Throughout antiquity these events were the common ones mentioned regularly in connection with Prometheus, and all others seem to have had a more or less separate existence. It must

we read the *mss.* of the *Theogony*, they do not tell the story in this fashion; and what they do say cannot stand. Emendation can alter the text so that either portion may be set before Zeus, and editors have done both. But the psychological aspects of the incident would seem more natural if we assume the explanation which I have given above and thus prefer the text given by West to that of Rzach. See West's notes on lines 538 and 540 and his article in *CQ* 55 (1961) 137-138. West has been supported by G. S. Kirk, *JHS* 88 (1968) 145, and is followed by F. Solmsen in his new edition (Oxford 1970).

12 Pherecr. fr. 23; Eub. fr. 95 and 130; Men. *Dysc.* 447-453; *Sam.* 184-189 (= 399-404 in Colin Austin, ed., *Aspis et Samia* [Berlin 1969]); and *Com. Adesp.* 1205.

13 We need not concern ourselves with the rather minor points of conflict between the two authors. The text of Hyginus is uncertain, and the number may be either 30 or 30,000. The use of *cor* rather than *iecur*, as also in *Fab.* 54, is perhaps due to a mistake in his Greek source. Cf. Rose on *Fab.* 54.

always have been Prometheus, however, who engineered the deceitful allotment of sacrifices. The relationship between the stories would be easier to understand if the division of the sacrifices was in origin a local myth, perhaps among the residents of Mecone.

By adding this myth to the usual story, Hesiod was able to provide Zeus a motive for his decision to withhold fire from men. Zeus' actions in this way seem less arbitrary and tyrannical, and Prometheus becomes less a champion of man against unjust divinities and more an insolent deceiver of the gods who know what is best. Since throughout the *Theogony* Hesiod is especially concerned with celebrating the wisdom and majesty of Zeus, such an addition to the story of Prometheus is entirely in accordance with his position.

The event in the story of Prometheus which appears in all versions as *the* sin against Zeus is the theft of fire, an attempt to explain the dim memory of the time when men lacked fire. Nearly every society seems to recall or imagine a period when men were unable to produce fire, and many myths exist to explain how men first obtained it.[14] The fact that Prometheus was the native Greek deity of fire and the crafts until ousted by the oriental Hephaestus[15] would help to confirm our view that the theft of fire from Zeus and its gift to men was Prometheus' original crime.

At one time the story must have said that in the beginning men were able to obtain fire only when Zeus gave it to them—in other words, when a chance bolt of lightning produced fire. Their champion Prometheus then gave them unlimited access to fire by bringing it from heaven hidden in a reed. Zeus therefore resolved angrily to punish both men and Prometheus. After the incident about the sacrifices had been attached, the story was altered to tell how the gods and men came together for a banquet and how they disputed the division of the ox. Prometheus then tricked Zeus into choosing the worthless portion for the gods; and the furious Zeus decided to withhold fire from men, thus rendering their victory at the banquet worthless, since they could not eat their meat without cooking it. The story continued as in the earlier version. It may not have been necessary for the tale to have made explicit reference to the time when fire was obtainable only from occasional strikes of lightning: the second version did not need that detail, and the earlier could have omitted it without loss of coherence.[16]

When we turn to the account of the first woman, sent as a punishment for man, we find ourselves enmeshed in numerous difficulties. The history of the story of the first woman in Greece may always remain obscure. It is one of a large group of myths found in many places (Thompson [below, n. 22], A 1275) which assume that the male sex alone existed at first and that the female was created later. The woman is often compared to the Eve in *Genesis*, but even better parallels can be found elsewhere in

14 See the collection in appendix III of vol. 2 of Frazer's ed. of Apollod. (p. 326-350).

15 Cf. L. R. Farnell, *The cults of the Greek states*, vol. 5 (Oxford 1909), p. 378-379; H. J. Rose, *A handbook of Greek mythology* (New York 1959), p. 56; and K. Bapp (above, n. 8), col. 3036-3044 and 3048. For the view that the division of the sacrifices and the theft of fire were originally two independent myths, cf. Kurt von Fritz, "Pandora, Prometheus, and the myth of the ages," *RR* 11 (1947) 253; and Frederick J. Teggart, "The argument of Hesiod's *Works and days*," *JHI* 8 (1947) 48.

16 The version of the myth in which Prometheus stole fire from Hephaestus (seen at the beginning of Aesch. *Pv*) is a later variant deriving from the fact that Hephaestus was the fire-god of classical Greece. Hesiod adheres to the other version, which may have been the only one known to him and which remained the common one long after Hephaestus had replaced Prometheus as the patron of fire and the crafts.

the Near East.[17] As the result of some early speculation on the relationship between the sexes and the nature of evil, the myth lent itself to further reflection. Exactly what the relationship of this woman is to Γῆ παυδώρα and what her pithos and its contents owe to the festival of the Anthesteria we cannot yet say: we see only traces of a complex development, which must have been at best only half-remembered by the age of Hesiod.[18]

Although Hesiod tells us in both poems that it was Hephaestus who fashioned the woman at the request of Zeus, there was another ancient tradition (e.g., Aesop 240) which said simply that Prometheus created mankind, in which case the myth more closely resembles the Hebrew one in which Jehovah created man, both male and female, at the same time (*Genesis* 1.27).[19] The tradition which Hesiod follows must be the younger and have arisen to solve the problem which developed when the story of the creation of woman was attached to the other myths of Prometheus. In the merged version it made no sense to allow Prometheus to create woman, but it was easy to transfer the task to his newer non-Greek counterpart Hephaestus.[20]

A satisfactory explanation for certain peculiarities in this myth may be forthcoming if we again postulate that Hesiod himself first inserted the creation of woman into the other myths of Prometheus and made Hephaestus the creator. Previously, the usual myths of Prometheus would have implied that he had created both sexes at the same time. The other myth would have existed separately and have said that woman had been created as an evil for man. Though conflicting, the two myths had been devised by different persons for different purposes but, having made no claim to represent a coherent philosophy, could both exist among the Greeks as easily as the two creation stories in *Genesis* (cf. n. 20) have managed to exist among the Hebrews and their descendants. When the second myth was merged with the former, it was necessary to alter certain details: Prometheus was henceforth considered simply the creator of mankind in general; and, since he may have been the maker of woman in the second myth also, he had to be replaced to avoid an inconsistency. The availability of Hephaestus, the imported god of fire and the crafts, made the change possible.

This set of assumptions would help to explain certain strange facts in the tradition. First of all, this story is hardly better attached to the cycle of Prometheus stories than the one about the division of the sacrifices: it does appear in Hyginus (*Fabula* 142) but is not alluded to in Aeschylus or Apollodorus. Its absence from the former is comprehensible, since it is alien to the dramatist's theme; but it would be most peculiar for the latter to have omitted it if it were a firm part of the tradition. If, however, Apollodorus considered Hesiod's accounts as no more than a strange or aberrant version which did not belong to the usual tradition, then his omission is understandable. Secondly, Hesiod's accounts do not harmonize well with each other. I pass over

17 See, for example, the discussion by I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel in "The Pandora myth," *Acta ethnographica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 4 (1955) 116-123.

18 See Trencsényi-Waldapfel (above, n. 17), p. 106 f.; Jane E. Harrison, "Pandora's box," *JHS* 20 (1900) 99-114; Wm. A. Oldfather, s.v. "Pandora," *RE* 18.3, col. 531-548; Carl Robert (above, n. 8), p. 17-38; and Otto Lendle, *Die "Pandorasage" bei Hesiod* (Würzburg 1957).

19 Cf. K. Bapp (above, n. 8), col. 3044-3045; Oldfather (above, n. 18), col. 541-542; and Dora and Erwin Panofsky, *Pandora's box*, 2nd ed. (New York 1962), p. 7.

20 This younger tradition has a certain affinity to the other Hebrew myth, which is found in *Genesis* 2. There a period of time elapses between the creation of man and that of woman. In the account of *Genesis* 1 and in the other Greek version, both sexes were created at once. As far as I know, no one else has noticed that there are two Greek accounts which are similar to the two Hebrew ones.

details for the moment but suggest that the conflicts, which are by no means minor, are comprehensible if Hesiod is attempting to work out a myth for himself, trying first one explanation and then another. Thirdly, Hesiod's length and detail in the two accounts are unparalleled by any other narrative within the two poems. The elaborate details may be explained if Hesiod is for once telling a story either unknown to his audience or unknown in this form and is absorbed in the story because its form is at least partly his own creation.

Hesiod tells about the punishment of Prometheus only in the *Theogony*, and there is no reason to suppose that the account there is not the usual one of the tradition. Prometheus, the poet says, was bound by tight chains to a column[21] and was daily visited by an eagle which feasted on his liver, the liver being regenerated during the night.[22] Although Zeus allowed Heracles to slay the eagle and thus end that torment, the story that Prometheus was eventually released does not develop until after Hesiod.[23] Lines 526-528 of the *Theogony* have often been read in such a way as to conflict with 616, but a careful reading reveals that the torment from which Prometheus is released is the affliction of the eagle, not imprisonment. Although Hesiod does not localize the punishment, all later sources agree in placing it in the Caucasus; West feels that Hesiod, too, knew of the Caucasus as the site.[24]

Although we have now examined the myths of Prometheus with which we must concern ourselves in discussing Hesiod's handling of them, nevertheless we may note several other tales about him. None of them exists in Hesiod or Homer; although their absence by no means proves that they were created only later, most of them were perhaps developed during the interval between Hesiod and Aeschylus, when logographers were attempting to complete the process of making the myths of Prometheus into a coherent whole. Even if they were in existence earlier and were known to Hesiod, they seem to have had no influence on him. These myths, therefore, are of small consequence here, however important they may be for the later history of the tradition; and I shall not attempt to discuss them fully.[25]

The story that Prometheus had aided Zeus in the Titanomachy (Aeschylus, *Prometheus bound* 201-225) seems to be the result of pondering the earlier relationship between Zeus and Prometheus.[26] Prometheus' prophecy about the offspring of Thetis who was destined to be greater than his father (*Prometheus bound* 764, 907-910;

21 The exact interpretation of 522 is unclear, but the explanation for which West, ad loc., argues seems sound: the chains are fastened through the middle of the column to which Prometheus is bound. There is no need to interpret the line to mean that he is actually impaled.

22 The frequency with which the eagle came may not have been a stable element within the tradition, although Hesiod's version of the motif is the common one (cf. Stith Thompson, *Motif-index of folk-literature*, rev. ed. [Bloomington 1955-1958], D 2192). According to Aeschylus, the bird came only every other day (fr. 193, line 10). This appears to be a later rationalization.

23 It became, of course, the common version (Aesch. *Pv* 1020-1029 and the *Lyomenos*; Hyg. *Fab.* 54 and 144; Apollod. 1.7.1 and 2.5.11; etc.). Pherecydes still accepted the version seen in Hesiod (*FGrH* 3 F 17). See West's remarks on lines 523-533.

24 See his notes to lines 522 and 523-533. He cites the work of Axel Olrik (*Ragnarök: die Sagen vom Weltuntergang* [German transl. by Wilhelm Ranisch, Berlin and Leipzig 1922]) to show that the motif of the punishment of Prometheus probably came to Greece from the Caucasus. In the Caucasian myth the punishment lasted forever (Olrik, p. 253 f.).

25 I have omitted the myth which says that Prometheus split the head of Zeus for the birth of Athena, for which the interested reader may consult Rose (above, n. 15), p. 108 and note. The cleaving of Zeus' head was not known to Hesiod, and generally the deed was attributed to Hephaestus and not Prometheus. A study of the myth more properly belongs to an inquiry into the relationship between Prometheus and Hephaestus.

26 Cf. Louis Séchan, *Le mythe de Prométhée* (Paris 1951), p. 42.

Hyginus, *Fabula* 54[27]) is an extension of the motif of the Succession Myth whereby Zeus, too, would fall from power; and this detail is connected with the story that Prometheus was ultimately released from bondage with the consent of Zeus. Also a part of the motif of Prometheus' liberation is the tale which speaks of the centaur Chiron, who, though immortal, was accidentally given an incurable wound by Heracles. The centaur wished to die but could not do so until he gave, with the approval of Zeus, his immortality to Prometheus (who has here been implicitly demoted to a mortal man). Frazer surmises[28] that this story (which is found in *Prometheus bound* 1026-1029 and Apollodorus 2.5.4 and 2.5.11) can be traced back to Pherecydes, who was active during the middle of the sixth century B.C. The stories which make Prometheus the father of Deucalion (Apollodorus 1.7.2) are probably the results of further reflection on the connection between Prometheus and mankind.[29] This motif must have been developed soon after the time of Hesiod; if not before, since it is attributed to the *Catalogue* (fr. 2-4). If, as I think, the myth of Prometheus as the creator of man was already current, its development is easier to understand.

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The manner in which Hesiod approaches Prometheus in the *Theogony*, which is basically genealogical in nature, is dictated by the context. In discussing the Iapetids Hesiod treats the family in his normal manner, first listing the children of Iapetus and Clymene and then adding pertinent details, in this case stressing their relationship to Zeus. All of the Iapetids had been punished for violating the will of Zeus, and Hesiod saw the family as an opportunity to preach obedience to Zeus. Since any narratives are digressions in a genealogical poem and since the poet naturally shapes his narratives to suit his theme, we should expect to find that the poet has omitted much, especially in a poet for whom compression is a major means of composition.

Having listed the four sons of Iapetus (509-511), Hesiod proceeds, according to his usual practice, to describe in reverse order what happened to each, Prometheus being removed from his proper position because his story is to be told in great detail.[30] Through severe narrative compression the first three brothers are almost summarily dismissed, although in the cases of Menoetius and Atlas it is possible that the compression is more apparent than real. Menoetius, whose crime is "reckless and presumptuous insolence" (516), was driven to Erebus; Atlas, whose fault is vaguely mentioned by characterizing him as "headstrong" (509), was assigned to hold the heavens up off the earth. One wonders whether early mythical tradition was ever much more specific than Hesiod about the deeds of these two. Although Hyginus (*Fabula* 150) gives Atlas a prominent role in the Titanomachy and Apollodorus (1.2.3) makes a similar statement about Menoetius, both authors could be relating expansions of Hesiod's remarks. The important matter, however, is that Hesiod tells the stories as if he is omitting details.

27 Cf. the variant version in Pind. *Isthm.* 8.31 f., where Themis, and not Prometheus, makes the prophecy.

28 In Apollod., vol. 1, p. 228 (n. 2).

29 There seems to have been a natural tendency to consider Prometheus a man, partly because he was the champion of man and partly because he was the opponent of the gods. These reasons seem to represent two sides of the same coin. The fact remains that Prometheus was originally divine and lost his immortality only when his divine nature became of secondary importance.

30 West, p. 38.

In the case of Epimetheus, the compression is real and extensive enough to prove that this fictitious brother of Prometheus had been developed well before Hesiod.[31] In the *Works and days* his story is told at its proper point in the narrative and at greater length; but in the *Theogony* we have only the briefest description of his actions, and that outside the narrative completely. Problems of organization account for the peculiarity: Hesiod begins the section with the simple intention of mentioning the crime and fate of each brother, although he clearly plans to devote some length to Prometheus (as is shown by moving him from his proper position). Having once indicated, however summarily, the story of Epimetheus, he omits details which he has previously suggested. Consequently, at the point (between 589 and 590) where we expect to hear what happens when Pandora is given to Epimetheus, Hesiod felt no need to retell it. What happened, of course, is that Hermes took the woman to Epimetheus, who received her, forgetting his brother's warning never to accept a present from Zeus. Accordingly, there first came among men all the ambiguous forces which increase the complexities and tensions of living.

Prometheus is introduced exactly as his brothers were, with a description of his punishment (521-534) and then an explanation of the reason, this one at very great length. Lest, however, we forget the purpose of introducing Prometheus, Hesiod concludes (613-616) by returning explicitly to the subject of punishment for violating the will of Zeus. There is only one matter which has caused problems of interpretation: in a story emphasizing the punishment of Prometheus, Hesiod expends several lines (526-534) explaining how part of the torture ended when Heracles finally killed the liver-eating eagle. I am inclined to think that a free association of ideas caused the mention of Heracles in a mental chain that one finds logical in oral poetry. In another, perfectly natural context, Hesiod had just mentioned Atlas and the Hesperides (518). He then turned to Prometheus and the eagle. The active and alert mind of the storyteller was easily reminded that Heracles, while on the way to the Hesperides to steal the golden apples, met Prometheus and killed the eagle and that Prometheus then told him to send Atlas after the apples.[32] Having related that Heracles killed the eagle, Hesiod then had to engage in some dubiously successful efforts to show that the ending of the torture (by a son of Zeus even) does not prove that it *is* possible to deceive Zeus safely. He did this by returning to another recurring theme, the grandeur and wisdom of Zeus: Heracles was allowed by the father of men and gods to kill the eagle in order that his glory be exalted, not because Prometheus had been pitied by Zeus, who allayed his wrath solely for the honor of his own son. The only relief given Prometheus was the termination of the eagle's torment, although this respite was certainly enough to justify speaking of the cessation of Zeus' wrath. At the end of the section (616), Hesiod makes it explicit that Prometheus remained chained.[33]

Hesiod then turned to the causes of the punishment. He omits the creation of man,

31 It has been shown convincingly (cf. K. Bapp [above, n. 8], col. 3033-3035; Gerhard Fink, *Pandora und Epimetheus* [Erlangen 1958], p. 45-53; and Walter Kraus [above, n. 8], col. 689-690) that Prometheus is not an etymologically transparent word in Greek; but, regardless of its origin, the Greeks understood it as meaning "forethought." Having been interpreted as such, it led naturally in mythical thought processes to the creation of another son of Iapetus named "afterthought" (cf. Fink, p. 60 and n.).

32 Apollod. 2.5.11.

33 Hesiod's handling of this subject seems to have aided the development of the detail that Prometheus was eventually freed completely. The apparent emphasis of the poet is on the cessation of the torture; he mentions only later in passing that the confinement continued.

which was in no way related to his theme. The making of man was not a crime and may have been envisioned as an act to benefit the gods; since Hesiod was making no claim to tell the entire story of Prometheus, the omission was entirely natural. He began, therefore, with the gathering at Mecone. Our poet's purpose was to attempt to stress the grandeur and wisdom of Zeus. Unlike his assignment, however, in the similar situation in speaking of the eagle, Hesiod set himself an impossible task. The basic fact of the story is that Prometheus, however unwisely, deceived Zeus; only for an ardent believer such as Hesiod could the deception be felt as only apparent. Later Greek writers always spoke of the deception without apologies;[34] and, whether or not the episode may be considered a tribute to the omniscience of Zeus, it is an example of the wonderful tolerance of the Greek gods and of the splendid relationship that they were able to enjoy with men.

The story of the sacrifice and the theft of fire are linked (561) with a statement of Zeus' anger when crossed, a subtle reminder of the poet's theme. Hesiod relates the incident with great brevity, not in order to minimize its importance, but because, as part of the earliest core of the myth of Prometheus, it would hardly have needed elaboration for understanding. Moreover, the theft exactly illustrates Hesiod's point, unlike the story of the sacrifice, from which Zeus emerged somewhat tarnished. Elaboration could serve no useful purpose, as it does when the same incident is told in the *Works and days*.

Once again Hesiod mentions the anger of Zeus, inevitable when his divine will is thwarted, as a bridge to the creation of woman, who is to balance the benefits which man gained from the possession of fire. The myth of the creation of woman was an old one, though previously not linked to the theft of fire; but the coupling was a natural one, since woman was supposed to be a source of trouble for men and since men's possession of fire gave Zeus a good reason to send them a misery to compensate for the blessings gained through fire. Alterations to the earlier myth had to be made, however, and for once we see an ancient Greek molding a myth to his own purposes. The version in the *Works and days* is more satisfying than that of the *Theogony* since by that time Hesiod had established the details in a satisfactory manner. The generalized misogyny of 590-612 is undoubtedly a rather set theme placed here only because Hesiod had not yet evolved the details of the loss of man's means of livelihood (βίος) through the contents of the pithos. Consequently, what seems like omission or compression in the version of the *Theogony* may well be explainable on other grounds.

Narrative compression, however, is recognizable, since Hesiod chooses not to relate most of the details from the incident. Had Homer or a similar poet given us the creation of woman, it might well have occupied a full book. Zeus would have asked Hephaestus to mold the woman, and the other divinities to endow her with gifts, to make her an evil irresistible to men. The gods would then have assented to the request, and only then would the task have been carried out. Hesiod, however, focuses only upon his theme and omits the first two steps of a typical expanded narrative. Hephaestus molds the woman from clay, and Athena breathes life into her[35] and clothes her. Athena then puts on her head the crown which Hephaestus had fashioned.

34 E.g., Hyg. *Poet. astr.* 2.15; Lucian, *Prom.* 3 (et passim) and *Ddeor.* 1.1.

35 *Vulcanus . . . mulieris effigiem fecit, cui Minerua animam dedit*, says Hyginus (*Fab.* 142). Cf. Hes. fr. 382. Hesiod's ξῶσε (*Th.* 573, *Op.* 72) should be understood, I think, as an aorist from ξῶ and not ξώννυμι, in spite of the lexicographers and editors. The only actual evidence for ξῶ as causative occurs in the Septuagint (Psalm 118[119]:37); but cf. H. W. Smyth, *Greek grammar*, rev. Gordon M. Messing (Cambridge; Mass. 1956), sec. 1711. Perhaps Hesiod actually wrote ξῆσε, although the aorist in omega is well attested in antiquity: Call., fr. 191.39 (Pfeiffer); *IG*

The conclusion of the episode in the *Theogony* (585-589) is extremely puzzling. His creature perfected, Hephaestus brings the woman forth to the place where the other gods and men are, all of whom marvel at her. Again we have a scene inexplicable because of compression. One cannot tell where the scene occurs, whether at Mecone or elsewhere, or why the gods and men are again (or still) together. Although the lines seem to imply that the men here are not the same ones for whom Pandora is to be an evil, that seems an unlikely possibility. The omission of Epimetheus is understandable, since Hesiod does not normally repeat himself; but it is hard to reconcile these lines with the role for Epimetheus. Whatever the reason for the scene, Hesiod does not use it again in the *Works and days*.

The poet concludes the passage with the lengthy generalization that explains how women are an evil to men. However unsatisfactory the lines seemed to Hesiod (and he was probably dissatisfied, since he worked out an alternative), they fit in well enough with his theme. Just as Prometheus did not escape punishment for violating the will of Zeus, so man for his part in the activities of Prometheus could not escape suffering. And finally, with a restatement of the theme, especially necessary for balance after such a lengthy digression, Hesiod brings to a close the stories of the sons of Iapetus.

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Although Hesiod used approximately the same mythic material in lines 42-105 of the *Works and days*, he approached the matter the second time from a completely different standpoint. The *Works and days* concerns man, not the gods; and Hesiod has oriented his narrative toward a new purpose, an explanation of the evils which plague the lives of men as well as of the difficulty of gaining a livelihood. Though he knew of the gods as the givers of good and the supporters of the righteous, he knew, too, of life in miserable and wretched Ascra, of his father's failure in Cyme, and of base poverty, all of which could be explained only as other gifts from Zeus. He had heard of a time in some distant past when life was easy and blessings flowed freely; now wants were no longer satisfied easily, while all types of ills roamed freely among men. In the story of Prometheus, Hesiod thought that he could find an explanation.

The Promethean material in the *Works and days* reveals the fruits of much speculation, including an attempt to reach toward abstract reasoning. The way in which woman was responsible for the ills of mankind is finally understood, although it was almost without coherence or explanation in the *Theogony* , where man's ills were attributed to the perennial battle of the sexes, which, however real the struggle may be, will hardly of itself embrace satisfactorily all the troubles that beset mankind. Now Hesiod has developed a more mature, though still mythical, explanation. The woes of mankind were ills, diseases and toils, which had not always existed among men. The person of Pandora was an obvious one to seize upon as the agent for bringing ills. Contrary to the wishes of Zeus, Prometheus had given man βίος, the means to live easily a blessed life without woe. For this act, summed up in the theft of fire, he was punished cruelly; and men were deprived of their benefits through the agency of the

11(4).1299, line 6; and Hdt. 1.120 (ἐπέζωσε). There is little point in saying that Athena girded and clothed Pandora, but Walcot has shown (above, n. 5, p. 69) that Egypt had a tradition in which the woman was created by a god and that life was breathed into her by a goddess. Later ancient tradition, as the statement of Hyginus shows, understood the creation of Pandora similarly. Cf. Rose (above, n. 15), p. 55.

woman. These considerations form the rationale for the narrative in the *Works and days* and govern the omissions and resulting compression that shape the story for Hesiod's purposes.

The creation of man and the punishment of Prometheus are both omitted, because they were of no significance for the poem. The story of the sacrifice, as well-known to the audience as that of Prometheus' punishment, is not important to the theme beyond providing a motive for Zeus' hiding fire. The shape of the narrative is determined. The story of the sacrifice is reduced to a rather vague one-line hint;[36] and the theft of fire itself, briefly told in the *Theogony*, is even more compressed here, a clear example of Hesiod's normal interest in the results of actions rather than in the actions themselves. The life of men would be easy, Hesiod now says, had not Zeus hidden their βίος. Because Prometheus had deceived him, he hid fire from men, thus annulling the advantage gained by men from Prometheus' deception. When Prometheus then stole fire for men, Zeus in rage had woman created and withheld βίος from men by counteracting the blessings obtained by men through fire. The remarkable point in the narrative, one not noted at all in the *Theogony*, is the use of fire on a higher than literal level as a symbol for βίος, Hesiod's addition of which to a more or less traditional narrative is noteworthy, even though the equation of fire and βίος is not perfectly logical.

The theft itself, although given in a compressed form, is emphasized through one of Hesiod's rare speeches, when Zeus rebukes Prometheus and indicates the significance of the theft by declaring, "I shall give men an evil in return for fire" (57). The same statement had been made in the *Theogony* (570), but there it was in a third-personal narrative of the poet. Here the loss of βίος is the subject of the myth. As a basic necessity of civilization and an important device in leading an easy and blessed life, fire is both a part of βίος and a symbol of all that it includes. When Prometheus gave it to men he gave them something that would tend to void the separation between the human and the divine. Since men had it, Zeus had to balance it.

Pandora was created and sent to men in order to scatter among them all the woes that keep human life from being easy and free from cares and toils. Because of its great importance for the theme, her creation in the *Works and days* is given increased emphasis through expansion. The poet is clearly exercising a creative talent in order to produce for his audience the dazzling creature who caused all men to rejoice at the same time that they embraced their own destruction, and what might seem to be omission in detail from the *Theogony* may actually be an invention for our present poem. In the *Theogony* Hesiod showed Hephaestus carrying out unspoken orders and molding the woman immediately after Zeus' decision to retaliate for the theft of fire, another example of the poet's interest in results rather than in the steps leading to the results. In the *Works and days* some of the intervening steps in the narrative are described, as Zeus actually gives the orders to create the woman and they are accomplished. When the different gods have endowed the woman with the gifts requested by Zeus, Hermes decides to give her a descriptive name, which was probably created for the *Works and days*.[37]

36 I believe that there can be no question of another deception's being implied in line 48.

37 Not only is the name applied to the woman probably first by Hesiod, but it is even applied in a perverted way, this being perhaps the best clue to the fact that Hesiod first used the name "Pandora." The name cannot mean in Greek what Hesiod (*Op.* 81-82) says it does: the sense is active, not passive; and the word was properly an epithet for Ge (Oldfather [above, n. 18], col. 533; cf. T. A. Sinclair on *Op.* 81 and S. M. Adams, "Hesiod's Pandora," *CR* 46 [1932] 193). Attempts occasionally have been made to prove that Pandora and the woman of the *Theogony* are

We lack a parallel for the scene in the *Theogony* where the perfected woman was displayed to an assembly: Hermes simply fulfills Zeus' request to deliver her to Epimetheus. It could well be that the earlier myth which Hesiod has been adapting for his purposes presented woman not as an invention to punish man but simply as a gift for man.[38] On some occasions misogynist bards could have gone on to sing, in a manner similar to that of lines 590-612 of the *Theogony*, of the unfortunate nature of the gift. In either case, this earlier version could have included a scene in which the finished woman was brought forth to be admired by gods and men alike. Rather awkwardly, Hesiod retained the scene for the *Theogony*; but, realizing its difficulties, he finally omitted it altogether.

The concluding scene in the *Works and days* (90-104), being told by a storyteller and not a philosopher, defies logical analysis; but Hesiod's intentions come through nevertheless, even though his picture cannot withstand a detailed and sophisticated examination. Where the jar came from and why Pandora removed the lid are not explained—nor, in the typical paralogical thought processes of myth, do they need to be. The story would seem to be Hesiod's own, perhaps modeled on a traditional scene similar to that in *Iliad* 24.527-533, where there are two pithoi on the doorstep of Zeus, one of evils and the other of good, which can be allotted to men in differing amounts. Hesiod, however, cannot have in mind a precisely analogous scene, for nowhere in his narrative does he allow for a distribution of blessings. He approaches the problem of good and evil from a standpoint quite different from the Homeric one by assuming that until the arrival of Pandora men's lives were filled only with blessings (the implication of 42-47).[39] The jar must have contained evils for men (cf. 88-89, 90-92, and 95), although Hesiod does not say so precisely. Nevertheless, Zeus had evidently kept ills away previously; and somehow these ills were now available for Pandora to let loose among men.

The appearance in the urn of Hope should not be so serious a problem as it has often been, if one is willing to accept the naive thought processes of folk-literature. Semantic quibbling about the precise meaning of ἐλπίς will never resolve the difficulties. Hesiod wished only to say that Zeus, though depriving men of their former life of ease, did not intend to destroy them. Hope, Hesiod knew well enough, is the salvation of men in desperate situations, explaining why one man yields to an evil which another conquers. Zeus' plan gave men evils but the means to defeat them as well. Putting Hope into the urn with the evils creates a confusing picture, and it is possible that Hesiod might later have reworked the material again. But his meaning is not lost. Whatever is in the jar is under control. Hence, when the lid is removed, the evil things are no longer locked up where they are harmless. Good things, however, are available, if in the urn, for use when needed. Therefore, lest men's situation remain desperate indeed, Hope must be in the urn at the end of the scene, wherever it may have been up to that point. The verb of rest (97) implies that the urn first contained both the evils and Hope and that the possibility for the release of both existed. On the

not the same creature (e.g., G. F. Schoemann, *Opuscula academica*, vol. 2 [Berlin 1857], p. 284 and 290), but these are now generally discounted. We cannot yet understand whatever religious developments may have made this first woman suitable, in Hesiod's mind, for the epithet and other attributes of the earth-goddess.

38 As in the Hebrew myth, *Genesis* 2:18.

39 There are two ways of considering good and evil. The Homeric passage implies that, were Zeus to choose not to allot to men from the two urns, life would be neutral. Hesiod, on the other hand, seems to suggest that blessings, except for the good gained through fire, are only the absence of evils.

other hand, Hesiod may not have thought at all about Hope and its whereabouts until he actually mentioned it.[40]

We need now to discuss only the discrepancies in the adorning of Pandora (69-80). Zeus gives a set of orders which do not correspond exactly to what then takes place. Hephaestus, who was asked to make the woman from clay, does as bidden. But Athena, though asked to teach her the skills of needlework, gives her breath and clothes her, as in the *Theogony*. Aphrodite was to endow her with the irresistible charms of love, but we are not told that she ever carried out the request. Instead, the Graces, Persuasion, and the Horae, who are not mentioned in Zeus' orders, give her jewels and flowers. Lastly, Hermes, as requested, gives her a shameless mind and a deceitful nature. The discrepancies between the list of orders and their execution may very well be due to another instance of the poet's originality.

I think it reasonably likely that the version of the creation of the woman as found in the *Theogony* is in details rather close to the pre-Hesiodic one, although Hesiod has placed his own distinctive narrative technique upon it. In that earlier version, Zeus would have asked Hephaestus (or Prometheus) and Athena, the two craftsman-gods, to fashion and adorn the woman; and they would have done so. When their creature was complete, she was brought forth to be admired by all the other divinities (and perhaps, depending upon context, by men as well) and then delivered to Epimetheus. For the *Works and days*, however, Hesiod's fascination with this woman and his desire to make the irresistible gift as alluring as possible (Hesiod's well-known and often overrated misogynism must have been based upon a thorough knowledge of feminine wiles and charms) led him to elaborate her creation extensively. He may have had in mind a more complex list of deities and gifts than that which he chose to recite on this occasion. What he has done is simply to have made no attempt in accordance with his own usual practice and in violation of the normally repetitive manner of folk-literature to give logically all the details twice. Hephaestus and Athena, the two deities necessary to the tradition, appear in both lists, although Athena's gift of skill in embroidery, which could be a Hesiodic contribution to the scene, occurs only in the former. The other deities, all probably added by Hesiod, appear only in one list or the other, with the exception of Hermes, who gives such notable and characteristic gifts that the poet could hardly resist emphasis through repetition. The entire scene is treated in a free and relatively sophisticated fashion by the poet, who wanted to bedazzle his audience with a kaleidoscopic burst of details.

In the *Works and days*, just as in the *Theogony*, Hesiod's approach to the myths of Prometheus is governed by the purposes of the narrative, in this case as an attempt to explain the evils which plague mankind as well as the difficulty of gaining a livelihood. Between the two compositions, the poet had thought much about the uses and details of the myths. Since in the *Works and days* the central concern is man, the focus is upon Pandora and not Prometheus; and Hesiod has carefully shaped his material for his present purposes.

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As the only narrative material treated twice by a Greek poet from the Archaic age, the story of Prometheus can teach us much about Hesiod's manner of composition and

40 Of all previous discussions about Pandora's urn and Hope, only West's (on *Th.* 507-616, p. 307 and n.) seems perceptive.

in general about the uses of myth. If we consider, as many scholars now do, that the *Theogony* and the *Works and days* may be attributed to the same poet[41] and if we reject wholesale excision of verses as a means of resolving differences, then we can seek to understand differences between the two narratives on the basis of Hesiod's own purposes and techniques of composition.

Throughout his poetry Hesiod uses the devices of compression and omission of material as his preferred means of controlling the development of a narrative, at least partly because of the enormous amount of narrative material that he covers. Expansion and ornamentation, the poetic devices that are particularly characteristic of Homer, are used by Hesiod only rarely. Once one realizes the prevalence of compressive techniques in Hesiod and considers how they are applied to the myths with which he worked, it becomes possible to appreciate the excellence of his stories and their suitability for achieving his purposes. It is sometimes difficult, and occasionally impossible, to know exactly what was the shape of a myth in pre-Hesiodic times; but generally one can understand well enough to see what Hesiod has done and to recognize some of the originality that the poet brought to his subjects.

The pre-Hesiodic state of the myths of Prometheus shows a highly developed set of material which was obviously familiar to Hesiod's audiences. Two incidents, the division of the sacrifice at Mecone and the creation of woman, are probably relatively recent additions to the basic story of Prometheus, although both no doubt had long independent lives of their own; and Hesiod himself may have incorporated them into the basic plot, which told of Prometheus' theft of fire for the men whom he had created and his subsequent punishment. Consistency required certain changes of detail, most notably the substitution of Hephaestus for Prometheus as the creator of the woman (although the change might be earlier). The story of the sacrifice became an explanation for Zeus' decision to hide fire from men, and the woman became a means of counterbalancing the blessings gained by men when Prometheus gave them fire.

Hesiod's specific approach to the myth in the *Theogony* was governed by his interest in using the family of Iapetus as an example of the dangers involved in violating the will of Zeus and by the genealogical nature of the poem. The crime and punishment of each Iapetid were given, the story of Prometheus being told in much greater detail than those of the others. The emphasis in each case was the punishment, and Prometheus' suffering was consequently described before his misdeeds. The creation of man was omitted; the story of the sacrifice and especially that of the theft of fire were told in a compressed fashion. The punishment of man through the creation of woman was then outlined; but that of Prometheus, having been previously related, was not told a second time.

In the *Works and days*, on the other hand, Hesiod focused upon Pandora, so as to explain the present state of the lives of men, since he had by now worked out the details of what occurred when Epimetheus received Pandora. By replacing the misogynist's lament with the urn of evils he made the woman seem less an evil herself than the agent through which the evil appeared. The focus upon Pandora rather than Prometheus explains the highly compressed form of the material pertaining to Prometheus.

The freedom that Hesiod employed in each narrative is noteworthy. Since the myths that concern Prometheus and Pandora embrace a wide range of elements, Hesiod could by careful arrangement and through techniques of compression or expan-

41 See, for example, John E. Rexine, "The unity of authorship in Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and days*" (unpubl. diss., Harvard University 1965).

sion adapt one body of myth for different purposes on separate occasions. Far more striking, however, than just Hesiod's distinctive treatments are the elements that appear in one or both poems which are probably the poet's additions to the myths and which may stand as evidence for the creative achievements of Hesiod.[42]

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